

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**of the**  
**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**IN AMERICA**  
**IN TWO VOLUMES**  
*Both volumes are included in this digital version*

**VOLUME 1**

PART I: Directory of General Assembly Committees and Agencies

PART II: Journal

PART III: Appendices A-O

**VOLUME 2**

PART III: Appendices P-V

PART IV: Corrections to Previous Minutes

Part V: References and Index

**June 11-14, 2024**  
**Richmond, Virginia**

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**of the**  
**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**VOLUME 1 of 2**

PLEASE NOTE:

1. The pages of Volume 1 and Volume 2 are numbered consecutively.
2. The INDEX to both volumes is found at the back of Volume 2.

**VOLUME 1, pp. 1-706**

PART I: Directory of General Assembly Committees and Agencies

PART II: Daily Journal

PART III: Appendices A-O

**VOLUME 2, pp. 707-1276**

PART III: Appendices P-V

PART IV: Corrections to Previous Minutes

Part V: References and Index

This page intentionally left blank

# MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

## **PART I    DIRECTORY**

I.	Officers of the General Assembly .....	5
II.	Ministries of the General Assembly .....	6
III.	Permanent Committees.....	7
IV.	Agencies .....	10
V.	Special Committees .....	13
VI.	Standing Judicial Commission .....	14

<b>PART II    JOURNAL (see *Note, p. 2) .....</b>	<b>15</b>
Quick Reference Guide to Sessions and Item Numbers .....	1259

<b>PART III   APPENDICES .....</b>	<b>111</b>
------------------------------------	------------

## **REPORTS**

APPENDIX A	Administrative Committee.....	115
APPENDIX B	Board of Directors.....	207
APPENDIX C	Committee on Discipleship Ministries.....	211
APPENDIX D	Committee on Constitutional Business .....	223
	Supplemental Report.....	231
APPENDIX E	Cooperative Ministries Committee .....	233
APPENDIX F	Covenant College.....	235
APPENDIX G	Covenant Theological Seminary .....	249
APPENDIX H	Geneva Benefits Group.....	291
APPENDIX I	Interchurch Relations Committee. ....	301
APPENDIX J	Mission to North America .....	303
APPENDIX K	Mission to the World .....	329
APPENDIX L	Nominating Committee.....	353
	Supplemental Report.....	389
APPENDIX M	PCA Foundation.....	397
APPENDIX N	Reformed University Fellowship.....	413
APPENDIX O	Review of Presbytery Records.....	457
APPENDIX P	Ridge Haven.....	707
APPENDIX Q	Standing Judicial Commission.....	711
	Supplemental Report.....	968
APPENDIX R	Stated Clerk.....	969
APPENDIX S	Theological Examining Committee .....	997



**OTHER ITEMS**

APPENDIX T Attendance Report..... 999  
APPENDIX U Overtures to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly .....1047  
APPENDIX V Worship Services.....1203

**PART IV CORRECTIONS TO PREVIOUS MINUTES .....1217**

**PART V REFERENCES AND INDEX**

Docket.....1251  
Quick Reference Guide to Sessions and Item Numbers .....1259  
Index .....1261

**\*Note – re:** Recommendations in Reports of Committees of Commissioners

Double underlining in Committee of Commissioners (CoC) recommendations indicates that the Committee of Commissioners added or changed the wording from the original Permanent Committee or Agency Recommendation. (Where the original Permanent Committee or Agency Report has proposed a change in the *BCO* or *RAO*, that change is indicated by single underlining.)

## SUCCESSION OF MODERATORS

ASSEMBLY	YEAR	NAME	PLACE OF ASSEMBLY
1 <sup>st</sup>	1973	RE W. Jack Williamson	Birmingham, AL
2 <sup>nd</sup>	1974	TE Erskine L. Jackson	Macon, GA
3 <sup>rd</sup>	1975	RE Leon F. Hendrick	Jackson, MS
4 <sup>th</sup>	1976	TE William A. McIlwaine	Greenville, SC
5 <sup>th</sup>	1977	RE John T. Clark	Smyrna, GA
6 <sup>th</sup>	1978	TE G. Aiken Taylor	Grand Rapids, MI
7 <sup>th</sup>	1979	RE William F. Joseph Jr.	Charlotte, NC
8 <sup>th</sup>	1980	TE Paul G. Settle	Savannah, GA
9 <sup>th</sup>	1981	RE Kenneth L. Ryskamp	Fort Lauderdale, FL
10 <sup>th</sup>	1982	TE R. Laird Harris	Grand Rapids, MI
11 <sup>th</sup>	1983	RE L. B. Austin III	Norfolk, VA
12 <sup>th</sup>	1984	TE James M. Baird Jr.	Baton Rouge, LA
13 <sup>th</sup>	1985	RE Richard C. Chewning	St. Louis, MO
14 <sup>th</sup>	1986	TE Frank M. Barker Jr.	Philadelphia, PA
15 <sup>th</sup>	1987	RE Gerald Sovereign	Grand Rapids, MI
16 <sup>th</sup>	1988	TE D. James Kennedy	Knoxville, TN
17 <sup>th</sup>	1989	RE John B. White, Jr.	La Mirada, CA
18 <sup>th</sup>	1990	TE Cortez A. Cooper Jr.	Atlanta, GA
19 <sup>th</sup>	1991	RE Mark Belz	Birmingham, AL
20 <sup>th</sup>	1992	TE W. Wilson Benton Jr.	Roanoke, VA
21 <sup>st</sup>	1993	RE G. Richard Hostetter	Columbia, SC
22 <sup>nd</sup>	1994	TE William S. Barker II	Atlanta, GA
23 <sup>rd</sup>	1995	RE Frank A. Brock	Dallas, TX
24 <sup>th</sup>	1996	TE Charles A. McGowan	Fort Lauderdale, FL
25 <sup>th</sup>	1997	RE Samuel J. Duncan	Colorado Springs, CO
26 <sup>th</sup>	1998	TE Kennedy Smartt	St. Louis, MO
		TE Donald B. Patterson (Honorary)	
27 <sup>th</sup>	1999	RE Thomas F. Leopard	Louisville, KY
28 <sup>th</sup>	2000	TE Morton H. Smith	Tampa, FL
29 <sup>th</sup>	2001	RE Stephen M. Fox	Dallas, TX
30 <sup>th</sup>	2002	TE Joseph F. "Skip" Ryan	Birmingham, AL
31 <sup>st</sup>	2003	RE Joel Belz	Charlotte, NC
32 <sup>nd</sup>	2004	TE J. Ligon Duncan III	Pittsburgh, PA
33 <sup>rd</sup>	2005	RE Howard Q. Davis Jr.	Chattanooga, TN
34 <sup>th</sup>	2006	TE Dominic A. Aquila	Atlanta, GA
35 <sup>th</sup>	2007	RE E. J. Nusbaum	Memphis, TN
36 <sup>th</sup>	2008	TE Paul D. Kooistra	Dallas, TX
37 <sup>th</sup>	2009	RE Bradford L. "Brad" Bradley	Orlando, FL

**MODERATORS, continued**

<b>ASSEMBLY</b>	<b>YEAR</b>	<b>NAME</b>	<b>PLACE OF ASSEMBLY</b>
38 <sup>th</sup>	2010	TE Harry L. Reeder III	Nashville, TN
39 <sup>th</sup>	2011	RE Daniel A. Carrell	Virginia Beach, VA
40 <sup>th</sup>	2012	TE Michael F. Ross	Louisville, KY
41 <sup>st</sup>	2013	RE Bruce Terrell	Greenville, SC
42 <sup>nd</sup>	2014	TE Bryan S. Chapell	Houston, TX
43 <sup>rd</sup>	2015	RE James W. Wert Jr.	Chattanooga, TN
44 <sup>th</sup>	2016	TE George W. Robertson Jr.	Mobile, AL
45 <sup>th</sup>	2017	RE Alexander Jun	Greensboro, NC
46 <sup>th</sup>	2018	TE Irwyn L. Ince Jr.	Atlanta, GA
47 <sup>th</sup>	2019	RE J. Howard “Howie” Donahoe	Dallas, TX
48 <sup>th</sup>	2021	TE L. Roy Taylor	St. Louis, MO
49 <sup>th</sup>	2022	RE John R. Bise	Birmingham, AL
50 <sup>th</sup>	2023	TE Fred Greco	Memphis, TN
51 <sup>st</sup>	2024	RE Steven W. Dowling	Richmond, VA

**SUCCESSION OF STATED CLERKS**

<b>YEARS</b>	<b>NAME</b>
1973 - 1988	TE Morton H. Smith
1988 - 1998	TE Paul R. Gilchrist
1998 - 2020	TE L. Roy Taylor Jr.
2021 -	TE Bryan Chapell

## **PART I**

# **DIRECTORY OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEES AND AGENCIES 2024-2025**

### **I. OFFICERS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

#### **Moderator**

RE Steve Dowling  
445 Shelton Mill Road  
Auburn, AL 36830  
Phone: 540-446-1720  
E-mail: swd81@outlook.com

#### **Stated Clerk**

TE Bryan Chapell  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 105  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1000  
E-mail: ac@pcanet.org

## II. MINISTRIES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Administration**

TE Bryan Chapell, Coordinator  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 105  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1000  
E-mail: [ac@pcanet.org](mailto:ac@pcanet.org)  
[www.pcaac.org](http://www.pcaac.org)

### **Committee on Discipleship Ministries**

TE Stephen T. Estock, Coordinator  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 102  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1100  
E-mail: [sestock@pcanet.org](mailto:sestock@pcanet.org)  
[www.pcacdm.org](http://www.pcacdm.org)

### **Covenant College**

TE Brad Voyles, President  
14049 Scenic Highway  
Lookout Mountain, GA 30750-4164  
Phone: 706-419-1119  
Email: [brad.voyles@covenant.edu](mailto:brad.voyles@covenant.edu)  
[www.covenant.edu](http://www.covenant.edu)

### **Covenant Theological Seminary**

TE Tom C. Gibbs, President  
12330 Conway Road  
St. Louis, MO 63141-8609  
Phone: 314-434-4044  
E-mail: [tom.gibbs@covenantseminary.edu](mailto:tom.gibbs@covenantseminary.edu)  
[www.covenantseminary.edu](http://www.covenantseminary.edu)

### **Mission to North America**

TE Irwyn Ince, Coordinator  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 101  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1200  
E-mail: [iince@pcanet.org](mailto:iince@pcanet.org)  
[www.pcamna.org](http://www.pcamna.org)

### **Mission to the World**

TE Lloyd Kim, Coordinator  
1600 North Brown Road  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8141  
Phone: 678-823-0004  
E-mail: [lloyd.kim@mtw.org](mailto:lloyd.kim@mtw.org)  
[www.mtw.org](http://www.mtw.org)

### **PCA Foundation, Inc.**

RE Timothy W. Townsend, President  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 103  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1040  
E-mail: [ttownsend@pcanet.org](mailto:ttownsend@pcanet.org)  
[www.pcafoundation.com](http://www.pcafoundation.com)

### **Geneva Benefits Group**

TE Edward W. Dunnington, President  
1700 North Brown Road, Suite 106  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1260  
E-mail: [ed.dunnington@genevabenefits.org](mailto:ed.dunnington@genevabenefits.org)  
[www.genevabenefits.org](http://www.genevabenefits.org)

### **Reformed University Fellowship**

RE Will W. Huss Jr., Coordinator  
1600 North Brown Road  
Lawrenceville, GA 30043-8143  
Phone: 678-825-1070  
E-mail: [will.huss@ruf.org](mailto:will.huss@ruf.org)  
[www.ruf.org](http://www.ruf.org)

### **Ridge Haven**

TE Cameron Anderson, Exec. Director  
215 Ridge Haven Road  
Brevard, NC 28712  
Phone: 828-862-3916  
E-mail: [cameron.anderson@ridgehaven.org](mailto:cameron.anderson@ridgehaven.org)  
[www.ridgehaven.org](http://www.ridgehaven.org)

GENERAL ASSEMBLY DIRECTORY

**III. PERMANENT COMMITTEES  
(2024-2025)**

**ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**

**CHAIRMAN:** RE Danny McDaniel **VICE CHAIRMAN:** RE Richard Dolan  
**SECRETARY:** TE Roger Collins

**Class of 2028**

TE Scott Edburg, Illiana  
TE Richard Phillips, Calvary

RE EJ Nusbaum, Rocky Mountain

**Class of 2027**

TE Jason Helopoulos, Great Lakes

RE Dave Cias, Houston Metro  
RE Alan Walters, Mississippi Valley

**Class of 2026**

TE Michael Dixon, Fellowship

RE Danny McDaniel, Houston Metro

**Class of 2025**

TE Roger G. Collins, Tennessee Valley  
TE Steve Jeantet, Suncoast Florida

RE Richard Dolan, Georgia Foothills

**Alternates**

TE Michael Hearon, Savannah River

RE Richard Leino, James River

**Chairman of Committee/Board or Designate**

TE Thomas M. Harr, New Jersey  
Committee on Discipleship Ministries

RE R. Craig Wood, Blue Ridge  
Covenant College

TE Hansoo Jin, Korean Capital  
Mission to North America

RE Miles Gresham, Evangel  
Covenant Theological Seminary

TE Thomas Patton, Evangel  
Mission to the World

TE Martin Wagner, Evangel  
PCA Foundation

TE Josh Martin, Calvary  
Reformed University Fellowship

TE Andrew E. Field, Metro New York  
Geneva Benefits

TE David Sasser Hall, Fellowship  
Ridge Haven

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES

**CHAIRMAN:** TE Thomas Michael Harr Jr. **VICE CHAIRMAN:** TE W. Scott Barber

**SECRETARY:** RE Taylor Clement

#### Class of 2029

TE Danny Kwon, Korean Eastern

RE James D. Murphy, Blue Ridge

RE Jack North, Pee Dee

#### Class of 2028

TE Richard Burguet, Central Florida

RE David Hinkley, Great Lakes

TE Robert Cathcart, Calvary

#### Class of 2027

TE Christopher Lee Hutchings., Ohio

RE Randy Stair, Metro Atlanta

RE Taylor Clement, Missouri

#### Class of 2026

TE W. Scott Barber, Georgia Foothills

RE Dan Barber, Central Indiana

TE Dean Williams, Mississippi Valley

#### Class of 2025

TE Thomas Michael Harr Jr., New Jersey

RE Jacob Lightsey Wallace, James River

RE Jeremy Whitley, South Texas

#### Alternates

TE Jonathan Medlock, Northern California

RE Larkin Chapman, Mississippi Valley

### COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA

**CHAIRMAN:** TE Hansoo Jin **VICE CHAIRMAN:** RE Timothy Threadgill

**SECRETARY:** RE Jason Kang

#### Class of 2029

TE Hunter Brewer, Covenant

RE Samuel K. Suttle, Mississippi Valley

TE Nate Shurden, Nashville

#### Class of 2028

TE Jeremy Byrd, Great Lakes

RE Brett Doster, Gulf Coast

RE Lance Kinzer, Heartland

#### Class of 2027

TE Dean Faulkner, Central Carolina

RE Timothy Threadgill, Mississippi Valley

TE Hansoo Jin, Korean Capital

#### Class of 2026

TE Roland Barnes, Savannah River

RE Brent Andersen, Central Carolina

RE Jason Kang, Metro Atlanta

#### Class of 2025

TE R. Lyle Caswell Jr., Southwest Florida

RE Ernie Shipman, Northern New England

TE Robert A. Willetts, Tidewater

#### Alternates

TE Zachary Groff, Calvary

RE Mitch Young, South Texas

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY DIRECTORY

### COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO THE WORLD

**CHAIRMAN:** TE Owen Lee    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** TE Billy Dempsey

**SECRETARY:** TE Josh Rieger    **TREASURER:** RE John Bateman

#### Class of 2029

TE Kevin Smith, Tennessee Valley  
TE Patrick Womack, Suncoast Florida

RE John Kunkel, North Florida

#### Class of 2028

TE Joshua Rieger, Houston Metro

RE Bryan Wintersteen, Evangel  
RE Scott Wulff, Ohio

#### Class of 2027

TE Maranatha Chung, Philadelphia  
TE Owen Lee, Korean Capital

RE Theo Hagg, Westminster

#### Class of 2026

TE Shaun M. Nolan, Pittsburgh

RE John E. Bateman, North Texas  
RE Oscar R. Aylor, Blue Ridge

#### Class of 2025

TE Brett W. Carl, Tidewater  
TE William E. Dempsey, Mississippi Valley

RE Byron Johnson, Metro Atlanta

#### Alternates

TE Larry Trotter, South Florida

RE David Moore, Central Florida

### COMMITTEE ON REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP

**CHAIRMAN:** TE Joshua A. Martin    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** TE David Osborne

**SECRETARY:** RE Stephen Berry

#### Class of 2029

TE David Felker, Mississippi Valley  
TE Brian Frey, Pacific Northwest

RE Stephen Gordon, Ohio Valley

#### Class of 2028

TE Kenneth Foster, Heritage

RE Stephen Berry, S New England  
RE Tobe Hester, Lowcountry

#### Class of 2027

TE Martin Biggs, Hills and Plains  
TE Eric Zellner, Southeast Alabama

RE Justen Ellis, Northwest Georgia

#### Class of 2026

TE Iron D. Kim, Northern California

RE Jeremy Kath, Nashville  
RE Rob Grabenkort, Georgia Foothills

#### Class of 2025

TE Joshua A. Martin, Calvary  
TE David Osborne, Eastern Carolina

RE Charles Powell Jr., Evangel

#### Alternates

TE Billy Crain, South Texas

RE John Miller, Eastern Carolina



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### IV. AGENCIES

#### BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF COVENANT COLLEGE

**CHAIRMAN:** RE John Truschel    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** RE R. Craig Wood

**SECRETARY:** RE Robert Wilkinson    **TREASURER:** RE Michael Kramer

##### Class of 2028

TE Timothy Brindle, Philadelphia Metro West

TE Matthew David Fray, North Texas

RE Richard T. Bowser, Eastern Carolina

RE Gregory J. Moore, Susquehanna Valley

RE Paul D. Moore, Calvary

RE William H. Ryan, South Florida

RE Stephen E. Sligh, Southwest Florida

##### Class of 2027

TE Thurman Williams, Missouri

RE Michael Kramer, Tennessee Valley

RE John Kwasny, Mississippi Valley

RE Ken Smith, North Texas

RE John Truschel, Eastern Carolina

RE Robert Wilkinson, Missouri

RE R. Craig Wood, Blue Ridge

##### Class of 2026

TE Thomas Groelsema, Central Carolina

TE Lance Lewis, Northern California

TE Sean McGowan, Gulf Coast

TE Omari Hill, Central Carolina

RE Don Mellott, Pacific Northwest

RE Towner Scheffler, Piedmont Triad

RE Gordon Sluis, Mississippi Valley

##### Class of 2025

TE Bradley J. Barnes, Southern New England

TE Alexander Brown, Savannah River

RE David Caines, Tennessee Valley

RE Mark Griggs, Tennessee Valley

RE Bradley M. Harris, Covenant

RE Drew Jelgerhuis, Great Lakes

RE Sam Smartt, Tennessee Valley

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY DIRECTORY

### BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

**CHAIRMAN:** RE Miles E. Gresham    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** TE Brian Habig

**SECRETARY:** RE Doug Hickel

#### Class of 2028

TE Brian Habig, Calvary  
TE Murray Lee, Evangel

RE David L. Duren, Houston Metro  
RE Bruce Harrington, Rocky Mountain  
RE Paul R. Stoll, Chicago Metro  
RE Gif Thornton, Nashville

#### Class of 2027

TE Jimmy Agan, Metro Atlanta  
TE Robert Flayhart, Evangel  
TE Fredric Ryan Laughlin, Potomac

RE Mark Ensio, Arizona  
RE John Fitch, South Texas  
RE Dwight Jones, Central Georgia

#### Class of 2026

TE Russell St. John, Missouri  
TE David Sinclair, Calvary

RE James Albritton, Evangel  
RE Doug Hickel, Missouri  
RE Ron McNalley, North Texas  
RE Walter Turner, Pittsburgh

#### Class of 2025

TE Brian Cosby, Tennessee Valley

RE Samuel N. Graham, Covenant  
RE Miles E. Gresham, Evangel  
RE Donald Guthrie, Chicago Metro  
RE Otis Pickett, Mississippi Valley  
RE Curtis S. Shidemantle, Ascension

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF GENEVA BENEFITS

**CHAIRMAN:** TE Andrew E. Field    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** RE Chris Rogers

**SECRETARY:** TE Jon Medlock    **TREASURER:** RE Chet Lilly

#### Class of 2028

TE Andrew E. Field, Metropolitan New York

RE James S. Clark, Mississippi Valley  
DE Theodore J. Dankovich, Calvary

#### Class of 2027

RE L. Robert Clark, Tennessee Valley  
RE David C. Allegood, Pittsburgh  
RE Huey Townsend, Mississippi Valley

#### Class of 2026

TE William Chang, Korean SW Orange Co.

RE Ken Downer, Highlands  
RE Chris Rogers, Covenant

#### Class of 2025

TE Roderick Miles, Northern California

RE Gary D. Campbell, Metro Atlanta  
RE Scott P. Magnuson, Pittsburgh

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF PCA FOUNDATION**

**CHAIRMAN:** TE Martin Wagner    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** RE W. Russell Trapp  
**SECRETARY:** RE Willis L. Frazer

**Class of 2028**

TE Patrick W. Curles, Nashville                      RE John Alexander, Metro Atlanta  
RE Rob W. Morton, Central Georgia

**Class of 2027**

TE Solomon Kim, Southern New England                      RE William O. Stone Jr., Miss. Valley

**Class of 2026**

RE Owen H. Malcolm, Georgia Foothills  
RE W. Russell Trapp, Providence  
DE Andrew Schmidt, Central Carolina

**Class of 2025**

TE Martin Wagner, Evangel                      RE Willis L. Frazer, Covenant

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF RIDGE HAVEN**

**PRESIDENT:** TE David Sasser Hall    **VICE PRESIDENT:** RE Tuan La  
**SECRETARY/TREASURER:** RE John Randall Berger

**Class of 2029**

TE J. Andrew White, Westminster                      RE Thomas A. Cook, Gulfstream

**Class of 2028**

TE Travis Hutchinson, Southern New England                      RE Tuan La, South Texas

**Class of 2027**

TE David Sasser Hall, Fellowship  
TE Richard Smith, Susquehanna Valley

**Class of 2026**

RE Art Fox, North Florida  
RE Ellison Smith, Pee Dee

**Class of 2025**

TE Larry Doughan, Iowa                      RE John Randall Berger, Eastern Carolina

## GENERAL ASSEMBLY DIRECTORY

### V. SPECIAL COMMITTEES

#### THEOLOGICAL EXAMINING COMMITTEE

**CHAIRMAN:** TE KJ Drake    **SECRETARY:** RE Edward Currie

##### **Class of 2027**

TE Drew Martin, Central Carolina

RE Jim Wert, Metro Atlanta

##### **Class of 2026**

TE Jonathan Master, Calvary

RE James Elkin, Mississippi Valley

##### **Class of 2025**

TE Guy Richard, Metro Atlanta

TE KJ Drake, Central Indiana\*

##### **Alternates**

TE Christopher Bechtel, Pacific Northwest

RE Josh Spears, Hills and Plains

*\*elected as an RE*

#### COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS

**CHAIRMAN:** RE Matt Fender    **SECRETARY:** TE Jason Piland

##### **Class of 2028**

TE David Strain, Mississippi Valley

RE John Ward Weis, Southeast Alabama

##### **Class of 2027**

TE Stephen Tipton, Gulf Coast

RE Chris Shoemaker, S New England

##### **Class of 2026**

TE Jason Piland, Ohio

RE Bryce Sullivan, Nashville

##### **Class of 2025**

TE J. Scott Phillips, Providence

RE Matt Fender, James River

##### **Alternates**

TE T. David Gordon, Ascension

RE Joshua Torrey, South Texas

#### COMMITTEE ON INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

**CHAIRMAN:** RE Dennis Watts    **VICE CHAIRMAN:** RE Billy Ball

**SECRETARY:** TE David Gilleran

##### **Class of 2027**

TE Nathan Chambers, Pacific Northwest

RE Aaron Reeves, Hills and Plains

##### **Class of 2026**

TE David Gilleran, Blue Ridge

RE Dennis Watts, Mississippi Valley

##### **Class of 2025**

TE Wallace Tinsley, Fellowship

RE Billy Ball, Evangel

##### **Alternates**

TE Kenneth McHeard, Savannah River

RE James Isbell, Tennessee Valley

##### **Ex-Officio Member**

TE Bryan Chapell, Northern Illinois

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**VI. STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

**CHAIRMAN:** RE Jack Wilson **VICE CHAIRMAN:** TE Guy Prentiss Waters  
**SECRETARY:** TE Fred Greco **ASST. SECRETARY:** TE Hoochan Paul Lee

**Class of 2028**

TE Jay Bruce, Hills and Plains	RE Howie Donahoe, Pacific Northwest
TE Eric Landry, South Texas	RE Frederic Marcinak, Calvary
TE Hoochan Paul Lee, Korean Northeastern	RE Caleb Stegall, Heartland

**Class of 2027**

TE Rhett Dodson, Ohio	RE Daniel A. Carrell, James River
TE Brad Evans, Southern New England	RE John Maynard, Central Florida
TE David Garner, Philadelphia Metro West	RE John B. White Jr., Metro Atlanta

**Class of 2026**

TE Art Sartorius, Siouxlands	RE James Eggert, Southwest Florida
TE Fred Greco, Houston Metro	RE John Bise, Providence
TE Guy Prentiss Waters, Mississippi Valley	RE John Pickering, Evangel

**Class of 2025**

TE Paul L. Bankson, Central Georgia	RE Steve Dowling, Southeast Alabama
TE David F. Coffin Jr., Potomac	RE Frederick Neikirk, Ascension
TE Paul D. Kooistra, Warrior	RE R. Jackson Wilson, Georgia Foothills

**Clerk of the Commission**

TE Bryan Chapell, Northern Illinois

# JOURNAL

## MINUTES OF THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

First Session — Tuesday Evening  
June 11, 2024

### 51-1 Assembly Called to Order and Opening Worship

The Fifty-first General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America gathered for the opening worship service at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, June 11, 2024, at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in Richmond, Virginia. Outgoing Moderator, TE Fred Greco, called the Assembly to order for worship and the observance of the Lord's Supper (Appendix V, p. 1191).

Following worship, the Assembly recessed at 8:15 p.m. to reconvene in 10 minutes.

### 51-2 Assembly Reconvened

#### Declaration of Quorum and Enrollment

The Moderator reconvened the Assembly at 8:26 p.m. for business. The Moderator declared a quorum present with a total of 2160 elders enrolled.

At the Moderator's request, Mr. Jonathan Calloway briefed the Assembly on the use of the voting devices. The Moderator made several announcements to the Assembly.

### 51-3 Election of Moderator

The Moderator opened the floor for nominations for Moderator of the Fifty-first General Assembly. RE Mel Duncan placed in nomination RE Steven Wayne Dowling. A **motion** to close the nominations was made, seconded, and **passed**, and the Moderator declared nominations closed. RE Steve Dowling was **elected** by acclamation.

RE Dowling assumed the chair and addressed the Assembly briefly, expressing his thanks to the Assembly and his wife.

RE Bob Brunson, Chairman of the Administrative Committee, presented to retiring Moderator Greco a plaque in token of the Assembly's appreciation for his year of service as Moderator of the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

#### **51-4 Election of Clerks and Appointment of Assistant Parliamentarians and Committee on Thanks**

On recommendation by the Stated Clerk to the Moderator, the following men were **elected** in gross: TEs Paul L. Bankson, Hoochan Paul Lee, and Kenneth A. McHeard, recording clerks; TE Matthew Bradley, timekeeper; and RE Mel Duncan and TE Jon Medlock, Committee on Thanks.

The Moderator appointed the following to serve the Assembly: RE Robert Berman, voting screen operator; RE Sam Duncan, RE John B. White Jr., and TE Randy Schlichting, assistant parliamentarians; TE Tom Stein, Chairman of the Floor Clerks, RE Tom Taylor, Vice Chairman of the floor clerks, and RE Richard "Ric" Springer, Chairman Emeritus of the floor clerks; TE Larry Roff, Assembly organist; TE L. Roy Taylor Stated Clerk Emeritus; and Initial Production Group (IPG), event technology production team.

Stated Clerk Bryan Chapell noted with gratitude that RE Ric Springer has served as chairman of the floor clerks for 38 of the past 40 years and TE Larry Roff has served as Assembly organist for the past 50 years.

#### **51-5 Report of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly**

TE Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk, presented his report (Appendix R, p. 957). Sharing some of the great things that God is doing in and through the PCA in the past year, he prayed that all of these blessings were indicative of the Lord's grace enabling humble obedience to Christ's mission, and that through that humble obedience, the unique gift of growth that he has given to the PCA would bring new fruit and new faithfulness through the PCA to our people, to generations, and to nations. He gave special recognition to the retiring Business Administrator, TE John W. Robertson, after 25 years of service.

#### **51-6 Docket**

On behalf of the Stated Clerk, the Moderator presented the third draft of the Docket (p. 1205), and he declared it **adopted** without objection.

**51-7 BCO Amendments Sent to the Presbyteries by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

The Moderator reported that all three *BCO* amendments sent down by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to the Presbyteries for advice and consent were approved by the requisite number of Presbyteries (see p. 968).

**Item 2** (to amend *BCO* 8-2 and 9-3) and **Item 3** (to amend *BCO* 38-1) were **adopted** in gross without objection.

**Item 1** (to amend *BCO* 7-3) was **adopted** by a standing vote due to technical difficulties with the voting devices.

TE Fred Greco rose to a **point of order** suggesting that during the technical difficulties with the voting devices, commissioners raise their voting devices to cast their votes to assure that they are entitled to vote. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **well taken**.

The following commissioners requested that their negative votes on **Item 1** be recorded:

TE Dan Adamson	Chicago Metro
RE Tim Akers	Central Carolina
TE Yamil Alejandro	South Florida
TE John Alexander	Warrior
TE Jarrett Allebach	Southern New England
TE Charles Anderson	Central Indiana
TE Hyung Min Bae	Korean Capital
TE Aaron Baker	Chicago Metro
TE Allan M. Barth	Gulfstream
TE Robert Becker	James River
TE Luke Bert	Eastern Canada
RE Arlen Biersgreen	Rio Grande
TE Jeffrey Birch	Central Georgia
TE Josiah Carey	Blue Ridge
TE Bob Cargo	Metro Atlanta
TE Hace Cargo	Metro Atlanta
TE Patrick Choi	Metro Atlanta
TE Aaron Chung	Metropolitan New York
TE John Chung	Missouri
TE J. Andrew Conrad	James River
TE Jason Cornwell	Palmetto
TE Charles Davis	Heritage
TE Brandon Dean	Metro Atlanta
TE Jay Denton	Eastern Carolina



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE David Ellis	Metropolitan New York
RE Jeff Faris	James River
TE Gustavo Formenti	Tennessee Valley
RE Brian Franklin	North Texas
TE Shawn Gendall	Pacific
TE Clyde Godwin	Piedmont Triad
RE Jason Greene	Northern California
TE Bryce Hales	Northern California
TE W. Brian Haring	Gulfstream
TE Andrew Harwell	Metro Atlanta
TE Jonathan Hatt	New Jersey
RE Jeff Heck	Metro Atlanta
TE Walter Henegar	Metro Atlanta
TE Nagib Hermes	Metro Atlanta
TE Pat Hickman	Central Indiana
TE Omari Hill	Metro Atlanta
RE Robert Honey	Wisconsin
TE Larry Hoop	Ohio Valley
TE J. T. Hoover	Fellowship
TE Jason Hsu	Hills and Plains
RE Aaron Jaggard	Potomac
TE Christopher Jhu	New York State
TE Hansoo Jin	Philadelphia
TE Ryan Johnson	Metro Atlanta
TE Todd Johnson	Blue Ridge
TE Lyndon Jost	Eastern Canada
TE Daniel Jung	Korean Northwest
TE David Keithly	Northern Illinois
TE Josh Keller	South Texas
TE Austin Kettle	Potomac
TE Mike Khandjian	Chesapeake
TE Andrew Kim	Korean Eastern
TE Iron Kim	Northern California
TE John Kim	Northern California
TE Paul Kim	South Coast
TE Jeremy King	Ohio
RE George Koontz	Calvary
TE Ken Kostrzewa	Southern Louisiana
TE Jason Kriaski	Blue Ridge

# JOURNAL

TE Timothy R. LeCroy	New York State
TE Anthony Lee	Korean Southeastern
TE Isaac Lee	Korean Eastern
TE Owen Lee	Korean Capital
TE Matt Lietzen	Wisconsin
TE David Lindberg	North Texas
TE Nick Locke	South Coast
TE Theo Lodder	Canada West
TE Brad Lucht	Northern Illinois
RE Hans Madueme	Tennessee Valley
TE Stephen Maginas	Metro Atlanta
TE Richard H. McCaskill	Metropolitan New York
TE George Mixon	Calvary
TE Danny Morgan	South Texas
TE Anthony Myles	Central Carolina
TE Mick Palombo	Central Georgia
TE Joe Parker	Metro Atlanta
TE Tom Patton	Evangel
TE Michael Phillips	Rocky Mountain
RE Norman C. Powell	Metro Atlanta
TE Jonathan Richardson	Philadelphia
TE David Richter	Nashville
RE Eugene Rivers	James River
TE Israel Ruiz	Heritage
TE Hector Sanchez	Metropolitan New York
TE Travis Scott	Pittsburgh
TE Alexander Shipman	Providence
TE Stephen Simmons	Nashville
TE Timothy Sin	Rocky Mountain
RE Joshua Spare	Rio Grande
RE William Stackler	Mississippi Valley
TE Bobby Suh	Korean Capital
TE Jeff Suhr	South Coast
RE Brian Terrell	Metro Atlanta
RE Bruce Terrell	Metro Atlanta
RE Matthew Terrell	Metropolitan New York
RE Joseph P. Thompson	Metro Atlanta
TE Timothy Udouj	Calvary
RE Michael L. Vietz	Gulfstream

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE David Vilches	South Texas
TE Jacob Virtue	Calvary
TE Greg Ward	South Texas
TE Daniel Wells	Tennessee Valley
RE James W. Wert, Jr.	Metro Atlanta
TE Nicholas Whitaker	Pacific
TE Jeffrey White	Metropolitan New York
TE John Wilbanks	North Texas
TE Thurman Williams	Missouri
TE Matt Wilson	Gulfstream
RE John C. Wingard, Jr.	Tennessee Valley
TE John Yenchko	Metropolitan New York
TE Steve Yoon	Korean Capital
TE Geoff Zeigler	Chicago Metro

### **51-8 Partial Report of the Committee on the Review of Presbytery Records on proposed *RAO* Amendments**

TE Jon Anderson, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented a partial report (Appendix O, p. 445). **Recommendations V.6** (to amend *RAO* 16-3.e.5) **and V.7**, (to amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1) were **adopted** in gross without objection, meeting the 2/3 vote of those voting, which must also be a majority of the total enrollment of commissioners (*RAO* 20). The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

### **51-9 Partial Report of the Overtures Committee**

TE Stephen Tipton, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented a partial report. **Recommendation 7** to answer **Overture 7** (to amend *RAO* 11-5) in the **affirmative**, **Recommendation 14** to answer **Overture 14** (to amend *RAO* 4-21.d) in the **affirmative**, and **Recommendation 28** to answer **Overture 28** (to amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1) by **referring it back to the Presbytery** were **adopted** in gross without objection, meeting the 2/3 vote of those voting, which must also be a majority of the total enrollment of commissioners (*RAO* 20). The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

## **PARTIAL REPORT OF THE OVERTURES COMMITTEE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **IV. Recommendations**

7. That **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery (“Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments”, p. 1070) be answered in the **affirmative**. **122-1-0**
14. That **Overture 14** from Northwest Georgia Presbytery (“Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data From Higher Ed Institutions”, p. 1082) be answered in the **affirmative**. **118-4-1**
28. That **Overture 28** from New Jersey Presbytery (“Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1. to Eliminate Conflict with *BCO* 40-5”, p. 1168) be **referred back to the Presbytery**. **114-8-1**

**Grounds:** The Overture attempts to resolve a purported conflict between *RAO* 16.6.c.1 and *BCO* 40-5. However, it fails to provide sufficient clarity about the conflict's nature or a solution that would avoid future controversy. As a result, we believe it is wisest to send the Overture back to the Presbytery for further refinement.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE Stephen B. Tipton, Chairman

/s/ TE Edward Lim, Secretary

#### **51-10 Partial Report of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC)**

RE Jack Wilson, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented a partial report (Appendix Q, p. 699). The chairman presented **Recommendations 1-7** to amend the *OMSJC*. The recommendations were **adopted** in gross without objection, meeting the 2/3 vote of those voting, which must also be a majority of the total enrollment of commissioners (*RAO* 17-5). The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

#### **51-11 Cooperative Ministries Committee (CMC) Report**

TE Fred Greco, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented the report (Appendix E, p. 233), which was received as information. The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

#### **51-12 Report of the Committee on Constitutional Business (CCB)**

RE Fred Marcinak, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented the report (Appendix C, p. 211), which was received as information. The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

### **51-13 Theological Examining Committee Report**

TE K. J. Drake, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and gave the report (Appendix S, p. 985), which was received as information. The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

### **51-14 Assembly Recessed**

At the Moderator's request, Mr. Jonathan Calloway led the Assembly in testing the voting devices.

The Assembly recessed, with prayer by RE Frederick "Jay" Neikirk, at 9:58 p.m. to reconvene at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday.

## **Second Session — Wednesday Morning June 12, 2024**

### **51-15 Assembly Reconvened and Announcements**

The Assembly reconvened at 9:30 a.m. on June 12, 2024, with TE Jere Scott Bradshaw leading the Assembly in prayer.

### **51-16 Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) Report**

TE Jon Anderson, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented the report (Appendix O, p. 445).

The Chairman noted that **Recommendation VI.34** (Korean Central) **Exception of Substance 2024-9** is not properly before the Assembly because it is before the Standing Judicial Commission.

The Chairman **moved** the rest of the Recommendations in gross. The following recommendations were removed at the request of commissioners.

TE Fred Greco rose to a **point of order** asking the Moderator to direct the commissioners to include page numbers for the recommendations they request to have removed from the omnibus. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **well taken**.

**Recommendation VI.5** (Canada West)

**Recommendation VI.13** (Columbus Metro)

**Recommendation VI.25.c** (Heartland) **2024-2**

**Recommendation VI.33.c** (Korean Capital) **2024-2**

**Recommendation VI.46** (Missouri)

**Recommendation VI.47c** (Nashville) **2024-4** and **2024-5**

**Recommendation VI.56.e** (Northwest Georgia).

**Recommendation VI.65** (Piedmont Triad)

**Recommendation VI.67.c** (Platte Valley) **2024-1** and **2024-2**

**Recommendation VI.68** (Potomac)

**Recommendation VI.73** (Siouxlands)

**Recommendation VI.87** (Westminster)

TE David Coffin rose to a **point of order** asking that consideration of the RPR report be postponed following the time to pull recommendations from the omnibus until a complete listing of such recommendations with citations and page numbers could be made available to the commissioners. The Moderator restated the point of order as a **procedural motion** to postpone consideration until the recommendations that have been pulled out could be re-presented in a manner that is more accessible (i.e., a list of citations and page numbers). The motion **failed**.

TE Fred Greco rose to a **point of inquiry** asking if the Assistant Clerks could put on the screen a listing in order of which recommendations have been pulled out of the omnibus with its page numbers. The Moderator answered in the negative. TE Greco asked if when each recommendation is put before the body, the citation with page numbers could be displayed on the screen and remain there through the discussion. The Moderator ordered this to happen.

TE Larry Hoop requested that the email for making motions be put back on the screen. The Moderator so ordered.

**Recommendation VI.44** (Metropolitan New York) was pulled out of the omnibus.

The omnibus with the requested recommendations removed was **adopted** (1322-28-44).

TE Peter Green **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.33.c** (Korean Capital) **2024-2**, **Recommendation VI.47.c** (Nashville) **2024-4** and **2024-5**, and **Recommendation VI.67.c** (Platte Valley) **2024-1** and **2024-2** and that the related dated minutes of Platte Valley be approved without exception.

In response to an inquiry, the Moderator ruled that the citations (**Recommendations IV.1-4**) were passed as part of the in gross motion. TE David Coffin rose to a **point of order** that **Recommendation IV.1** (Columbus Metro) and **Recommendation IV.2** (Metropolitan New York) were not approved as part of the in gross motion as they referred to recommendations that were pulled from the omnibus. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **well taken**.

TE Ryan Biese **moved a substitute** that these (VI.33.c, VI.47.c, and VI.67.c) be referred back to RPR. The substitute **passed** (1249-195-54) and became the main motion.

RE Bob Mattes rose to a **point of order** that the previous motion was to make the substitute motion the main motion and that the main motion still needs to be voted. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **well taken**.

The motion to refer back to RPR was **adopted** (975-481-61).

TE Peter Green **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.25.c** (Heartland) **2024-2**. The motion **failed** (274-1234-37). The Recommendation was **adopted** (1305-156-32).

TE Art Sartorius **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.73.c** (Siouxlands) **2024-4**. The motion **failed** (417-1024-62). **Recommendation VI.73** (Siouxlands) was **adopted** (1209-227-30).

RE Flynt Jones **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.65.c** (Piedmont Triad) **2024-5**. The motion **passed** (825-602-61). **Recommendation VI.65** (Piedmont Triad) was **adopted as amended** (1293-84-57).

RE Flynt Jones **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.87** (Westminster) **2024-1**. The motion **passed** (864-436-86). **Recommendation VI.87** was **adopted as amended** (1255-49-40).

TE Ken Christian **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.5** (Canada West) **2024-13**. The motion **failed** (576-704-85). **Recommendation VI.5** (Canada West) was **adopted** (1192-184-33).

TE Joel St. Clair **moved** to change **Recommendation VI.68.e** (Potomac) **Exception 2023-2** from unsatisfactory to satisfactory and to strike the Committee's rationale. The motion **passed** (944-363-85). **Recommendation VI.68** was **adopted as amended** (1294-49-30).

TE Derek Radney **moved** to strike **Recommendation VI.46.c** (Missouri) **Exception 2024-2**. The motion **passed** (849-607-34). **Recommendation VI.46** was **adopted as amended**.

The Chairman requested that the RPR report be paused so that a partial report from the Interchurch Relations Committee could be heard due to time constraints on some of the fraternal delegates. The Moderator so ordered.

## **51-17 Partial Report of the Interchurch Relations Committee**

TE Michael Wichlan, CoC Chairman, introduced RE Dennis Watts of the permanent committee, who introduced the fraternal and corresponding delegates. Corresponding delegates: Rev. Hanwoo Kim, Stated Clerk, and Rev. Tae Young Lee, chairman of the Interchurch Relations Committee brought greetings from the Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong). Fraternal delegates: Pastor Juan Marcos Perez Alonso and Pastor Robelio Roblero Reyes brought greetings from the National Presbyterian Church in Mexico.

**51-18 Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) Report** (continued from **51-16**)

TE Larry Hoop **moved** to strike **Recommendations IV.1** and **VI.13.g** (Columbus Metro), to strike “June 21, 2023” from **Recommendation VI.13.a** (Columbus Metro), and to add an **Exception of Substance 2024-4**: “June 21, 2023 (BCO PP6; 13-10; 25-6, 7, 9, 11) Presbytery appears to dissolve the congregation without following the correct Constitutional process.” The motion **failed** (94-1024-15). **Recommendation VI.13** was **adopted** (1032-35-11).

TE Dominic Aquila **moved** to strike the RPR recommendation to rescind a previous action in **Recommendation VI.56.e**. (Northwest Georgia). The motion **failed** (142-752-66). **Recommendation VI.56.e** was **adopted** (886-25-11).

**51-19 Assembly Recessed**

The Assembly recessed at 11:55 a.m. to reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

**Third Session – Wednesday Afternoon  
June 12, 2024**

**51-20 Assembly Reconvened**

The Assembly reconvened at 1:30 p.m. with the singing of “Holy, Holy, Holy” followed by prayer led by TE Caleb Cangelosi.

**51-21 Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) Report** (continued from **51-18**)

TE Jon Anderson, Chairman, presented **Recommendation VI.44** (Metropolitan New York). TE Kevin Twit **moved** to amend to find the response regarding SJC case 2023-13 (**Recommendation VI.44.f.1**) satisfactory and strike **Recommendation VI.44.f.2** and **Recommendation IV.2**.

TE Fred Greco rose to a **point of order** that the Chairman should get the last word. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **well taken**.

TE Jerid Krulish rose to a **point of order** to ask the previous speaker to identify himself. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **well taken**.

The Chairman’s designee gave the final word.

TE David Coffin rose to a **point of order** that the topic time had expired. The Moderator ruled that the Chairman’s designee would get his full time of three minutes.

The motion to amend **failed** (326-852-31).



TE Ryan Biese **moved** the previous question, which was seconded and **passed**.

**Recommendation VI.44** (Metropolitan New York) was **adopted** (1005-211-26).

The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

## **51-22 Interchurch Relations Committee Report**

TE Michael Wichlan, CoC chairman, led the Assembly in prayer. The Chairman introduced the chairman of the permanent committee, Dr. L. Roy Taylor, who presented the informational report (Appendix I, p. 301). The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-5** were **moved** in gross and **adopted** (1036-15-48).

RE Dennis Watts, the incoming Chairman of the permanent committee, introduced fraternal delegates from the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America, Evangelical Presbyterian and Reformed Church of Peru, and the Presbyterian Church of Australia. Dr. Watts then introduced the following fraternal and corresponding delegates who addressed the Assembly:

Fraternal Delegates:

Rev. Robert Godfrey, United Reformed Churches of North America

Dr. Davi Gomez, Presbyterian Church of Brazil and the World Reformed Fellowship

Rev. Chad Van Dixhoorn, Orthodox Presbyterian Church

Corresponding Delegate: Rev. David Meredith, Free Church of Scotland

The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON INTERCHURCH RELATIONS TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. IRC Permanent Committee Report
- B. IRC Permanent Committee Minutes from:
  - September 13, 2023
  - March 26, 2024
- C. IRC Permanent Committee Recommendations

### **II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed**

- A. IRC Permanent Committee Report

- B. IRC Permanent Committee Minutes from:  
September 13, 2023  
March 26, 2024
- C. IRC Permanent Committee Recommendations

### III. Recommendations

1. That all Fraternal Delegates be granted access to the General Assembly Commissioner Handbook. *Adopted*
2. That **Overture 2** (2023) from Covenant Presbytery about the PCA joining the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) which was subsequently referred back to this year's IRC be answered as follows: The IRC recommends that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly follow the recommendation the IRC made to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, namely that the IRC follow the specific guidelines of the ICRC's membership procedures by having members of the PCA's IRC attend the next meeting of the ICRC (which is ordinarily required before membership application can be made) in 2026 to investigate and determine first-hand if formal membership is appropriate for the PCA, and return with a recommendation for the General Assembly to join or not. *Adopted*
3. That the minutes of September 13, 2023 be approved without exception. *Adopted*
4. That the minutes of March 26, 2024 be approved without exception. *Adopted*
5. That visiting ministers be introduced to the General Assembly, *BCO 13-13*. *Adopted*

### IV. Commissioners Present: Presbytery

### Commissioner (Convener marked with \*)

Ascension	RE Ben Hardesty
Blue Ridge	TE Jake Hooker
Calvary	TE Carl Robbins
Central Carolina	RE Jordan Clark
Central Florida	TE J.A.T. Abraham van Blerk
Central Indiana	TE David S. Young
Chesapeake	RE Steven Deterding
Chicago Metro	TE R. Aaron Baker
Eastern Carolina	TE John A. Musgrave

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Evangel	TE Michael Wichlan*
Fellowship	RE Neil Allen
Great Lakes	TE Kenneth E. Klett
Gulf Coast	TE Rafael P. LaGuardia
Heritage	TE Charles Davis
Hills and Plains	TE Casey Shutt
Houston Metro	TE Mark J. Blalack
Iowa	TE Brian V. Janssen
James River	RE Rick Hutton
Korean Capital	TE Dong Woo Kim
Lowcountry	RE Ron Woernle
Mississippi Valley	TE Kevin Nathanael Vollema
Missouri	TE Christopher Smith
Nashville	TE Will Young
New River	TE Andrew Styer
North Texas	RE Larry Eugene Perry
Ohio	TE Mark A. Bell
Ohio Valley	TE Charles Hickey
Pacific Northwest	RE Jay Gardner
Piedmont Triad	TE Benjamin Tietje
Pittsburgh	TE Michael D. Bowen
Potomac	TE Dan Doll
Providence	TE James T. Roberts
Rocky Mountain	TE Steven Patrick Stanton
Savannah River	TE Geoff Gleason
Siouxlands	RE Blake Pool
South Texas	TE Gregory Allen Ward
Southeast Alabama	TE Dylan Halter
Southern New England	TE Matthew Kerr
Southwest Florida	RE Jim Eggert
Susquehanna Valley	TE Troy DeBruin
Tennessee Valley	TE Jonathan Brooks

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE Michael Wichlan, Chairman

/s/ RE Jim Eggert, Secretary

### **51-23 Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS) Report**

TE Jamie Peterson, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to TE Thomas C. “Tom” Gibbs, President of the Seminary, who presented

## JOURNAL

the informational report on the work of the Seminary (Appendix G, p. 249). The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-9** were **moved** in gross and **adopted** (1068-24-26).

**Recommendation 10**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

RE Flynt Jones **moved Recommendations 11-14** be referred to the Overtures Committee. The motion was **adopted** (1069-40-33).

The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

#### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. CTS Report to General Assembly
- B. CTS Stated Board Meeting Minutes  
Stated Board Meeting Minutes  
April 28, 2023; September 22, 2023; January 26, 2024  
Called Board Meeting Minutes - None
- C. CTS Executive Committee Minutes  
Stated Executive Committee Meetings:  
April 27, 2023; September 21, 2023; January 25, 2024  
Called Executive Committee Meetings:  
April 18, 2023; September 13, 2023; December 5, 2023,  
January 19, 2024
- D. CTS 2024-2025 Proposed Budgets
- E. 2023 CTS Audits
- F. CTS Permanent Committee Recommendations

#### **II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed**

- A. CTS Report to General Assembly
- B. CTS Stated Board Meeting Minutes  
Stated Board Meeting Minutes  
April 28, 2023; September 22, 2023; January 26, 2024  
Called Board Meeting Minutes - None
- C. CTS Executive Committee Minutes  
Stated Executive Committee Meetings:  
April 27, 2023; September 21, 2023; January 25, 2024

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Called Executive Committee Meetings:

April 18, 2023; September 13, 2023; December 5, 2023,  
January 19, 2024

- D. CTS 2024-2025 Proposed Budgets
- E. 2023 CTS Audits
- F. CTS Permanent Committee Recommendations

### III. Recommendations

1. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the ministry of Covenant Theological Seminary; for its faithfulness to the Scriptures, the Reformed faith, and the Great Commission; for its students, graduates, faculty, staff, and trustees; and for those who support the Seminary through their prayers and gifts. *Adopted*
2. That the General Assembly encourage the congregations of the Presbyterian Church in America to support the ministry of Covenant Theological Seminary by contributing the Partnership Shares approved by the Assembly, and by recommending Covenant Seminary to prospective students. *Adopted*
3. That the General Assembly ask the Lord's blessing on Covenant Seminary's President, Rev. Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs, and grant him and the Seminary's leadership team, faculty, and Board of Trustees great wisdom, biblical faithfulness, and clear vision as they lead the institution forward in training fruitful pastors and other ministry leaders. *Adopted*
4. That the General Assembly ask God to guide Covenant Seminary's ongoing efforts at recruiting new students, evaluating and strengthening our programs, and seeking to make the Seminary a greater resource for the church both locally and globally. *Adopted*
5. That the General Assembly ask God's blessing on the Seminary's planning and fundraising efforts, and on its attempts to recruit a new generation of dedicated pastor-scholars to train new generations of leaders for Christ's church and kingdom. *Adopted*
6. That the General Assembly praise God for his provision of faithful donors and supporters who continue to give generously toward our mission, and for the many ways that he has enabled Covenant Seminary's students, faculty, and staff to continue building effectively on the solid foundation laid by our forebears in the faith. Praise him for the gift of resilient and creative people who enable the institution to function so well during challenging times. *Adopted*

## JOURNAL

7. That the General Assembly pray for unity among the brethren of the PCA and ask the Lord to work in all our hearts to foster a deeper desire to engage with one another and the world in compassionate and gospel-centered ways, and that we might bear strong witness to the truth and power of God's redeeming grace. *Adopted*
8. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the stated and called meetings of the Seminary's Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees for 2023-2024 as follows:
- *Stated Board Meetings:* April 28, 2023; September 22, 2023; January 26, 2024
  - *Called Board Meetings:* None
  - *Stated Executive Committee Meetings:* April 27, 2023; September 21, 2023; January 25, 2024
  - *Called Executive Committee Meetings:* April 18, 2023; September 13, 2023; December 5, 2023, January 19, 2024
- Adopted*
9. That the financial audit for Covenant Theological Seminary for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, by Capin Crouse LLC, be received. *Adopted*
10. That the proposed budget for 2024–25 for Covenant Theological Seminary be approved. *Deferred to CoC on AC*
11. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments" in the affirmative. *Referred to the Overtures Committee*
12. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 14** from the Presbytery of Northwest Georgia "Amend RAO 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data from Higher Ed Institutions" in the affirmative. *Referred to the Overtures Committee*
13. That the General Assembly refer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery "Amend BCO 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in 2025. *Referred to the Overtures Committee*
- Rationale:** This overture was not received by the Administrative Committee in time for any Permanent Committees or Agencies, except for Covenant Seminary, to consider prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2024. Given its late date (April 3<sup>rd</sup>), neither Covenant Seminary nor the Administrative Committee could prepare an informed recommendation to their respective committees and boards.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

14. That the General Assembly refer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency” to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in 2025. *Referred to the Overtures Committee*

**Rationale:** This overture was not received by the Administrative Committee in time for any Permanent Committee or Agency Board (or their legal counselors) to consider prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2024.

The Chairman plans to present the following recommendations to the assembly in gross: 1-14

**IV. Commissioners Present:**  
**Presbytery**

**Commissioner**  
(Convener marked with \*)

Calvary	TE Jonathan Patrick Davis
Central Carolina	RE Bob Rose
Central Georgia	TE R. Parker Agnew
Central Indiana	TE Pat Hickman
Chesapeake	RE Bradley James Chwastyk
Eastern Carolina	TE Jay Denton
Evangel	TE James Corbin Peterson Sr.*
Great Lakes	TE Kevin Phipps
Gulf Coast	TE Chad Watkins
Heartland	RE Marlon Johnston
Heritage	TE Kenneth Foster
Hills and Plains	TE Brandon Van Marel
Houston Metro	TE Benjamin S. Duncan
James River	RE Robert Williams
Korean Capital	TE Walter Chong Won Lee
Lowcountry	TE Steve Walton
Missouri	TE David D. Barnes
Nashville	TE Kenny Silva
New York State	TE Jared Hoyt
North Texas	RE David Gatz
Ohio Valley	TE Joshua Reitano
Pee Dee	RE Jack North
Piedmont Triad	TE Thomas Brown

## JOURNAL

Pittsburgh	TE Jonathan Price
Platte Valley	RE Leslie Novak
Potomac	TE J. Walter Nilsson
Providence	TE Alexander Myron Shipman
South Texas	RE Bob Hardister
Southeast Alabama	TE Christopher Thomas
Southwest Florida	RE Ron Avery
Suncoast Florida	TE Dwight L. Dolby
Tennessee Valley	TE Shawn Slate
Westminster	RE Andy McLeod

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE Jamie Peterson, Chairman

/s/ TE Pat Hickman Secretary

### **51-24 Geneva Benefits Group Report**

TE Leonard Bailey, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to TE Ed Dunnington, President of Geneva Benefits Group, who presented the informational report (Appendix H, p. 291), including a video highlighting the work of Geneva. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-2 and 5-8** were **moved** in gross and **adopted** (1039-15-27).

**Recommendation 3**, addressing the budget, and **Recommendation 4**, dealing with Trustee Fee Agreements, were **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendation 9** was **adopted**.

**Recommendation 10** was **adopted**.

TE David Coffin **asked** the Moderator to rule **Recommendations 11 and 12** and all like recommendations from other Committees of Commissioners moot. The Moderator ruled **Recommendations 11 and 12** and all like recommendations **moot**.

**Recommendation 13** was **adopted**.

The CoC Chairman closed the report in prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON GENEVA BENEFITS GROUP, INC. TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- A. Geneva Board of Directors Minutes:
  - September 22, 2023
  - November 17, 2023
  - March 08, 2024
  - Called Meeting May 30, 2024
- B. Review of Audited Financials/Report for 2023
- C. Review of the Proposed 2025 Budget
- D. Review of Board of Directors Recommendations

### II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. The Chairman introduced TE Ed Dunnington, Geneva's President. TE Dunnington introduced the Geneva staff then he gave a presentation on the work of Geneva. Specific topics in the presentation included:
  - 1. Geneva's Passion
  - 2. Helping You Provide – Retirement Plan and Investments
    - a. Our Price
    - b. Our Performance
    - c. Our Pledge
  - 3. Helping You Protect – Insurance Plans
    - a. Insurance Plans & Employee Benefits
  - 4. Helping You Thrive – Ministerial Wellbeing (TE Paul Joiner as presenter)
    - a. Our (Geneva) Response
  - 5. Ministerial Relief
    - a. Video from Fred & Shirley Guthrie
    - b. Ministerial Relief Projected Needs
- B. CofC Business:
  - 1. Geneva Scorecard
  - 2. Review of Agency Recommendations

### III. Recommendations

- 1. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings dated September 22, 2023, November 17, 2023, and March 08, 2024, and the called meeting of May 30, 2024; *Adopted*
- 2. That the General Assembly receive the 2023 Audited Financials as reviewed by Capin Crouse LLP; *Adopted*
- 3. That the General Assembly approve the 2025 Operating Budget with the understanding that it is a spending plan and will be adjusted as necessary by the Board of Directors to accommodate changing conditions during

that fiscal year;

*Deferred to CoC on AC*

4. That the General Assembly approve the 2025 Trustee Fee Agreements for the 403(b) Retirement Plan Trust, the Health and Welfare Benefit Trust, and the Charitable Relief Trust;

*Deferred to CoC on AC*

5. That the General Assembly approve the Amended and Restated Trust Agreement for the Presbyterian Church in America 403(b)(9) Retirement Plan and Other Retirement Plans Trust;

*Adopted*

6. That the General Assembly approve the Amended and Restated Trust Agreement for the Presbyterian Church in America Health and Welfare Benefit Trust;

*Adopted*

7. That the General Assembly approve the Declaration of Trust Amending the Geneva Benefits Group Charitable Relief Trust;

*Adopted*

8. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee;

*Adopted*

9. That the General Assembly exhort PCA Presbyteries, churches and related ministries to review and utilize the PCA Call Package Guidelines in creating compensation packages for Teaching Elders;

*Adopted*

10. That the General Assembly urge member churches to participate in an annual offering to Ministerial Relief or to budget regular benevolence giving to support relief activities through the Ministerial Relief Fund;

*Adopted*

11. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee;

*Ruled Moot*

12. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for Those Employed by a Committee or Agency” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee;

*Ruled Moot*

13. That the General Assembly commend President Ed Dunnington and the staff of Geneva Benefits Group for their faithful service to the church.

*Adopted*

**IV. Commissioners Present:  
Presbytery**

**Commissioner**  
(Convener marked with \*)

Arizona	TE Alex Diaz
Arizona	TE Paul Muresan
Ascension	TE Nathan Morgan
Blue Ridge	TE Matthew Pinckard
Calvary	RE Jon Barkman
Central Carolina	RE George Kurtz
Central Georgia	RE George Roundtree
Chesapeake	TE Daniel Smith
Eastern Pennsylvania	TE Angel Gomez
Evangel	RE Charles Woodall
Great Lakes	RE Jay Quint
Heartland	TE Timothy Rackley
Heritage	TE Graham Guo
Hills and Plains	RE Tyler Gray
Houston Metro	RE Justin Chandler
James River	TE Leonard Bailey*
Metro Atlanta	TE Bob Carter
Missouri	RE Lowell Pitzer
Northwest Georgia	TE Daniel Myers
Ohio	TE Seth Young
Ohio Valley	RE Michael Nelson
Pacific Northwest	RE Jeff Banker
Pee Dee	TE James Robbins
Piedmont Triad	TE Jeff Miller
Pittsburgh	TE Keith Larson
Potomac	TE Berdj Tchilinguirian
Rocky Mountain	RE Dennis Helsel
Savannah River	RE Travis Peacock
South Texas	TE Allen Taha
Southwest Florida	TE John K. Keen
Tennessee Valley	TE Frank Hitchings
Warrior	TE Michael Perry

Respectfully submitted:

/s/ TE Leonard Bailey, Chairman

/s/ TE Allen Taha, Secretary

### **51-25 Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) Report**

RE Howie Donahoe, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to RE Will Huss, RUF coordinator, who presented the informational report on the work of RUF (Appendix N, p. 413). RE Huss asked TE Cyril Chavis to give a report. A video highlighting the ministry of RUF was presented. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-3** and **6-11** were **moved** in gross and **adopted** (1173-15-18).

**Recommendation 4**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendation 5** was previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24).

The CoC Chairman closed the report in prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. RUF Permanent Committee Report
- B. RUF Permanent Committee Minutes from:  
June 9, 2023; August 22, 2023; October 4, 2023;  
March 20, 2024
- C. RUF 2023 Audit
- D. RUF 2025 Proposed Budget
- E. RUF Permanent Committee Recommendations

### **II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed**

- A. RUF Permanent Committee Report
- B. RUF Permanent Committee Minutes from:  
June 9, 2023; August 22, 2023; October 4, 2023;  
March 20, 2024
- C. RUF 2023 Audit
- D. RUF 2025 Proposed Budget
- E. RUF Permanent Committee Recommendations

### **III. Recommendations**

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the Permanent Committee on Reformed University Fellowship meetings on August 22, 2023, October 4, 2023, and March 20, 2024. *Adopted*
2. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the executive session meetings of the Committee on Reformed University Fellowship on October 4, 2023. *Adopted*
3. That the General Assembly receive the Financial Audit for Reformed University Fellowship for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023 by Carr, Riggs, & Ingram, LLP. *Adopted*
4. That the action on the 2025 budget for Reformed University Fellowship be deferred until the Report of the Committee of Commissioners on Administration. *Deferred to CoC on AC*
5. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments" in the Affirmative. *Ruled Moot*  
**Grounds** – The RUF Permanent Committee believes the overture will be a helpful amendment to the RAO. The proposed change will clarify the process for how the Assembly authorizes an RAO amendment while protecting the right of the General Assembly's Committees and Agencies to speak to any proposed changes affecting them. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the RUF Permanent Committee.
6. That the General Assembly re-elect RE Will W. Huss, Jr. as Coordinator of Reformed University Fellowship for the 2024/2025 term. *Adopted*
7. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly accept the following RUF Permanent Committee responses to citations to their minutes of exceptions of substance from the 50th General Assembly. *Adopted*
  - A) Item #1 - October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Minutes - from the 50<sup>th</sup> GA RUF Committee of Commissioners Report III.1a.a - Contra RAO - 4-21.d.3, no minutes from the executive session were provided.  
*Response - The RUF Permanent Committee did keep executive session minutes from the meeting on 10.5.22, but inadvertently failed to submit those minutes. We have presented the executive session minutes from our meeting on*

*10.5.22 to the 51st GA's Committee of Commissioners for RUF for review. (attachment 8)*

- B) Item #2 - October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Minutes - from the 50<sup>th</sup> GA RUF Committee of Commissioners Report III.1a.b - although the minutes refer to recommendations regarding compensation, no record of any action taken is recorded.

*Response - The RUF Permanent Committee failed to record compensation changes approved during the executive session in our meeting minutes. The minutes have been corrected and we will endeavor to avoid this mistake in the future.*

- C) Item #3 - October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Minutes - from the 50<sup>th</sup> GA RUF Committee of Commissioners Report - III.1a.c - The permanent committee established and executed a substantial new policy not approved by the general assembly, contrary to BCO 14-1.7.

*Response - RUF serves at the pleasure of the General Assembly and willingly submits to its direction. The RUF Permanent Committee submits the attached updated Affiliation Agreement (v.22) for approval by the General Assembly to preserve ongoing partnerships with presbyteries, strengthen collaboration, and provide legal clarity.*

8. That the General Assembly, in consideration of his recent passing, formally acknowledge and praise God for His manifold grace through the life and labors of Mark L. Lowery in the founding and development of the ministry of Reformed University Fellowship and posthumously commend his strategic and fruitful work for the glory of God, the edification of His church and the advancement of His Kingdom. *Adopted*
9. That the General Assembly approve the updated Affiliation Agreement version 22 (attachment 1) to preserve ongoing partnerships with presbyteries, strengthen collaboration, and provide legal clarity. *Adopted*
10. That the GA commend RUF Coordinator RE Will Huss, RUF Staff, and the RUF Permanent Committee for the way they responded to actions of the 50<sup>th</sup> GA with grace and humility, seeking input from others to strengthen the RUF Affiliation Agreement and presenting it to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA for approval.

*Adopted*

11. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the Permanent Committee on Reformed University Fellowship meeting on June 9, 2023. *Adopted*

**IV. Commissioners Present:**

**Presbytery**

**Commissioner**

(Convener marked with \*)

Arizona  
Ascension  
Blue Ridge  
Calvary  
Central Florida  
Central Georgia  
Chesapeake  
Chicago Metro  
Covenant  
Eastern Pennsylvania  
Evangel  
Fellowship  
Georgia Foothills  
Grace  
Great Lakes  
Gulfstream  
Heritage  
Highlands  
Hills and Plains  
Houston Metro  
Illiana  
James River  
Korean Capital  
Lowcountry  
Metro Atlanta  
Mississippi Valley  
Nashville  
North Florida  
Northern Illinois  
Ohio

TE Jonathan Foster  
TE David W. Hills  
RE Frank Smith  
RE Derek Scott  
TE Benjamin Shaw  
RE Chris A. Schuster  
TE Jonathan Song  
TE Caleb Hughes  
TE Duncan Hoopes  
TE Mark A. Herzer  
RE Michael McMillan  
TE Jeff Bryant  
RE James Zeller  
TE John Franklin  
RE Jerry Stutzman  
TE W. Brian Haring  
RE William Zinkand  
TE James Curtis  
RE Jeff Chewning  
RE Eric Manthei  
TE Brian Matthew Sandifer  
TE Harrison Ford  
TE Huey Lee  
RE Mark Senn  
TE Walter H. Henegar  
RE Rob Coker  
TE Ryan Clark Anderson  
TE Stephen Spinnenweber  
TE Josué Pernillo  
TE Jason Piland

## JOURNAL

Ohio Valley	RE Joshua Kiihne
Pacific Northwest	RE Howie Donahoe*
Palmetto	TE H. Curtis McDaniel Jr.
Piedmont Triad	TE Joel Branscomb
Potomac	TE Charlie A. Baile
Providence	RE Mark Hundscheid
Rocky Mountain	RE Doug Duncan
Savannah River	TE Jonas Brock
Siouxlands	TE Ethan Sayler
Southeast Alabama	RE David Shipman
South Texas	RE Andrew Waller
Southern New England	TE Stephen LaValley
Southwest Florida	TE Wright Busching
Tennessee Valley	RE Josh Hurst
Tidewater	TE Timothy J. Schley
Warrior	TE John Alexander
Westminster	TE Bill Leuzinger

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ RE Howie Donahoe, Chairman

/s/ RE Eric Manthei, Secretary

### **51-26 Mission to North America (MNA) Report**

TE Alan Johnson, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to TE Irwyn Ince, Coordinator, who presented the informational report (Appendix J, p. 303), including a video highlighting the work of MNA. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1, 3-8, and 12-13** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendation 2**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendations 9-11** were previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24).

The CoC Chairman closed the report in prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

#### **A. MNA Permanent Committee Report**



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- B. MNA Permanent Committee Minutes
  - April 5, 2024 (called meeting)
  - March 1-2, 2024
  - September 13-14, 2023
- C. MNA 2024 Proposed Budgets
- D. MNA Permanent Committee 2023 Audits
- E. Overtures referred to MNA Committee
- F. Permanent Committee Recommendations

### II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. MNA Permanent Committee Report
- B. MNA Permanent Committee Minutes
  - April 5, 2024 (called meeting)
  - March 1-2, 2024
  - September 13-14, 2023
- C. MNA 2024 Proposed Budgets
- D. MNA Permanent Committee 2023 Audits
- E. Overtures referred to Committee
- F. MNA Permanent Committee Recommendations

### III. Recommendations

1. That having reviewed the work of the MNA Coordinator during 2023 according to the General Assembly guidelines, **the MNA Committee commends TE Irwyn Ince for his excellent leadership, with thanks to the Lord for the good results in MNA Ministry during 2023 and recommends his re-election as MNA Coordinator for another year.** Attachment 2 provides a complete list of MNA staff; see Attachment 3 for the list of MNA Permanent Committee members.

*Adopted*

2. That the **Permanent Committee on Mission to North America 2024 budget, as presented through the Administrative Committee,** be approved by the General Assembly and commended to the churches for their support.

*Deferred to CoC on AC*

3. That the General Assembly adopts the 2023 MNA Audit.

*Adopted*

4. That **TE CH (COL) Keith N. Goode, USA** and **TE CH (LTC) James R. McCay, USA, Ret.,** and **RE Captain Rick Owens, USN, (Ret.)** be appointed to serve as a PCA members of the Presbyterian and

Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC) for the Class of 2028. **Major General Brook J. Leonard, USAF**, and **TE Capt. Paul Riley Wrigley, CHC, Ret.** be appointed to serve as PCA members of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC) for the Class of 2027.

*Adopted*

5. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 5** from the Piedmont Triad Presbytery, “Adjust Piedmont Triad and Catawba Valley Presbytery Boundaries, to restructure the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery (PTP) and Catawba Valley Presbytery (CVP) such that will extend north to Hwy 64 in Davidson County and PTP will extend south to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 4. *Adopted*
6. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 12** from Catawba Presbytery, Concur with Piedmont Triad Presbytery, to “Adjust Catawba Valley and Piedmont Triad Presbytery Boundaries”, and to likewise transfer all existing PCA churches and church plants of the aforementioned territory will come into Catawba Valley Presbytery, and that all teaching elders and churches be received after a successful theological views examination effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 5. *Adopted*
7. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 8** from Covenant Presbytery, “Change Boundaries of Covenant and Mississippi Valley Presbytery, to restructure the boundary between The Presbytery of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbytery, transfer Choctaw 29 County, Mississippi, from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the 30 geographic bounds of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley, effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 6. *Adopted*
8. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 11** from Mississippi Valley Presbytery, “Change Boundaries of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbytery, to restructure the boundary between The Presbytery of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbytery, transfer Choctaw County, Mississippi, from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley,

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 7. *Adopted*

9. That the MNA Committee Recommends the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. Attachment 8.

*Ruled Moot*

10. That the Permanent MNA Committee recommend ~~to the Overtures Committee that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer the General Assembly answer~~ **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery, “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy,” ~~to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it. Recommendation 10. (Attachment 1) with reference to the answer provided by the Overtures Committee.~~

*Ruled Moot*

11. That the Permanent MNA Committee recommend ~~to the Overtures Committee that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer the General Assembly answer~~ **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery, “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency,” ~~to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it, as Recommendation 11. (Attachment 2) with reference to the answer provided by the Overtures Committee.~~

*Ruled Moot*

12. That the MNA Permanent Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 34** from Columbus Metro Presbytery, “Merge Columbus Metro Presbytery and Ohio Valley Presbytery,” be answered in the affirmative with concurrence of Ohio Valley Presbytery, with an effective date of July 1, 2024. (Attachment 3) with the following amended language: *Adopted*

Now therefore, be it resolved, that ~~the Ohio Valley Presbytery and the Columbus Metro Presbytery~~ overture the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to merge the aforementioned Presbyteries Ohio Valley Presbytery and the Columbus Metro Presbytery into one Presbytery effective July 1, 2024, continuing under the name “Ohio Valley Presbytery,” and with the new Presbytery assuming responsibility for any judicial actions against either presbytery that have or will arise before the merger is effected, to include all mission works and churches located in the counties of Ohio south and west of but not including

Mercer, Auglaize, Shelby, Logan, Hardin, Marion, Morrow, Knox, Coshocton, Muskingum, Perry, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs; all of Kentucky north and east of and including the counties of Breckinridge, Hardin, Larue, Taylor, Casey, Pulaski, and McCreary; and the Indiana counties of Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, Jefferson, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Washington, and Harrison.

**Rationale:** The changes conform the language to our conventions as an assembly and clarify the responsibility of the receiving presbytery to handle all pending judicial matters coming before the merging presbytery.

13. That the MNA Permanent Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 35** from Ohio Valley Presbytery, "Merge Ohio Valley and Columbus Metro Presbyteries" Concur with **Overture 34**, be answered in the affirmative, with an effective date of July 1, 2024. (**Attachment 4**) with the following amended language:

*Adopted*

Now therefore, be it resolved, that the ~~the Ohio Valley Presbytery and the Columbus Metro Presbytery~~ overture the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to merge the aforementioned Presbyteries Ohio Valley Presbytery and the Columbus Metro Presbytery into one Presbytery effective July 1, 2024, continuing under the name “Ohio Valley Presbytery,” and with the new Presbytery assuming responsibility for any judicial actions against either presbytery that have or will arise before the merger is effected, to include all mission works and churches located in the counties of Ohio south and west of but not including Mercer, Auglaize, Shelby, Logan, Hardin, Marion, Morrow, Knox, Coshocton, Muskingum, Perry, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs; all of Kentucky north and east of and including the counties of Breckinridge, Hardin, Larue, Taylor, Casey, Pulaski, and McCreary; and the Indiana counties of Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, Jefferson, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Washington, and Harrison.

**Rationale:** The changes conform the language to our conventions as an assembly and clarify the responsibility of the receiving presbytery to handle all pending judicial matters coming before the merging presbytery.

**IV. Commissioners Present:**

**Presbytery**

**Commissioner**

(Convener marked with \*)

Arizona  
 Blue Ridge  
 Calvary  
 Canada West  
 Catawba Valley  
 Central Carolina  
 Central Florida  
 Central Indiana  
 Chesapeake  
 Chicago Metro  
 Covenant  
 Eastern Carolina  
 Georgia Foothills  
 Grace  
 Great Lakes  
 Gulf Coast  
 Heartland  
 Heritage  
 Highlands  
 Hills and Plains  
 James River  
 Korean Capital  
 Korean Southeastern  
 Low Country  
 Metro Atlanta  
 Mississippi Valley  
 Missouri  
 Nashville  
 New River  
 New York  
 North Texas  
 Northern Illinois  
 Northern New England  
 Ohio

RE Dirk E. Uphoff  
 TE Roland Mathews  
 TE Zachary Groff  
 TE Theodore E. Lodder  
 TE William Thrailkill  
 RE Tim Shorey  
 TE Tyler Kenney  
 TE Ben Reed  
 RE Jeremiah Horner  
 TE Philip G. Ryken  
 RE Jason Conner  
 TE Timothy Inman  
 TE Alan H. Johnson\*  
 RE Bryan Kelly  
 TE Jerry Riendeau  
 TE Sean McGowan  
 RE Larry Hauck  
 TE Joshua Suh  
 TE Cooper Starnes  
 TE Aaron Douglas Raines  
 RE Eugene Rivers  
 TE Brian Sang Hoon Shim  
 TE Anthony Lee  
 TE John Schley  
 TE Eric Ryan  
 TE Eric Mabbott  
 TE Chad Townsley  
 TE Nathan William McCall  
 TE Alan Hager  
 RE Drew McLean  
 RE Steve J. Stallard  
 RE Dean Kuper  
 TE James Pavlic  
 TE Justin Salinas

## JOURNAL

Ohio Valley	TE Kyle McClellan
Pacific Northwest	RE Micah Meeuwssen
Pee Dee	RE Paul Goodrich
Piedmont Triad	RE Kevin Miller
Pittsburgh	TE Seth Dakota Gurley
Potomac	TE Dan Warne
Rocky Mountain	TE Blake Denlinger
Siouxlands	TE Jeffrey Neikirk
South Coast	TE Daniel A. Dalton
South Texas	TE Bryant McGee
Southern New England	TE Solomon Kim
Southwest Florida	RE Bryan Toenes
Suncoast Florida	TE Gary Goodrich
Tennessee Valley	TE Sam Brown
West Hudson	TE Steven Sage
Westminster	TE Bobby T. Roberts

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE Alan Johnson, Chairman /s/ TE Eric Mabbott, Secretary

### **51-27 Covenant College Report**

TE Nathan Newman, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer, and yielded to RE Brad Voyles, President of Covenant College, who presented the informational report (Appendix F, p. 235), including a video highlighting the work of Covenant College. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-2 and 4-7** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendation 3**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendations 8-10** were previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24).

The CoC Chairman closed the report in prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON COVENANT COLLEGE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. CC Report to General Assembly
- B. CC Permanent Committee Minutes from:

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

June 28, 2023, July 18, 2023, August 1, 2023, August 30, 2023, October 6, 2023, October 12-13, 2023, March 14-15, 2024, and April 8, 2024

- C. CC FY2023 Audit
- D. CC 2024-2025 Proposed Budget
- E. CC Permanent Committee Recommendations

### II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. CC Report to General Assembly
- B. CC Permanent Committee Minutes from:  
June 28, 2023, July 18, 2023, August 1, 2023, August 30, 2023, October 6, 2023, October 12-13, 2023, March 14-15, 2024, and April 8, 2024
- C. CC FY2023 Audit
- D. CC 2024-2025 Proposed Budget
- E. CC Permanent Committee Recommendations

### III. Recommendations

1. That the General Assembly thank and praise God for the excellent work and faithfulness of the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff of Covenant College in serving the Presbyterian Church in America by shaping students for lives of service in the Kingdom of God. *Adopted*
2. That the General Assembly encourage congregations of the PCA to support the ministry of Covenant College through encouraging prospective students to attend, through contributing the Partnership Shares approved by the General Assembly, and through prayer. *Adopted*
3. That the General Assembly approve the budget for 2024-2025, as submitted through the Administrative Committee. *Deferred to CoC on AC*
4. That the General Assembly adopt “The Covenant College and Supporting Foundation Consolidated Financial Statements” dated June 30, 2023, as prepared by Capin Crouse LLP. *Adopted*
5. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees for June 28, 2023, July 18, 2023, August 1, 2023, August 30, 2023, October 6, 2023, October 12-13, 2023, March 14-15, 2024, and April 8, 2024. *Adopted*
6. That the General Assembly receive as information the foregoing Annual Report, recognizing God’s gracious and abundant blessing and

commending the College in its desire to continue pursuing excellence in higher education for the glory of God. *Adopted*

7. That the General Assembly designate Sunday, October 20, 2024, as a Lord's Day on which churches of the denomination are encouraged to highlight Covenant College's ministry and pray specifically for the College in its mission and ministry. *Adopted*
8. The **Overture 14** from the Northwest Georgia Presbytery entitled "Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data From Higher Ed Institutions" be answered in the affirmative, noting that the enrollment information requested to be reported in the minutes of the Board of Trustees is, and has been, publicly available. *Ruled Moot*
9. That **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery entitled "Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" and **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery entitled "Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency" be referred to the 52nd General Assembly to allow Covenant College sufficient time to fully consider. *Ruled Moot*
10. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. *Ruled Moot*

The Chairman plans to present the following recommendations to the assembly in gross: 1-2, 4-10.

#### IV. Commissioners Present: Presbytery

#### Commissioner (Convener marked with \*)

Ascension  
Blue Ridge  
Calvary  
Central Florida  
Central Indiana  
Chesapeake  
Covenant  
Eastern Canada  
Eastern Carolina

TE Jeff K. Zehnder  
TE Andrew H. Trotter Jr.  
RE Terry Richards  
TE Deren Harper  
TE Jeff Nottingham  
TE Joshua P. Sillaman  
TE Benjamin David Ratliff  
TE Lyndon Micah Jost  
RE Joe Frazier



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Evangel	RE Drew Ricketts
Fellowship	TE Jason Ryan Anderson
Grace	TE Brian McCollough
Great Lakes	RE Ross Harris
Gulf Coast	RE Joel Holston
Heartland	TE Jason T. Wegener
Heritage	TE Rick A. Gray
Highlands	TE David Hina
Houston Metro	RE Neal Hare
James River	TE Dennis Bullock
Metro Atlanta	TE Erik Veerman
Nashville	TE Stephen Thomas Young
North Texas	TE Brian Charles Davis
Northern California	TE Jeremiah Hill
Northern Illinois	TE Brad Lucht
Ohio	TE Jacob Piland
Ohio Valley	RE Herb Melton
Pacific Northwest	TE Michael Awtry
Pee Dee	TE Matthew Dallas Adams
Piedmont Triad	TE Nathan E. Kline
Pittsburgh	RE Adam Kirkton
Platte Valley	TE Jacob Gerber
Potomac	TE Nathan Newman*
Rocky Mountain	RE Mark Shelby
Savannah River	TE Kenneth Anthony McHeard
Siouxlands	TE Arthur Sartorius
South Coast	RE Marty McCullah
South Texas	TE Timothy Lewis Fox
Southeast Alabama	RE Mark Anderson III
Southern New England	TE Nathan Barcsi
Southwest Florida	TE Wes Holland Jr.
Susquehanna Valley	TE Erik David Swanson
Tennessee Valley	TE Nathanael Xanders

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/ TE Nathan Newman, Chairman

/s/ TE Erik Veerman, Secretary

### **51-28 Mission to the World (MTW) Report**

TE Aaron Messner, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to TE Lloyd Kim, MTW Coordinator, who presented the informational report (Appendix K, p. 329). The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-4 and 6-8** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendation 5**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendations 9-11** were previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24).

The CoC Chairman closed the report in prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON MISSION TO THE WORLD TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. Review of CMTW minutes from:  
March 8-9, 2023  
September 27-28, 2023
- B. Review of Recommendations from Permanent Committee
- C. Review of finances for 2022
- D. Review of Proposed 2025 Budget
- E. Permanent Committee Report
- F. Recommendations on Overture 31 and Overture 32

### **II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed**

- A. Review of CMTW minutes from:  
March 8-9, 2023  
September 27-28, 2023
- B. Review of Recommendations from Permanent Committee
- C. Review of finances for 2022
- D. Review of Proposed 2025 Budget
- E. Permanent Committee Report
- F. Recommendations on Overture 31 and Overture 32

### **III. Recommendations**

- 1. That the General Assembly urge churches to set aside the month of November 2024, as a month of prayer for global missions, asking God

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- to send many more laborers into His harvest field. (MTW will offer a 30 Days of Prayer Calendar, which your church can download from [mtw.org/30dop](http://mtw.org/30dop) in the fall as well as other prayer resources); *Adopted*
2. That the General Assembly urge churches to set aside a portion of their giving for the suffering peoples of the world; to that end, be it recommended that a special offering for relief and mercy (MTW Compassion offering) be taken during 2024 and distributed by MTW (MTW offers bulletin inserts by mail, as well as a digital version that can be downloaded at [mtw.org/compassion](http://mtw.org/compassion)); *Adopted*
  3. That the General Assembly urge churches to set aside Sunday, November 3, 2024, as a day of prayer for the persecuted church worldwide; *Adopted*
  4. Having performed his annual evaluation and with gratitude to God, CMTW commends Dr. Lloyd Kim for the excellent leadership he has provided to MTW and recommends that Dr. Kim be re-elected as Coordinator of MTW. *Adopted*
  5. That the proposed budget of MTW, as presented through the Administrative Committee, be approved; *Deferred to CoC on AC*
  6. That the minutes of the meeting of CMTW of March 8–9, 2023, be accepted; and *Adopted*
  7. That the minutes of the meeting of CMTW of September 27–28, 2023, be accepted. *Adopted*
  8. Regarding MTW's 2022 Financial Audit: the Committee of Commissioners reviewed the financial audit for calendar year ending December 31, 2022. They also noted per CMTW's minutes that CMTW had accepted the audit. *Adopted*
  9. That **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments" be answered with reference to the answer provided by the ~~Administrative~~ Overtures Committee. *Ruled Moot*
  10. That **Overture 31** from the New River Presbytery "Amend BCO 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" be answered in the negative. *Ruled Moot*
  11. That **Overture 32** from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania "Amend BCO 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those Employed by a Committee or Agency" be answered by referral back to Presbytery. *Ruled Moot*

**IV. Commissioners Present:  
Presbytery**

**Commissioner**  
(Convener marked with \*)

Ascension	TE Scott P. Moreland
Blue Ridge	TE Todd Pruitt
Central Carolina	TE Matt Harris
Central Florida	TE Cody Alan Brobst
Central Georgia	RE Douglas Pohl
Central Indiana	TE Charles Anderson
Chesapeake	TE Jesse M. Crutchley
Columbus Metro	TE Dan Layman
Covenant	TE Bill Berry
Eastern Canada	TE Michael Chhangur
Eastern Carolina	RE Bruce Narveson
Eastern Pennsylvania	RE Dave Almack
Fellowship	TE John M. McArthur Jr.
Grace	TE James Logan
Great Lakes	RE Zane Meibeyer
Gulf Coast	RE Rick Sullivan
Heartland	TE John Hye Uk Choi
Heritage	RE George Pauley
Highlands	TE Andrew David Shank
Hills and Plains	RE Nathan Jarvis
Houston Metro	RE Ryan Bowling
Illiana	TE James Calvin Ryan
James River	TE Joseph E. Brown
Lowcountry	TE Jon D. Payne
Metro Atlanta	TE Aaron D. Messner*
Mississippi Valley	RE Alan Walters
Nashville	RE Jay Hollis
New York State	TE Tom Kristoffersen
North Texas	TE Matthew Wood
Northern Illinois	TE Zach Rogers
Northern New England	TE Jonathan P. Taylor
Northwest Georgia	TE Clif Daniell
Ohio	TE Rhett P. Dodson
Pacific Northwest	TE Jerid Krulish
Pee Dee	TE Brian Joseph Peterson

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Piedmont Triad	TE Clyde L. Godwin
Pittsburgh	RE Dennis W. Baker
Potomac	RE Chad Reed
Providence	RE Jonathan Haynes
PTP Winston Salem	RE Ozzie Marin
Savannah River	TE Pete Whitney
Siouxlands	TE Luke Bluhm
South Texas	TE Andrew William Triolo
Southern New England	TE Robert Steven Hill
Southwest Florida	TE Jeff Scott McDonald
Susquehanna Valley	TE Vincent L. Wood

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE Aaron Messner, Chairman

/s/ RE Nathan Jarvis, Secretary

### **51-29 Ridge Haven Conference Center (RH) Report**

TE Donny Friederichsen, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to TE Cameron Anderson, Ridge Haven Director, who presented the informational report (Appendix P, p. 695), including a video highlighting the work of Ridge Haven. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendation 1**, addressing the budget, was referred to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendations 2-4 and 7-9** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendations 5 and 6** were previously ruled moot (see 51-24).

The CoC Chairman closed the report with prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON RIDGE HAVEN TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. RH Report to General Assembly
- B. RH Board of Directors Minutes:
  - March 20-22, 2023
  - June 10, 2023
  - September 11-13, 2023
- C. RH 2025 Proposed Budget
- D. 2022 RH Audit
- E. RH Permanent Committee Recommendations

## II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. RH Report to General Assembly
- B. RH Board of Directors Minutes:  
March 20-22, 2023  
June 10, 2023  
September 11-13, 2023
- C. RH 2025 Proposed Budget
- D. 2022 RH Audit
- E. RH Permanent Committee Recommendations

## III. Recommendations

1. That the Ridge Haven 2025 Budget, as presented through the AC Budget Review Committee, be approved.  
*Deferred to CoC on AC*
2. That the 2022 audit dated December 31, 2022, performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan, be received. *Adopted*
3. That the following minutes of the Board of Directors of Ridge Haven be approved: March 20-22, 2023, June 10, 2023, and September 11-13, 2023 with the following exception of form: The minutes of the June 10, 2023 Called Meeting were not approved at the following Stated Meeting of September 11-13, 2023. *Adopted*
4. That February 16, 2025, be a day for our churches to pray for the ministries of Ridge Haven. *Adopted*
5. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the PCA answer **OVERTURE 31** from the New River Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy” by referring it to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. *Ruled Moot*
6. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the PCA answer **OVERTURE 32** from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency” by referring it to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. *Ruled Moot*
7. That the Lord would be praised, and TE Cameron Anderson be commended for his fruitful service to the ministry of Ridge Haven. *Adopted*
8. That Lord would be praised, and the staff and board of Ridge Haven be commended for their work in serving to advance the mission of Ridge Haven. *Adopted*
9. That the churches of the Presbyterian Church in America be encouraged to make use of the tremendous resource for spiritual renewal provided by Ridge Haven. *Adopted*

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**IV. Commissioners Present:**  
**Presbytery**

**Commissioner**  
(Convener marked with \*)

Blue Ridge	TE Brian Waters
Calvary	RE Kevin Mobley
Catawba Valley	TE Kevin L. Burrell
Central Carolina	TE John Chandler Black
Chesapeake	TE Brian Cummings March
Covenant	TE Tyler Kenyon
Evangel	RE Mike Sanders
Fellowship	TE Lewis Albert Ward Jr.
Grace	TE Gardner Fish
Great Lakes	RE Robert La Fleur
Gulf Coast	RE TJ Neely
Heartland	TE James A. Baxter
Highlands	TE George Andrew Adams
Hills and Plains	TE Jason Hsu
James River	TE Martin Cates
Nashville	TE Keaton Paul
New River	RE James Walling
North Texas	TE Donald Friederichsen*
Northern Illinois	TE Steve Jones
Ohio	TE John Fitzgerald Fennell
Ohio Valley	TE Brian Ferry
Palmetto	TE Jonathan Adam Shields
Pee Dee	TE Don Jacob Stager
Piedmont Triad	TE Taylor Howsmon
Savannah River	TE Philip Ryan
South Texas	TE Nicholas Bullock
Southeast Alabama	RE Sammy Rothfuss
Southern Louisiana	RE Ken Kostrzewa
Southern New England	TE Benjamin Sheldon
Southwest Florida	TE Justin Conner Woodall
Susquehanna Valley	TE Collin Gingrich
Tennessee Valley	TE Rob Herron

Respectfully submitted:

/s/ TE Donny Friederichsen, Chairman      /s/ TE Nicholas Bullock, Secretary

**51-30 Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) Report**

RE Jack Wilson, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and presented the report (Appendix Q, p. 699), which was received as information. The Chairman closed the report with prayer, which served as the closing prayer for this session of the Assembly.

**51-31 Assembly Recessed**

The Assembly recessed its business at 4:28 p.m. to gather for worship and then to reconvene for business at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday.

**51-32 Worship Service**

The Assembly entered a time of worship at 4:45 p.m. (Appendix V, p. 1196).

**Fourth Session - Thursday Morning  
June 13, 2024**

**51-33 Assembly Reconvened**

The Assembly reconvened at 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, June 13, 2024. After the Assembly sang “A Mighty Fortress Is Our God,” TE Zach Byrd led the Assembly in prayer.

**51-34 PCA Foundation Report**

TE W. Duncan Rankin, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and yielded to RE Timothy Townsend, President, who presented the informational report (Appendix M, p. 397), including a video highlighting the work of the Foundation. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1, 3, 4, and 8** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendation 2**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendations 5, 6, and 7** were previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24).

The CoC Chairman closed the report with prayer.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON  
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION  
TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**I. Business Referred to the Committee**



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- A. PCAF Board of Directors Report
- B. PCAF Board of Directors Minutes  
August 4, 2023, April 5, 2024 (including Executive Session minutes)
- C. 2023 Audit of PCAF by Capin Crouse, LLP
- D. 2025 PCAF Proposed Budget
- E. Recommendations of the PCA Foundation, Inc., Board

### II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. The work of the PCA Foundation as presented in the PCA Foundation Board Minutes and report
- B. PCAF Board of Directors Minutes  
August 4, 2023, April 5, 2024 (including Executive Session minutes)
- C. 2023 Audit of PCAF by Capin Crouse, LLP
- D. 2025 PCAF Proposed Budgets
- E. Recommendations of the PCA Foundation, Inc., Board

### III. Recommendations

1. That the financial audit for the PCA Foundation, Inc. for the calendar year ended December 31, 2023, by Capin Crouse, LLP be received and acknowledged. *Adopted*
2. That the General Assembly approve the proposed 2025 Budget of the PCA Foundation, Inc. with the understanding that it is a spending plan and will be modified as necessary by the PCA Foundation's Board of Directors to accommodate changing circumstances during the year. *Deferred to CoC on AC*
3. That the Minutes of Board meetings of August 4, 2023, and April 5, 2024, be approved. *Adopted*
4. That the Gift Acceptance and Management Policy (Attachment I) adopted by the PCA Foundation's Board of Directors be approved. *Adopted*
5. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend *RAO 11-5* to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. *Ruled Moot*
6. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 31** from the New River Presbytery "Amend *BCO 14-1* Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. *Ruled Moot*

7. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 32** from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. *Ruled Moot*
8. That the General Assembly commend the PCA Foundation, staff, and board for their superb work. *Adopted*

**IV. Commissioners Present:**  
**Presbytery**

**Commissioner**  
(Convener marked with \*)

Ascension	RE Timothy Adams
Blue Ridge	TE Justin Clement
Calvary	TE Dan Dodds
Catawba Valley	RE Frank Lopane
Central Carolina	RE Lane Jones
Central Florida	TE Matthew Matulia
Central Georgia	TE Richard Hunter Stevenson
Chesapeake	TE Michael S. Weltin
Evangel	TE Anton Ivanov
Fellowship	RE Josh Bouldin
Grace	RE Rob T. Jackson Jr.
Great Lakes	TE Ryan Potter
Gulf Coast	TE Joseph C. Grider
Heartland	TE Anthony J. Felich
Hills and Plains	TE Levi Bakerink
Houston Metro	TE W. Duncan Rankin*
James River	RE Matthew Murray
Korean Capital	TE Steve Sun Kyo Yoon
Metro Atlanta	RE Russell Berry
Metropolitan New York	TE Wei Ho
Mississippi Valley	TE Chris Stevens
New York State	RE Curt Lindahl
North Texas	RE Robert Looper
Northern Illinois	RE Fred Winterroth
Pacific	RE Richard Salinas
Pacific Northwest	RE Charles Meeker
Pee Dee	TE Jordan M. Gallo
Philadelphia	TE Maranatha Chung

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Pittsburgh	TE David R. Kenyon
Potomac	RE Mark Doehnert
Rocky Mountain	TE Michael Phillips
South Texas	RE Larry Laine
Southeast Alabama	TE Adam Coppock
Southern New England	RE Mark Slater
Southwest Florida	RE Bob Berry
Susquehanna Valley	RE Jay Hassinger
Tennessee Valley	TE Ryan F. Biese

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE W. Duncan Rankin, Chairman

/s/ TE Ryan F. Biese, Secretary

### **51-35 Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM) Report**

TE Wiley Lowry, CoC Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer, and yielded to TE Stephen Estock, CDM Coordinator, presented the informational report (Appendix D, p. 221), including a video highlighting the work of CDM. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 1-8** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendation 10**, addressing the budget, was **referred** to the CoC on AC (RAO 14-6.j).

**Recommendations 9, 11, and 12** were previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24). The CoC Chairman closed the report with prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES TO THE FIFTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. CDM Permanent Committee Report
- B. CDM Permanent Committee Minutes from:
  - September 7-8, 2023
  - March 7-8, 2024
  - May 22, 2024
- C. CDM 2024 Proposed Budget
- D. 2023 CDM Audit
- E. CDM Permanent Committee Recommendations

## II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. CDM Permanent Committee Report
- B. CDM Permanent Committee Minutes from:  
September 7-8, 2023  
March 7-8, 2024  
May 22, 2024
- C. CDM 2024 Proposed Budget
- D. 2023 CDM Audit
- E. CDM Permanent Committee Recommendations

## III. Recommendations

1. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the meetings of the Permanent Committee for the Committee on Discipleship Ministries on September 7-8, 2023, and March 7-8, 2024. *Adopted*
2. That the General Assembly receive the 2023 audit performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith, and Jordan, and approve the same firm for the 2024 audit. *Adopted*
3. That the General Assembly encourage churches and individuals to contribute generously to the “**Love Gift Legacy**” ([pcacdm.org/wm-love-gift](http://pcacdm.org/wm-love-gift)). For 2023, the funds were used by CDM to publish *Neighbor to Neighbor*, a new ESL curriculum designed by MNA. For 2024, CDM will use the funds to develop and promote resources and training for CDM's Women's Ministry International (WMI), which includes partnerships with MTW and ministries such as the UK Partnership and City to City Latin America. *Adopted*
4. That the General Assembly encourage individuals, local churches, and presbyteries to utilize the many free resources available on the CDM websites ([pcacdm.org](http://pcacdm.org) [especially resources for leaders]; [children.pcacdm.org](http://children.pcacdm.org) [children]; [women.pcacdm.org](http://women.pcacdm.org) [women]; [pcanextgen.org](http://pcanextgen.org) [youth]; [pcabookstore.com](http://pcabookstore.com)). These resources are developed by PCA leaders for PCA leaders. *Adopted*
5. That the General Assembly encourage local churches to consider and use **Reachout Adventures** from CDM for Summer programming ([reachoutadventures.com](http://reachoutadventures.com)). This reformed and covenantal curriculum was written by PCA members. The 2024 theme is *Olympion*, which corresponds well with the Paris Olympic Games in July. *Olympion* considers the redemption story in the Book of Joshua as it challenges children to run the race of faith. The 2025 theme will be *Upward Bound*, which focuses on the Gospel of Luke. *Adopted*

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

6. That the General Assembly encourage individuals and local churches to consider and utilize the excellent print and digital curricula from Great Commission Publications (GCP), e.g., *Show Me Jesus* and *Kids' Quest Catechism Club* for children, *G2R Genesis to Revelation* Bible studies for preteens to teens—including *G2R God's Promises*—and *So What?* Bible studies for youth. *Digging Deeper: Exploring Shorter Catechism* is a 2-volume, 2-year study of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, designed for youth and adults desiring to go deeper in the Christian faith. GCP also provides excellent training resources for ministry staff and volunteers.  
*Adopted*
7. That the General Assembly give thanks to RE Denny Crowe, TE Charles Johnson, TE David Lindberg, and Mrs. Melanie Cogdill for their faithful service as members of and adviser to the Permanent Committee. *Adopted*
8. That the General Assembly re-elect TE Stephen Estock to serve as the Coordinator for the Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM).  
*Adopted*
9. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend *RAO 11-5* to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.  
*Ruled Moot*

### Grounds

CDM believes the overture will be a helpful amendment to the RAO. The proposed change will clarify the process for how the Assembly authorizes an RAO amendment while protecting the right of the General Assembly's Committees and Agencies to speak to any proposed changes affecting them. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the Administrative Committee.

10. That the General Assembly approve the 2025 CDM budget as presented by the Administrative Committee. *Deferred to CoC on AC*
11. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery "Amend *BCO 14-1* Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. *Ruled Moot*

### Grounds

CDM sees value in the recommended change but would like more time to consult with the leaders of the other Committees and Agencies and consider potential consequences of such a change on the daily

operations of CDM's ministry. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is also wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the Administrative Committee.

12. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery "Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for Those Employed by a Committee or Agency" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. *Ruled Moot*

Grounds

CDM would like more time to consult with the leaders of the other Committees and Agencies and consider potential consequences of such a change on daily operations of CDM's ministry. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is also wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the Administrative Committee.

The Chairman plans to present the following recommendations to the assembly in gross: Items 1-12.

**IV. Commissioners Present:  
Presbytery**

**Commissioner**  
(Convener marked with \*)

Blue Ridge	TE Todd Johnson
Calvary	TE Taylor Alexander King
Canada West	TE Don Hulsey
Catawba Valley	TE Daniel Ellingburg
Central Carolina	TE Michael David Mock
Central Florida	TE Seth Wallace
Central Indiana	TE Robert Paul O'Bannon
Chesapeake	RE Gregory T. Hard
Chicago Metro	TE Brad McMurray
Covenant	RE Barron Caulfield Jr.
Eastern Carolina	TE Doug C. Domin
Evangel	TE John Fountain
Fellowship	RE Chris Arnold
Georgia Foothills	TE Travis Joshua Brown
Grace	RE Christopher Bird

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Great Lakes	TE Joel Irvin
Gulf Coast	TE Patrick H. Davey
Heartland	RE Jim Slocomb
Heritage	TE Kevin Gladding
Hills and Plains	TE Wilson Van Hooser
Houston Metro	TE Curt Mire
James River	RE Gregory Bay
Korean Capital	TE Bobby Jin Won Suh
Metro Atlanta	RE Bob Edwards
Mississippi Valley	TE Wiley P. Lowry III*
New York State	TE Eric Walter
North Texas	RE Stephen Wolters
Northern Illinois	RE Larry DeVries
Ohio	RE Ernest A. Miller
Pacific Northwest	TE Brent R. Kilman
Piedmont Triad	TE Austin David Pfeiffer
Pittsburgh	TE Greg Mead
Potomac	TE Nathan Boyette
Providence	TE Jason Ellerbee
Rocky Mountain	TE John Gordon Sackett
South Texas	TE Jonathon Herr
Southeast Alabama	TE Ross Hodges
Southern New England	RE Cris Campelli
Southwest Florida	RE Phil Smith
Susquehanna Valley	RE Mike Evanko
Tidewater	RE Jim Rogers
Westminster	RE BL Peters

Respectfully submitted:

/s/ TE Wiley Lowry, Chairman

/s/ TE Wilson Van Hooser, Secretary

### 51-36 Administrative Committee Report

TE Josh Reiger, CoC Chairman, led with prayer and yielded to TE Bryan Chapell, PCA Stated Clerk, who presented the informational report (Appendix A, p. 115), acknowledging the good work of planning done by the host committee of James River, Blue Ridge, Tidewater, and Korean Capital Presbyteries. The CoC Chairman presented the CoC report (below).

**Recommendations 3-5, and 30** were previously **ruled moot** (see 51-24).

**Recommendations 2, and 6-29** were **moved** in gross and **adopted**.

**Recommendation 1** was **moved**.

TE David Coffin rose to the following **point of order**.

“It is my understanding that *Commissioner Handbook*, p. 323, item 1, line 26, “That the General Assembly elect Dr. Bryan Chapell for another term as Stated Clerk.” is not a recommendation to be debated under regular order, but is rather “nominating speech,” that must be considered under RONR, 46:27, -28, “Debate on Nominations.”

As such, RONR, 46:28, sets forth the parameters of such debate: “... speakers must exercise caution to avoid making any personal criticism of [candidates] in debate. Rather than attacking a nominee, a speaker may advocate the election of a rival candidate.” However, as there are no rival candidates with respect to this election, speakers must exercise caution to avoid making any personal criticism of the candidate for Stated Clerk.

Further, I note that according to RONR 23:10-11: “The weight given to precedent increases with the number of times the same or similar rulings have been repeated and with the length of time during which the assembly has consistently adhered to them.” In my 40 some years of attending our Assembly, I do not believe we have ever allowed criticism of a nominated candidate as a part of debate.

I ask the Moderator to so rule.”

RE Matt Fender rose to a **point of order** that the previous point of order is out of order because it is referring to actions that might happen in the future. The point of order was ruled **not well taken**. The Moderator was **challenged** and **sustained**.

TE Coffin continued in his **point of order**, and the Moderator ruled it was **well taken**. The Moderator reminded the Assembly that decorum must be maintained.

TE Ryan Biese **moved** the previous question, which was seconded and **passed**.

**Recommendation 1** was **adopted** (892-259-22).

The CoC Chairman closed the report with prayer.

## **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF COMMISSIONERS ON ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **I. Business Referred to the Committee**

- A. AC Permanent Committee Report to GA
- B. Minutes of the 2023 meetings of the AC and Board of Directors



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. AC – April 20, 2023, June 5, 2023, June 13, 2023, and October 5, 2023
2. BD – April 20, 2023, and October 5, 2023
- C. Budgets for the permanent Committees and Agencies
- D. Overtures Referred to the AC
- E. Recommendations of the AC Committee

### II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed

- A. AC Permanent Committee Report to GA
- B. Minutes of the 2023 meetings of the AC and Board of Directors
  1. AC – April 20, 2023, June 5, 2023, June 13, 2023, and October 5, 2023
  2. BD – April 20, 2023, and October 5, 2023
- C. Budgets for the permanent Committees and Agencies
- D. Overtures Referred to the AC
- E. Recommendations of the AC Committee

### III. Recommendations

1. That the General Assembly elect Dr. Bryan Chapell for another term as Stated Clerk. *Adopted*
2. That the Assembly commend Stated Clerk Dr. Bryan Chapell, Business Administrator Dr. Dixie Zietlow, and the entire staff of the Administrative Committee for their faithful and effective labors for the Lord and their skillful and joyful service to the ministers, churches, presbyteries, permanent committees, agencies, and General Assembly in promoting the unity, purity, and mission of the Presbyterian Church in America in the past year and to commend RE Ric Springer for his 40 years of service to General Assembly with the floor clerks. *Adopted*
3. That **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery, “Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments,” be answered in the affirmative. *Ruled Moot*

Grounds:

The proposed *Rules of Assembly Operations (RAO)* changes were drawn up by Ascension Presbytery in consultation with the PCA’s Stated Clerk. The overture changes will clarify that the Overtures Committee should determine the procedures of the General Assembly’s RAO. The overture changes will also mandate that the General Assembly’s Permanent Committees or Agencies which

are affected by future, proposed *RAO* changes be consulted by the Overtures Committee before deciding upon such changes. Such a proposal wisely requires consultation of those who are most likely to be informed about, and affected by *RAO* changes, while leaving the process for approving *RAO* amendments with the Overtures Committee. The proposed changes in this overture thus provide protection of the Assembly's Committees or Agencies from uninformed decisions while enabling the Assembly to effect changes to the *RAO* through the body authorized to make such amendments.

4. That the Overtures Committee recommend that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery, "Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy," to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it. *Ruled Moot*

Rationale:

This overture was not received by the AC in time for any Permanent Committee or Agency to consider prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2024. The AC also received the overture too late (April 3—AC meeting materials were sent to members April 5) to prepare an informed recommendation for the AC.

5. That the Overtures Committee recommend that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery, "Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency," to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it. *Ruled Moot*

Rationale:

This overture was not received by the Administrative Committee (AC) in time for any Permanent Committee or Agency Board (or their legal counselors) to consider prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2024. The AC also received the overture too late (April 11—AC meeting materials were sent to members April 5) for its staff, officers, or legal counsel to review in order properly to inform the AC at its spring meeting regarding an AC recommendation to the General Assembly.

6. That the Administrative Committee 2025 budget of \$3,702,519 be approved. *Adopted*

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

7. That the PCA Building 2025 budget of \$395,907 be approved. *Adopted*
8. That the CDM 2025 budget of \$2,693,700 be approved. *Adopted*
9. That the CC 2025 budget of \$36,674,848 be approved. *Adopted*
10. That the CTS 2025 budget of \$10,506,366 be approved. *Adopted*
11. That the Geneva 2025 budget of \$6,310,798 be approved. *Adopted*
12. That the MNA 2025 budget of \$30,237,191 be approved. *Adopted*
13. That the MTW 2025 budget of \$76,032,310 be approved. *Adopted*
14. That the PCAF 2025 budget of \$2,419,270 be approved. *Adopted*
15. That the RUF 2025 budget of \$59,495,241 be approved. *Adopted*
16. That the RH 2025 budget of \$4,220,000 be approved. *Adopted*
17. That the “2025 Budgeted Partnership Shares and Ministry Asks of PCA Ministry Partners by the Participating General Assembly Ministries” be approved (see p. 124). *Adopted*
18. That the Assembly take note that the 2023 Audit performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan on the Administrative Committee was received and reviewed as required by RAO 14-7.h. *Adopted*
19. That the Assembly take note that the 2023 Audit performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan on the PCA Building Fund was received and reviewed as required by RAO 14-7.h. *Adopted*
20. That Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan, PC, be approved as auditors for the Administrative Committee and the Committee on Discipleship Ministries for the calendar year ending December 31, 2024. *Adopted*
21. That Capin, Crouse, & Company be approved as auditors for the Committee on Mission to the World and the Committee on Mission to North America for the calendar year ending December 31, 2024. *Adopted*
22. That Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLP, be approved as auditors for the Committee on Reformed University Fellowship for the calendar year ending December 31, 2024. *Adopted*
23. That the Assembly receive the charts below as the acceptable response to the GA requirement for an annual report on the cost of the AC’s mandated responsibilities. *Adopted*

# JOURNAL

## 2023 Unfunded Mandates GENERAL ASSEMBLY COSTS

Year	# of Commissioners	Total Costs	Cost per Commissioner	Amount of Fee Allotted to GA	Total Avg Standard Fee
2018	1537	\$628,815	\$409	\$350	\$450
2019	1652	\$729,515	\$442	\$350	\$450
2021	2114	\$844,600	\$400	\$350	\$450
2022	2385	\$920,326	\$386	\$350	\$450
2023	2301	\$1,104,136	\$480	\$350 (TE) \$300 (RE)	\$457*

\* The TE standard fee rose to \$525 and the RE standard fee dropped to \$300 in 2023 (approved by the 49th GA).

## AC GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESPONSIBILITIES

Description	2023 Total <sup>2</sup>	Per Commissioner
Committee on Constitutional Business	\$15,125	\$6.57
General Assembly <sup>1</sup>	\$1,104,136	\$479.85
Interchurch Relations Committee	\$18,880	\$8.21
Nominating Committee <sup>2</sup>	\$23,324	\$10.14
Standing Judicial Commission	\$238,558	\$103.68
Theological Examining Committee <sup>3</sup>	\$0	\$0
	\$1,400,023	\$608.45

<sup>1</sup> Review of Presbytery Records is included in the General Assembly Total. In 2023, RPR cost \$48,856. Production and delivery of the General Assembly Minutes costs will be reflected in the 2024 financials.

<sup>2</sup> The expense of the Nominating Committee is shared by the PCA Committees and Agencies.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<sup>3</sup>The Theological Examining Committee did not incur any material expenses in 2023 as per their report to the AC.

24. That the registration fee remain at \$525 (TEs) and \$300 (REs) for the 2025 General Assembly, with \$350 of the TE fee allocated to the GA expenses, \$50 for publication of the GA Minutes, and \$125 allocated to the Standing Committee cost center for the expenses that include the Standing Judicial Commission; and the full \$300 RE fee allocated to GA expenses. Honorably retired or emeritus elders would continue to pay \$150. Elders coming from churches with annual incomes below \$150,000, as per their 2023 statistics, may register for \$300.

*Adopted*

25. That the plan outlined below for the payment of the required contribution from the PCA Committees and Agencies to the PCA Administrative Committee be approved.

*Adopted*

PLAN: Committees and Agencies are asked to pay in one of the following three options:

1. Semiannual – one-half paid in January and one-half paid in July.
2. Quarterly – one-fourth paid the first month of each quarter:  
January, April, July, and October.
3. Monthly – one-twelfth paid on the first of each month.

NOTE: The chart shows the agreed-upon amounts for 2025.

AC	None
CDM	\$11,500
CC	\$11,500
CTS	\$11,500
MNA	\$11,500
MTW	\$11,500
PCAF	\$11,500
GEN	\$11,500
RH	\$11,500
<u>RUF</u>	<u>\$11,500</u>
Total	\$103,500

26. That the Annual Administration Fee paid by ministers be set at \$100 for 2025. *Adopted*
27. That the General Assembly set the request to Presbyteries for GA Host Committee assistance at \$500 for 2025. *Adopted*
28. That the Assembly approve the minutes of the Board of Directors for April 20, 2023, and October 5, 2023. *Adopted*

## JOURNAL

29. That the Assembly approve the minutes of the Administrative Committee for April 20, 2023, June 5, 2023, June 13, 2023, and October 5, 2023. *Adopted*

30. That **Overture 33** from TE Benjamin Inman to Eastern Carolina Presbytery and rejected by the Presbytery at its stated meeting, to “Erect Ad Interim Committee on the Book *Jesus Calling*”, be answered in the negative. *Ruled Moot*

### Grounds:

The Administrative Committee recommends that the 51st General Assembly not approve this Overture on the grounds that it has no “plan for how sufficient, designated funds for the Ad Interim Committee will be raised,” as required by RAO 9-3.

\*Note: This overture was received after the Spring meeting of the Administrative Committee and can only receive this informal recommendation from the Stated Clerk’s Office unless other Administrative Committee business requires a called meeting prior to the General Assembly.

The Chairman plans to present the following recommendations to the assembly in gross: 1-2, 4-30

## IV. Commissioners Present:

### Presbytery

### Commissioner

(Convener marked with \*)

Blue Ridge

RE Mark Coddington

Calvary

TE Bryan Jordan Counts

Central Carolina

TE Wendell F. Collins III

Central Florida

TE Kevin D. Gardner

Central Georgia

TE William C. Douglas

Central Indiana

TE KJ Drake

Chesapeake

RE Steven Madden

Chicago Metro

TE Joe Cristman

Columbus Metro

TE Hayden Nesbit

Covenant

RE Jacob Taylor

Evangel

TE Hunter Twitty

Fellowship

RE Steven Palecek

Grace

RE Robert Lee

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Great Lakes	TE Chad DeGraff
Gulf Coast	TE Richard A. Fennig
Highlands	TE Sean McCann
Hills and Plains	TE Jeremy Fair
Houston Metro	TE Joshua Michael Rieger*
James River	RE Daniel A. Carrell
Korean Capital	TE Peter Kim
Lowcountry	TE Jeremy Mullen
Metro Atlanta	TE Randy Schlichting
Metropolitan New York	TE E. Bruce O'Neil
Mississippi Valley	TE Charles M. Wingard
Nashville	TE Ryan Hudson
New Jersey	TE Stephen O'Neil
New River	TE William Michael Hall
New York State	TE Timothy LeCroy
North Florida	TE J.D Funyak
North Texas	RE Tony Mangefeste
Northern California	TE Benjamin Kappers
Northwest Georgia	TE Joel Smit
Ohio	RE James Parkin
Pacific Northwest	TE Adam Parker
Palmetto	TE Jason Cornwell
Pee Dee	RE Dwain Curtis
Piedmont Triad	TE Ethan Andrew Smith
Pittsburgh	TE Rick Appleton
Potomac	RE Doug Leepa
Providence	TE Matthew Duraski
Rocky Mountain	TE Shawn Young
Savannah River	TE Mike Hearon
South Texas	RE Barry McBee
Southeast Alabama	TE Parker Johnson
Southern New England	RE David Nok Daniel
Southwest Florida	RE Todd Bayley
Suncoast Florida	RE Brent Phillips
Susquehanna Valley	RE Christopher Menges
Tennessee Valley	TE John Blevins III
Tidewater	RE Timothy Panek
Westminster	TE Thomas Edwin Rickard

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/ TE Josh Reiger, Chairman

/s/ TE Sean McCann, Secretary

### **51-37 Overtures Committee Report**

The Moderator reminded the Assembly of the rules that govern the Assembly's actions with reference to the Overtures Committee report.

TE Stephen Tipton, Chairman, led the Assembly in prayer and began the report (see p. 83).

The Chairman noted that **Recommendations 7, 14, and 28** were dealt with by the Assembly on Tuesday evening.

**Recommendations 2, 4, 6, 9, 10, 15-27, 29-32** were **moved** in gross. **Recommendations 17 and 26** were removed from the omnibus at the request of commissioners. The omnibus was **adopted**.

**Recommendation 17** was **moved**. TE Jeremy King **moved** to recommit **Overture 17** to the Overtures Committee of the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. The motion **failed**. **Recommendation 17** was **adopted**, answering **Overture 17** in the affirmative as amended.

### **51-38 Special Order: Nominating Committee Report**

At 9:30 a.m. a Special Order was recognized by the Assembly. TE Jared Nelson, Chairman, led in prayer and presented the report of the Nominating Committee (Appendix L, p. 353).

Hearing no objection, the Moderator declared all uncontested nominees **elected**.

The following contested nominees were elected by the Assembly (see the Supplemental Report in Appendix L, p. 389).

**Committee on Constitutional Business, Class of 2028**

TE David Strain, Mississippi Valley (679-625)

**Committee on Interchurch Relations, Alternate:**

RE James B. Isbell, Tennessee Valley (808-483)

**Committee on Mission to North America, Class of 2029**

TE Nate Shurden, Nashville (676-616)

**Committee on Mission to the World, Class of 2029**

TE Kevin Smith, Tennessee Valley (692-642)

**Board of Trustees of Covenant College, Class of 2027**

RE John C. Kwasny, Mississippi Valley (910-426)

**Standing Judicial Commission, Class of 2028**

TE Jay Bruce, Hills and Plains (857-497)



The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

**51-39 Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) Vows and Declaration to be Assembly's Judicial Commission**

The newly elected members of the SJC who were present (TE Jay Bruce, TE Eric Landry, TE Hoochan Paul Lee, RE Howie Donahoe, and RE Frederic Marcinak) took their vows before the Assembly.

The Moderator **declared** the Standing Judicial Commission to be the Judicial Commission of this Assembly in accord with *BCO* 15-4.

**51-40 Overtures Committee Report** (continued from **51-37**)

TE Trevor Scott asked for division on the previous vote before the order of the day. The Moderator ruled that request was **out of order** because there was no way to affirm that no one had departed or entered the Assembly hall. The Moderator apologized personally regarding the voice vote on **Recommendation 17**. The chair was **challenged** and **sustained**.

It was **moved to reconsider Recommendation 17**. The motion **failed**.

The following commissioners requested that their negative votes be recorded:

RE Andrew Augenstein	Central Florida
TE Timothy R. LeCroy	New York State
TE Eric Schievenin	Savannah River
TE Travis Scott	Pittsburgh

**Recommendation 26** was **moved**. Regarding a previous question regarding the printed report on **Overture 26**, the Chairman asked that the Secretary of the Overtures Committee, TE Eddie Lim, be given permission to address the Assembly just on the issue of what the Committee's report should read. Permission was granted by the Assembly. TE Lim explained the Committee's report on Recommendation 26. Recommendation 26 was **adopted** (1456-119-20), answering **Overture 26** in the affirmative as amended.

**Recommendation 3** was **moved**. Debate was extended by five minutes (835-783-22). TE Mike Khandjian rose to a **point of order** about a speaker questioning motives. The Moderator ruled the point of order was **not well taken** as the speaker referenced widely reported historical information. Recommendation 3 was **defeated** (857-906-13), answering **Overture 3** in the negative.

**Recommendation 13** was **moved**. Recommendation 13 was **adopted** (985-727-35), answering **Overture 13** in the affirmative as amended.

**Recommendation 33** was moved. TE Jerid Krulish spoke against the Recommendation. TE Zachary Groff spoke for the Recommendation. Other speakers spoke on the matters. Debate was extended by five minutes. The recommendation was **adopted** (947-834-20), answering **Overture 33** in the affirmative as amended.

**51-41 Protest regarding Item 1 (to amend BCO 7-3)**

TE Matthew Terrell filed the following **protest** regarding **Item 1** (to amend *BCO* 7-3) (see **51-7**, p. 17):

“On this Assembly’s first night we held a vote to clarify titles for church officers. But in attempting clarity for some, we also laid a heavy burden on our Korean speaking brothers and sisters. Our action seems analogous to what was happening in Acts 6 when a language and cultural barrier between Hellenists and Jews led to the neglect of serving the needs of the those most easily overlooked, in that case the Hellenistic widows. Whether intentionally or not, we neglected to heed the words of those who serve faithfully in the margins of this denomination but are easy to overlook because they are not part of the dominant culture. Our Korean speaking brethren who spoke on Tuesday night were clear: the results of our vote on amendments to *BCO* 7-3 would place a great burden on their life together as God’s people, making ordinary, culturally appropriate and respectful communication between members of Christ’s body unconstitutional. I register this protest with great respect for our denomination and deference to the decision of this court, but also with grief that in seeking to solve one problem we created a significant new one for our Korean speaking brothers and sisters.”

The Moderator ruled the protest to be in temperate language and respectful to the court and ordered it recorded.

The following commissioners signed the protest:

TE Dave Abney	Hills and Plains
RE Paul Adams	Ohio Valley
TE Dan Adamson	Chicago Metro
TE Justin Adour	Metropolitan New York
TE Jarrett Allebach	Southern New England
TE Per Almquist	Northern New England
TE Charles Anderson	Central Indiana
TE Jon Anderson	Blue Ridge
TE Drew Archer	Metro Atlanta
RE Andrew Augenstein	Central Florida
RE Ron Avery	Southwest Florida
TE John Baber	Southwest Florida

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE Ben Bae	Southern New England
TE Leonard Bailey	James River
TE Aaron Baker	Chicago Metro
TE Nathan Barcsi	Southern New England
TE Cameron Barham	Northwest Georgia
TE Allan M. Barth	Gulfstream
TE Robert Becker	James River
RE Glen Berkel	Eastern Carolina
TE Luke Bert	Eastern Canada
RE Arlen Biersgreen	Rio Grande
TE Jeffrey Birch	Central Georgia
TE Caleb Blow	Fellowship
TE Kyle Bobos	Houston Metro
TE Nathan Boyette	Potomac
TE Bill Braeford	Covenant
TE Jeremy Britt	Covenant
TE Sam Brown	Tennessee Valley
TE Marshall Brown	Chicago Metro
TE Kevin Burrell	Catawba Valley
TE Matthew Cadora	Ohio Valley
RE Robert Caldwell	Calvary
TE Josiah Carey	Blue Ridge
TE Hace Cargo	Metro Atlanta
TE David Cassidy	Gulfstream
RE Benjamin Christmann	Tennessee Valley
TE Caleb Click	Evangel
TE Donnie Clinton, Jr.	James River
TE J. Andrew Conrad	James River
TE Bruce Cooke	Southern New England
TE Jason Cornwell	Palmetto
TE Bryan Counts	Calvary
TE Joseph L. Creech	Central Florida
RE Chad Cureton	Fellowship
TE Charles Davis	Heritage
TE Jonathan Davis	Calvary
TE E. Brandon Dean	Metro Atlanta
TE Matthew Delong	Potomac
TE Joe Dentici	Calvary
TE Jay Denton	Eastern Carolina

## JOURNAL

TE Sam DeSocio	Heritage
TE Josh Diack	Potomac
TE Mark Dodd	Calvary
TE David Driskell	Evangel
TE Ryan Egli	Philadelphia
TE Robert Eickelberg	Susquehanna Valley
TE Daniel Ellingburg	Catawba Valley
TE David Ellis	Metropolitan New York
TE Matt Esswein	Arizona
TE Logan Ford	Missouri
TE Gustavo Formenti	Tennessee Valley
RE Jeremy Foster	Covenant
TE Kenny Foster	Heritage
RE Brian Franklin	North Texas
RE David Fuller	Philadelphia
TE J. D. Funyak	North Florida
TE Jonathan Garrett	Fellowship
TE Chris Garriott	Chesapeake
RE Larry Goodman	Tennessee Valley
TE Timothy Gorbey	Eastern Pennsylvania
RE Wyatt Graves	Southwest Florida
TE Peter Green	New River
RE Jason Greene	Northern California
RE Miles Gresham	Evangel
RE Cole Gresham	Evangel
TE Chad Grindstaff	Ohio Valley
TE Elliot Grudem	Eastern Carolina
TE Matt Guzi	Central Carolina
TE Brian Habig	Calvary
TE Kyle Hackmann	Eastern Canada
TE J. Hager	Nashville
TE Bryce Hales	Northern California
RE Derek Halverson	Tennessee Valley
TE Moses Han	Central Florida
TE Brian Hand	Eastern Pennsylvania
RE Bob Hardister	South Texas
TE W. Brian Haring	Gulfstream
RE Jeff Heck	Metro Atlanta
RE Joseph Heidler	Susquehanna Valley

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE Walter Henegar	Metro Atlanta
RE Jason Henning	North Florida
TE Nagib Hermes	Metro Atlanta
TE Daniel F. Herron	Rio Grande
TE Pat Hickman	Central Indiana
TE Omari Hill	Metro Atlanta
TE Wei Ho	Metropolitan New York
RE Tyler Hogan	Heritage
RE Robert Honey	Wisconsin
TE Larry Hoop	Ohio Valley
TE J. T. Hoover	Fellowship
TE Ryan Hudson	Nashville
TE Caleb Hughes	Chicago Metro
TE Dustin Hunt	Rio Grande
RE Josh Hurst	Tennessee Valley
TE Matthew Hutchins	Piedmont Triad
TE Daniel Iverson III	Chesapeake
RE Aaron Jaggard	Potomac
TE Steve Jeantet	Suncoast Florida
TE Christopher Jhu	New York State
TE Hansoo Jin	Philadelphia
TE Charles Johnson	Evangel
TE Todd Johnson	Blue Ridge
TE Reid Jones	Calvary
RE Scott C. Jones	Tennessee Valley
TE Lyndon Jost	Eastern Canada
TE Jay Joye	Southeast Alabama
TE Daniel Jung	Korean Northwest
TE Josh Keller	South Texas
TE Jeremy Kemp	Nashville
TE Samuel Kennedy	Eastern Carolina
TE Jeffrey Kerr	Canada West
TE David Kertland	Susquehanna Valley
TE Austin Kettle	Potomac
TE Mike Khandjian	Chesapeake
TE Sungyak John Kim	Korean Southeastern
TE Andrew Kim	Korean Eastern
TE Dae Kim	Potomac
TE Iron Kim	Northern California

# JOURNAL

TE John Kim	Northern California
TE Solomon Kim	Southern New England
RE Robert King	Highlands
TE Jeremy King	Ohio
RE Nathan Kirkpatrick	Evangel
RE George Koontz	Calvary
TE Ken Kostrzewa	Southern Louisiana
TE Jason Kriaski	Blue Ridge
TE Duke Kwon	Potomac
TE Samuel Lago	Southwest Florida
TE Luke Le Duc	Susquehanna Valley
TE Timothy R. LeCroy	New York State
TE Isaac Lee	Korean Eastern
TE Jacob Lee	Lowcountry
TE David Lindberg	North Texas
TE Nick Locke	South Coast
RE Frank Lopane	Catawba Valley
TE Brian LoPiccolo	Chesapeake
TE Brian Lum Shue Chan	Central Florida
RE Hans Madueme	Tennessee Valley
RE Forrest L. Marion	Tennessee Valley
RE Dave Martin	Georgia Foothills
TE Daniel Mason	Eastern Carolina
TE Paul May	Rocky Mountain
TE Curtis McDaniel III	North Florida
TE Justin McGuire	Palmetto
RE Mark Midyette	Evangel
TE Tim Mindemann	Highlands
TE George Mixon	Calvary
RE David Moore	Central Florida
TE Danny Morgan	South Texas
TE Jeremy Mullen	Lowcountry
RE Mike Nelson	Ohio Valley
TE Murray Nickel	Ohio Valley
TE Daniel Paik	Southern New England
TE Joe Palekas	Potomac
TE Mick Palombo	Central Georgia
TE Moses Park	Southern New England
TE Joe Parker	Metro Atlanta

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE Jake Patton	North Texas
TE Michael Phillips	Rocky Mountain
RE Norman C. Powell	Metro Atlanta
TE Jon Price	Pittsburgh
TE Dan Quakkelaar	Wisconsin
TE Adam Radcliff	South Texas
RE Joseph Raine	Chesapeake
TE Ben Reed	Central Indiana
RE Timothy Reisinger	Heritage
TE Jonathan Richardson	Philadelphia
TE David Richter	Nashville
RE Eugene Rivers	James River
TE Chandler Rowlen	Tennessee Valley
TE Israel Ruiz	Heritage
TE Matt Ryman	Siouxlands
TE Mark Samuel	Chesapeake
TE Steve Schuper	Missouri
TE David Schweissing	Pittsburgh
TE Travis Scott	Pittsburgh
TE Andrew Shank	Highlands
TE Corby Shields	Tennessee Valley
TE Alexander Shipman	Providence
TE Christ Sicks	Potomac
TE Stephen Simmons	Nashville
TE Timothy Sin	Rocky Mountain
TE Shawn Slate	Tennessee Valley
RE Gordon Sluis	Mississippi Valley
TE Charles "Trip" Smith III	Central Carolina
TE Kevin Smith	Tennessee Valley
RE Robert Smole	Tidewater
TE Jonathan Song	Chesapeake
RE Joshua Spare	Rio Grande
TE Will Spink	Providence
RE William Stackler	Mississippi Valley
TE Scott Strickman	Metropolitan New York
TE Bobby Suh	Korean Capital
TE Jeff Suhr	South Coast
TE Aaron Sunu	Korean Southwest
TE Parker Tenent	Covenant

## JOURNAL

RE Bruce Terrell	Metro Atlanta
TE Timothy Udouj	Calvary
TE Andrew Vander Maas	Great Lakes
RE Michael L. Vietz	Gulfstream
TE Mike Viera	Suncoast Florida
TE Jacob Virtue	Calvary
TE Richard Vise	Warrior
TE Nathan Waddell	Chesapeake
TE Greg Ward	South Texas
TE Daniel Wells	Tennessee Valley
TE Clay Werner	Georgia Foothills
RE James W. Wert, Jr.	Metro Atlanta
TE Mark Whipple	Eastern Carolina
TE Nicholas Whitaker	Pacific
TE Noah Wiersema	Missouri
TE John Wilbanks	North Texas
TE Thurman Williams	Missouri
TE Matt Wilson	Gulfstream
TE Keith Winder	Susquehanna Valley
TE Jonathan Winfree	Southwest Florida
RE John C. Wingard, Jr.	Tennessee Valley
TE Joel E. Wood	South Coast
TE Justin Woodall	Southwest Florida
TE John Yenchko	Metropolitan New York
TE Daniel Ying	West Hudson
TE David Young	Central Indiana
TE Joo Young	Potomac
TE Will Young	Nashville
TE G. Eric Youngblood	Tennessee Valley
TE Geoff Zeigler	Chicago Metro

TE Ryan Biese **moved** that the Moderator to appoint a commission to answer the protest (*BCO* 45-5). RE Rich Leino **moved to amend** to make it a committee rather than a commission. The amendment **passed**. TE Fred Greco **moved to amend** that the committee was to report back to this Assembly. The amendment **passed**.

Upon a point of personal privilege, prayer was offered regarding Steve and Sarah Young.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE Jason Piland rose to a **point of order** that based on *RAO 9-2* the motion to appoint a committee is out of order. The Moderator ruled the point was **not well taken** as that provision is for ad interim and study committees and does not apply to this committee.

TE Joshua Suh **moved to amend** that the at least half the committee be comprised of Korean or Korean American brothers.

RE Bob Smole rose to a **point of order** that the previous speaker spoke to the matter prior to the amendment and speeches should address the amendment. The Moderator ruled the point was **not well taken** due to the order of who had the floor.

TE David Fischer rose to a **point of order** that debate is supposed to be about the most recent amendment. The Moderator ruled the point was **not well taken** due to the order of who had the floor.

TE Joseph Pipa **called the question** on all matters.

TE Fred Greco rose to a **point of order** that TE Suh's motion was made and seconded, and so, properly before the body, and therefore the motion to call the question on all matters was appropriately before the Assembly. The point of order was **well taken**.

The **motion** to call the question **passed** (1201-494-26).

The **motion to amend** to have more than 50% of the committee be comprised of Korean or Korean Americans **passed** (1069-630-39).

The **motion** as amended for the Moderator to appoint a committee to answer the protest, with at least half the Committee being Korean or Korean-Americans, to report back to this Assembly **failed** (665-1066-19).

TE Derek Radney **moved** that the Assembly recess for an early lunch and reconvene at 1:30. The Moderator asked that we show a video highlighting Ridge Haven as part of that process. The motion **passed**.

### 51-42 Assembly Recessed

The Assembly recessed for lunch at 11:27 a.m. to reconvene at 1:30 p.m.

## Fifth Session, Thursday Afternoon June 13, 2024

### 51-43 Assembly Reconvened

The Assembly reconvened at 1:30 p.m. with the singing of "Stand Up Stand Up for Jesus" followed by prayer led by TE Tim LeCroy.

**51-44 Overtures Committee Report** (continued from 51-40)

**Recommendation 1** was **moved** to answer **Overture 1** in the negative. RE Trevor Laurence made a **substitute motion** on behalf of the Committee's Minority Report to answer Overture 1 in the Affirmative as Amended (see p. 102).

TE John Keen **called the question** on all matters before the court. The motion **passed** (1425-275-16).

The motion to substitute the committee Recommendation 1 with the Minority Report **failed** (843-880-18)

**Recommendation 1** was **adopted** (950-750-34), answering Overture 1 in the negative.

The following commissioners requested that their negative votes be recorded:

TE Michael Awtry	Pacific Northwest
TE Jeff Birch	Central Georgia
TE Ian Hard	Northern New England
TE Hansoo Jin	Philadelphia
TE Danny Morgan	South Texas
TE Mike Polombo	Central Georgia
TE Israel Ruiz	Heritage
TE Michael Vogel	Wisconsin
TE Noah Wiersema	Missouri

The Chairman closed the report with prayer.

**REPORT OF THE OVERTURES COMMITTEE  
TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**I. Business Referred to the Committee**

29 Overtures: 1-4, 6, 7, 9, 10, 13-33. One overture (33) was referred to AC as well as to the OC. Twenty-three overtures (1-4, 6, 9, 10, 15-30) were referred to CCB as well as to the OC. One overture (14) was referred to CCB, CC and CTS as well as OC. Three overtures (7, 31, 32) were referred to CCB, AC, CC, CDM, CTS, GEN, MNA, MTW, PCAF, RH and RUF as well as to the OC. Six overtures, referred exclusively to other Committees or Agencies, were not considered by the OC (5, 8, 11, 12, 34, 35 to MNA).

**II. Statement of Major Issues Discussed**

Each overture was discussed and recommendations were made. If the OC recommended no amendment to an overture, then that overture is not

reprinted here, and we have included only the Clerk's Summary Title. In instances where the OC proposed amendments to an overture, the Presbytery's proposed action is reprinted, noting the changes proposed by OC (single underlining and ~~single strikethrough~~ for original overture; double underline and ~~double strikethrough~~ for OC amendment).

The full text of the Overtures is found on pp. 34-162 of this *Commissioner Handbook*. OC Recommendation numbers in this report correspond to the Overture numbers.

### III. Summary of Recommendations

1. Piedmont Triad – Amend <i>BCO</i> 35-1; 35-8	Negative	71-59-0
2. Northern California – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6	Affirmative/Amended	119-5-6
3. Pee Dee – Constitutional Status of <i>BCO</i> 53	Affirmative/Amended	94-39-1
4. Central Indiana – Study Committee-Judicial Rules	Negative	116-7-2
6. Susquehanna Valley – Require Background Checks	Ref. to O-17	117-2-1
7. Ascension – Amend <i>RAO</i> 11-5	Affirmative	122-1-0
9. Metro Atlanta – Great Commission requirement to <i>BCO</i> 12-5	Negative	114-16-3
10. Metro Atlanta – Presbytery TE Care to <i>BCO</i> 13-9	Negative	85-44-0
13. Calvary – Letter Regarding Gender Reassignment for Minors	Affirmative/Amended	78-56-1
14. Northwest Georgia – Amend <i>RAO</i> 4-21.d	Affirmative	118-4-1
15. Session of West End PC – Amend <i>BCO</i> 7-2	Negative	129-2-0
16. Warrior – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1	Ref. to O-17	117-2-1
17. Ohio – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1	Affirmative/Amended	115-13-4
18. Ohio – Amend <i>BCO</i> 35-1 and 35-8	Ref. to O-1	98-20-3
19. Session of Fountain Square PC – Amend <i>BCO</i> 41	Negative	104-4-1
20. Session of Fountain Square PC – Amend <i>BCO</i> 31, 32, and 35	Negative	117-2-1
21. Central Indiana – Amend <i>BCO</i> 43-1	Affirmative/Amended	117-3-1
22. South Florida – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-2	Refer back	120-6-0
23. Missouri – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1	Ref. to O-17	117-2-1
24. South Texas – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1	Ref. to O-17	117-2-1
25. Tennessee Valley – Amend <i>BCO</i> 31-2	Negative	88-30-1
26. Tennessee Valley – Amend <i>BCO</i> 32-19	Affirmative/Amended	116-7-1
27. Potomac – Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6	Affirmative	110-15-1

28. New Jersey – Amend <i>RAO</i> 16-6.c.1	Refer back	114-8-1
29. Session of Bryce Avenue PC – Amend <i>BCO</i> 53	Ref. to O-3	120-10-2
30. Lowcountry – Amend <i>BCO</i> 23-1	Negative	77-57-1
31. New River – Amend <i>BCO</i> 14-1	Negative	118-3-3
32. Eastern Pennsylvania – Amend <i>BCO</i> 23	Refer back	130-1-1
33. TE Benjamin Inman – Erect <i>Ad Interim</i> Committee on the Book <i>Jesus Calling</i>	Affirmative/Amended	80-53-2

#### IV. Recommendations

1. That **Overture 1** from Piedmont Triad Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility”, p. 1036) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture introduces the problem of having those who do not believe in the existence of God or a final judgment and who are unable, therefore, to swear an oath before God to give testimony in an ecclesiastical trial. Ecclesiastical trials are not criminal matters but judgments regarding sin and repentance, something non-theists are incapable of understanding. Further, the direct testimony of those who cannot meet the requirements of *BCO* 35-1 is not necessary in many cases. Documents, forensic evidence, medical tests, etc., can be submitted to a church court. Additionally, our *BCO* does not have the restrictive rules of evidence that civil courts do; most prominently, hearsay is admissible. Finally, the Overture would do away with courts’ ability to determine who is a competent witness and do away with the historical requirement of oaths (*BCO* 35-8).

2. That **Overture 2** from Northern California Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 13-6 for Clarity in Transfers of Ordination”, p. 1048) be answered in the **affirmative as amended**. *Adopted*

#### 13-6. Ministers Transferring into the Presbytery

- a. A Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery from another Presbyteries Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be examined on Christian experience, and also touching as to his their views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If the examining Presbytery does not accept the Minister seeking admission, it shall record this fact along with its rationale, if one is adopted in the minutes, and shall communicate its rationale to his current Presbytery.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- b. If an applicants comes from another denominations, the Presbytery shall examine him ~~them~~ thoroughly in ~~knowledge and views~~ as required by the trials listed in BCO 21-4; ~~and require them him to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination~~. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4.
- c. In every case, Presbyteries shall also require each ordained ministers coming from other denominations entering the Presbytery to state the specific instances in which they he may differ with the *Confession of Faith and Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4 (see *BCO* 21-4.f-g (see also *RAO* 16-3.e.5.a-d). ~~Each ordained minister accepted into the Presbytery shall also be required to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination.~~

So the amended section would read:

### 13-6. Ministers Transferring into the Presbytery

- a. A Minister seeking admission to a Presbytery from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be examined on Christian experience, and also as to his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If the examining Presbytery does not accept the Minister seeking admission, it shall record this fact along with its rationale, if one is adopted in the minutes, and shall communicate its rationale to his current Presbytery.
- b. If an applicant comes from another denomination, the Presbytery shall examine him thoroughly as required by the trials listed in *BCO* 21-4 and require him to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4.
- c. In every case, Presbyteries shall require each ordained minister entering the Presbytery to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the *Confession of Faith and Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences

the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4.f-g (see also *RAO* 16-3.e.5.a-d).

**Grounds:** The Overture fixes a potential problem when the transfer of a minister from one presbytery to another is not accepted, by making it possible for the Presbytery to adopt a rationale for such action. It also would require presbyteries to obtain a man's stated differences to the Standards in accordance with long-standing practice.

3. That **Overture 3** from Pee Dee Presbytery ("Grant Constitutional Status to *BCO* 53 re Preaching", p. 1050) be answered in the **affirmative as amended**. *Not Adopted*

**Therefore, be it resolved,** that the Pee Dee Presbytery hereby requests the 51st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to amend our Book of Church Order 53 (single underlining and single strikethrough for original overture; double underline and double strike through for OC amendment) and give this chapter constitutional status.

## CHAPTER 53

### *The Preaching of the Word*

**53-1.** The preaching of the Word is an ordinance of God for the salvation of men. Serious attention should be paid to the manner in which it is done. The minister or a qualified man should apply himself to it with diligence and prove himself a "worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Timothy 2:15).

**53-2.** The subject of a sermon should be some verse or verses of Scripture, and its object, to explain, defend and apply some part of the system of divine truth; or to point out the nature, and state the bounds and obligation, of some duty. A text should not be merely a motto, but should fairly contain the doctrine proposed to be handled. It is proper also that large portions of Scripture be sometimes expounded, and particularly improved, for the instruction of the people in the meaning and use of the sacred Scriptures.

**53-3.** Preaching requires much study, meditation, and prayer, and ministers or qualified men should prepare their sermons with care, and not indulge themselves in loose, extemporary harangues, nor serve God

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

with that which costs them naught. They should, however, keep to the simplicity of the Gospel, and express themselves in language that can be understood by all. They should also by their lives adorn the Gospel which they preach, and be examples to believers in word and deed.

**53-4.** As a primary design of public ordinances is to unite the people in acts of common worship of the most high God, ministers, or a qualified man, should be careful not to make their sermons so long as to interfere with or exclude the important duties of prayer and praise, but should preserve a just proportion in the several parts of public worship.

**53-5.** By way of application of the sermon the minister, or a qualified man, may urge his hearers by commandment or invitation to repent of their sins, to put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and to confess him publicly before men.

**53-6.** ~~No person qualified man should be invited to preach or exhort in any of the churches under our care without the consent of the Session. Only qualified men may be invited to preach in any of the churches under our care and only with the consent of the Session.~~

**Grounds:** The amended version of the Overture clarifies the language of 53-6, and otherwise supports the proposal of the Presbytery.

4. That **Overture 4** from Central Indiana Presbytery (“Establish Study Committee for Judicial Rules Changes”, p. 1053) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture is not the ordinary, or best, solution for amending the Constitution, and we are not persuaded there is a systematic problem with the Rules of Discipline that might indicate the need for an extraordinary process. Historically, *BCO* amendments have been offered by Presbyteries on specific matters or provisions, handled by the Overtures Committee, and submitted to the General Assembly for approval. We believe it is not the best course to submit a series of Overtures to a temporary committee for further refinement. Additionally, it is highly unusual both to propose a specific composition for a committee and also require that the committee be self-funding.

5. *[Overture 5 was referred by the Stated Clerk to MNA.]*

6. That **Overture 6** from Susquehanna Valley Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* Sections to Require Background Checks for Church Office”, p. 1067) be answered **with reference to the answer to Overture 17.** *Adopted*
7. That **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery (“Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments”, p. 1070) be answered in the **affirmative.** *Adopted*
8. *[Overture 8 was referred by the Stated Clerk to MNA.]*
9. That **Overture 9** from Metro Atlanta Presbytery (“Add Great Commission Requirement to *BCO* 12-5”, p. 1074) be answered in the **negative.** *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture is unnecessary. The Church exists to fulfill the Great Commission and has been the work of PCA congregations throughout its history. Not every Biblical and laudable work needs to be explicitly laid out as a duty of a Session. Further, *BCO* 12-5.d already charges Sessions “to promote obedience to the Great Commission in its totality at home and abroad.”

10. That **Overture 10** from Metro Atlanta Presbytery (“Add Presbytery TE Care to *BCO* 13-9”, p. 1075) be answered in the **negative.** *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture is unnecessary. Because Teaching Elders are members of Presbytery (*BCO* 13-1), the Presbytery already has both the jurisdiction and obligation to shepherd them.

11. *[Overture 11 was referred by the Stated Clerk to MNA.]*
12. *[Overture 12 was referred by the Stated Clerk to MNA.]*
13. That **Overture 13** from Calvary Presbytery (“Commend and Encourage Distribution of Commission Letter Regarding Gender Reassignment for Minors”, p. 1078) be answered in the **affirmative as amended.** *Adopted*

That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly commend as biblically faithful the letter written by the PCAGA50 Moderator’s Commission, humbly petitioning leaders of the United States Government “to protect the lives and welfare of minor children from the physical, mental, and emotional harms associated with medical and surgical interventions for the purpose of



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

gender reassignment.” ~~Furthermore, we call upon you to use your positions to promote the health, bodily integrity, and wellbeing of minors who are suffering from gender dysphoria and related conditions.”~~

~~That the 51st General Assembly further encourage PCA Sessions and Presbyteries to communicate with their own respective regional and/or municipal governments the same.~~

**Grounds:** This answer affirms the Biblical faithfulness of the letter drafted by the Commission, while leaving it to the discretion of each court to determine whether or how to share the letter with civil magistrates.

14. That **Overture 14** from Northwest Georgia Presbytery (“Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data From Higher Ed Institutions”, p. 1082) be answered in the **affirmative**. *Adopted*
15. That **Overture 15** from the Session of West End PC (“Amend *BCO* 7-2 to Specify Ordination for Biological Males Only”, p. 1083) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** Our Standards are clear that ordained offices are open only to men by Biblical warrant. Efforts to further define the term “men” is to accept the current cultural confusion on the issue.

16. That **Overture 16** from Warrior Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, 24-1 to Require Background Checks”, p. 1084) be answered **with reference to the answer to Overture 17**. *Adopted*
17. That **Overture 17** from Ohio Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”, p. 1089) be answered in the **affirmative as amended**. *Adopted*

~~Be it resolved that *BCO* 13-6 be amended by adding a final paragraph to the end of the section: (single underlining and single strikethrough for original overture; double underline and double strikethrough for OC amendment):~~

~~13-6. ...~~

~~A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of the candidate’s Christian~~

~~experience (if seeking admission from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America) or acquaintance with experiential religion (if seeking admission from other denominations [see BCO 21-4.e.(1)(a)]). The candidate shall be permitted to address the results of the background check.~~

**~~Be it further resolved that BCO 21-4.e.(1) be amended by adding a final unnumbered paragraph to the end of the subsection:~~**

**~~21-4.e.(1)...~~**

~~A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate's experiential religion (BCO 21-4.e.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the results of the background check.~~

So that the unnumbered paragraphs will read

~~“A Presbytery may accept a seminary degree which includes study in the original languages in lieu of an oral examination in the original languages.~~

~~A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate's experiential religion (BCO 21-4.e.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.”~~

**~~Be it further resolved that BCO 24-1 be amended by inserting a second unnumbered paragraph after subsection c. and before the unnumbered paragraph that begins, “Notwithstanding the above...”:~~**

**~~24-1.c...~~**

~~A Session shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Session, as part of its examination of a candidate's Christian experience (BCO 24-1.a.). The candidate shall be permitted to address the results of the background check.~~

**Be it further resolved** that Presbyteries and Sessions are ~~hereby~~ encouraged to adopt policies for conducting ~~mandatory~~ background checks on every candidate for office.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Grounds:** The Overture would have mandated background checks without mandating the process and procedures. A “one-size-fits-all” mandate in our *BCO* raises several issues, including who gets to see the results of background checks, who pays for them, and who protects the private information required. The amended language encourages church courts to adopt policies and procedures, which is wise, without making specific mandates.

18. That **Overture 18** from Ohio Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility”, p. 1095) be answered **with reference to the answer to Overture 1**. *Adopted*

19. That **Overture 19** from the Session of Fountain Square PC (“Amend *BCO* 41 to allow Venue Change in Judicial Cases”, p. 1100) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture would fundamentally change the way a matter or case is handled when a court is unable or unwilling to adjudicate a matter or a case. Current *BCO* 41 provides an avenue in such situations. The Overture would move matters to a court that does not have jurisdiction (*BCO* 46) over a person or church – requiring someone to submit to a non-jurisdictional court. *BCO* 41 does not suffer from that weakness.

20. That **Overture 20** from the Session of Fountain Square PC (“Proposed Systematic Changes to *BCO* 31, 32, and 35”, p. 1103) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture proposes amending three chapters of the *BCO*, a far too ambitious prospect for either the Overtures Committee or the General Assembly, particularly given we are not persuaded there is a systematic problem with the Rules of Discipline. It would be better for such a large series of *BCO* changes to be submitted in a more discrete and focused fashion.

21. That **Overture 21** from Central Indiana Presbytery (“Change the Prohibition Against ‘Interlocutory Appeal’ by Complaint in *BCO* 43-1”, p. 1153) be answered in the **affirmative as amended**. *Adopted*

**Resolved** that the *Book of Church Order (BCO)* 43 be amended as follows (single underlining and ~~single strikethrough~~ for original Overture; double underline and ~~double strikethrough~~ for OC amendment):

**43-1.** A complaint is a written representation made against some act or decision of a court of the Church. It is the right of any communing member of the Church in good standing to make complaint against any action of a court to whose jurisdiction he is subject, except that no complaint is allowable in a judicial case ~~in which an appeal is pending~~ after process has commenced. If, ~~a complaint is filed~~ at any time after process has commenced, a BCO 43-1 complaint is timely filed, the court's adjudication shall be delayed until after the judicial case has been completed, or, if an appeal is filed, after it has been fully adjudicated or withdrawn. During judicial process, the accused may raise BCO 32-14 objections on a variety of matters and the original court shall decide each. Those decisions could be reviewable on appeal.

**Grounds:** The changes to the Overture address CCB's concerns about the timeliness of complaints while preserving the Overture's desire that complaints arising in the course of judicial matters do not delay the adjudication of the judicial matter.

22. That **Overture 22** from South Florida Presbytery ("Amend *BCO* 13-2 to clarify Teaching Elder Presbytery Membership", p. 1155) be **referred back to the Presbytery**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** This Overture would benefit from additional work, as it shows a potential conflict in the *BCO*, that 8-7 and 13-2 define the place of a Teaching Elder's membership differently. However, the Overture does not resolve this conflict fully, as some Teaching Elders have a field of labor that spans multiple presbyteries and others do limited work outside the geographic bounds of their presbytery, but have a call to a work in their presbytery.

23. That **Overture 23** from Missouri Presbytery ("Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office", p. 1156) be answered **with reference to the answer to Overture 17**. *Adopted*

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

24. That **Overture 24** from South Texas Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”, p. 1160) be answered **with reference to the answer to Overture 17**. *Adopted*
25. That **Overture 25** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 31-2 to Expand Who May Assist in an Investigations”, p. 1164) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture introduces non-binding language into the *BCO*. Courts are already free to use third parties in *BCO* 31-2 investigations (or even in informal inquiries). The Overture creates a potential problem because its language may create an assumption that courts should always use third parties, and if they do not, they have somehow failed in their duty.

26. That **Overture 26** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 32-19 To Expand Representation of Accused Persons Before Church Courts”, p. 1165) be answered in the **affirmative as amended**. *Adopted*

**Therefore**, be it resolved that *BCO* 32-19 be amended as follows (single underlining and ~~single strikethrough~~ for original overture; double underline and ~~double strikethrough~~ for OC amendment):

**32-19.** No professional counsel shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court; but an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented before the Session or the Presbytery by any member in good standing of a church in the same Presbytery or by any Teaching Elder member of that Presbytery, or before the General Assembly by any court by a communing member of the same particular church, or before any other court, by any member of that court in good standing of a PCA church or any member in good standing of a in the PCA court. A member of the court so employed shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case. Courts are encouraged to suggest to the accused/appellant the names of potential representatives and potential advisors he might contact.

So the amended section would read:

**32-19.** No professional counsel shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court; but an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented before the Session or the Presbytery

by any member in good standing of a church in the same Presbytery or by any Teaching Elder member of that Presbytery, or before the General Assembly by any member in good standing in the PCA. A member of the court so employed shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case. Courts are encouraged to suggest to the accused/appellant the names of potential representatives and potential advisors he might contact.

**Grounds:** The Overture, as amended, solves the problem that existing *BCO* 32-19 is too restrictive on who may assist an accused person before a Session. It is very possible that there would be no other “communing member of the same particular church” with sufficient knowledge of the Rules of Discipline to help an accused person. The amended language avoids a counter problem in that allowing any member of the PCA to represent an accused before a Session could enable an ecclesiastical “expert” to overmatch a small local Session. The amended language provides an appropriate balance that will aid church courts in judicial cases.

27. That **Overture 27** from Potomac Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 13-6 to Add Personal Character and Family Management to the Examination of Transferring Ministers”, p. 1167) be answered in the **affirmative**.

*Adopted*

28. That **Overture 28** from New Jersey Presbytery (“Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1. to Eliminate Conflict with *BCO* 40-5”, p. 1168) be **referred back to the Presbytery**.

*Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture attempts to resolve a purported conflict between *RAO* 16.6.c.1 and *BCO* 40-5. However, it fails to provide sufficient clarity about the conflict's nature or a solution that would avoid future controversy. As a result, we believe it is wisest to send the Overture back to the Presbytery for further refinement.

29. That **Overture 29** from the Session of Bryce Avenue PC (“Amend *BCO* 53 by Addition To Ensure Only Men Preach”, p. 1170) be answered **with reference to the answer to Overture 3**.

*Adopted*

30. That **Overture 30** from Lowcountry Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 23-21 To Require that the Presbytery of Jurisdiction *Conduct* an Exit Interview Prior to Dissolution of Call”, p. 1171) be answered in the **negative**.

*Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture would mandate “exit interviews” for a Teaching Elder leaving a call. There are several reasons not to create such a mandate, including that Presbyteries already may conduct “exit interviews” with TEs and commissioners of a congregation per *BCO* 23-1; the mandatory nature of this meeting could delay the transfer of a Teaching Elder in good standing when there are no problems for months until the Presbytery can meet and have this exit interview; and no Teaching Elder is currently Constitutionally hindered from any discussion with his Presbytery. What a Teaching Elder or a congregation discusses should be left to their discretion.

31. That **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy”, p. 1175) be answered in the **negative**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture contains confusing terms, which could exacerbate the problems it seeks to solve. No clear definition is given for “ministry priority” or “operational policy.” It is unclear what would be an “organization that remain[s] entirely under the oversight of the committee or agency.” Further, the Permanent Committees have not had an adequate opportunity to study the Overture and assess its effects.

32. That **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery (“Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those Employed by a Committee or Agency”, p. 1180) be **referred back to the Presbytery**. *Adopted*

**Grounds:** The Overture raises significant issues relating to non-congregational calls to Teaching Elders from PCA Committees and Agencies. It does not, however, resolve or address all possible concerns beyond the dissolution of such calls (e.g., issuing of such calls, transfers of Teaching Elders with such calls, or questions for installation). The Overture would benefit from additional work.

33. That **Overture 33** from TE Benjamin Inman (“Erect *Ad Interim* Committee on the Book *Jesus Calling*”, p. 1182) be answered in the **affirmative as amended**. **80-53-2**

~~Therefore be it resolved that the General Assembly erect an Ad Interim Committee tasked to return a report to the next convened General Assembly:~~

- ~~1. Documenting the PCA's historical relationship to the book, *Jesus Calling*.~~
- ~~2. Demonstrating whether the book constitutes a violation of the Second Commandment according to our Subordinate Standards as proved from Scripture.~~
- ~~3. Bringing recommendations for any warranted actions of repentance by the PCA.~~

~~Therefore be it further resolved that the General Assembly's Theological Examining Committee be empowered as a commission to populate the ad interim committee with four (4) Teaching Elders and five (5) Ruling Elders (including from their own number if they so decide):~~

~~Therefore be it further resolved that the committee be encouraged to make judicious use of video conferencing and to seek assistance from TE Wayne Sparkman of the PCA Historical Center, and the budget not exceed \$10,000 to be funded by gifts to the AC designated for this purpose.~~

Therefore be it resolved that the General Assembly request reports to be returned to the 52nd General Assembly from the permanent committees of the two agencies most connected with the *Jesus Calling* book.

From the permanent committee for the Committee on Discipleship Ministries, a brief report that will:

1. Examine the history of the CDM's relationship with the book and outline its reasons for withdrawing the book from its inventory previously and not offering it for sale since.
2. Assess the book's appropriateness for Christians in general and PCA members and congregations in particular with special regard for its doctrine and method.
3. Provide recommendations (if needed) for remedial materials, advisory statements, or General Assembly actions concerning *Jesus Calling*.

And from Mission to the World, a brief report that will:

1. Examine MTW's relationship with the book, knowledge of its content, and any counsel given to the author.



2. Consider actions that MTW and the General Assembly should take in light of this study of the book and of the agency's relationship to it.

**Grounds:** The amended version of the Overture allows the relevant permanent committees to examine and demonstrate the PCA's relationship with this book and its appropriateness for Christians, while not creating an unnecessary study committee.

**V. Commissioners Present**

**Presbytery**

Arizona  
Arizona  
Ascension  
Ascension  
Blue Ridge  
Blue Ridge  
Calvary  
Calvary  
Canada West  
Canada West  
Catawba Valley  
Catawba Valley  
Central Carolina  
Central Carolina  
Central Florida  
Central Florida  
Central Georgia  
Central Georgia  
Central Indiana  
Chesapeake  
Chesapeake  
Chicago Metro  
Columbus Metro  
Columbus Metro  
Covenant  
Covenant  
Eastern Canada  
Eastern Canada

**Commissioner**

RE Dave Price  
TE Joshua Walker  
TE Cody Hooper  
RE Frederick Neikirk  
RE Stephen Hobson  
TE Burress McCombe  
TE Brian C. Habig  
RE Scott Hultstrand  
RE Paul Mandry  
TE Adam Harris  
RE Jim Aldridge  
TE Michael Colvard  
TE Ralph Johnston  
RE Flynt Jones  
RE Andrew Augenstein  
TE Justin Borger  
TE Paul L. Bankson  
RE John Mitchell  
TE Taylor Bradbury  
RE Joe Raine  
TE Mark C. Samuel  
TE Geoff M. Ziegler  
RE Chip Crickard  
TE Chris Mabee  
TE Douglas M. Barcroft  
RE Jonathan Barlow  
RE Ewan Goligher  
TE Kyle Hackmann

# JOURNAL

Eastern Carolina	TE Sam Kennedy
Eastern Carolina	RE Michael Newkirk
Eastern Pennsylvania	TE Taylor Anthony Bradley
Evangel	TE Jim Alexander
Evangel	RE Brandon Robbins
Fellowship	TE Caleb Blow
Fellowship	RE Chad Cureton
Georgia Foothills	TE Scott Barber
Georgia Foothills	RE Jack Wilson
Grace	RE Troy Gibson
Grace	TE David T. Irving
Great Lakes	TE Bruce Baugus
Great Lakes	RE Jerome Gorgon
Gulf Coast	RE Mike M. McCrary
Gulf Coast	TE Stephen B. Tipton
Heartland	TE Rick Franks
Heartland	RE Lance Kinzer
Heritage	TE Steve Coward
Heritage	RE Conrad W Judy Jr
Highlands	TE Jonathan D. Inman
Hills and Plains	RE Noel Henley
Hills and Plains	TE Chris Taylor
Houston Metro	RE Dave Cias
Houston Metro	TE Fred Greco
Illiana	TE Scott Edburg
Illiana	RE Andre Kok
Iowa	RE Chris Sutton
James River	TE Eric Ansell Dugan
James River	RE Matt Fender
Korean Capital	TE Hyung Min David Bae
Korean Central	TE Brian Park
Korean Northeastern	TE Hoochan Paul Lee
Korean Southeastern	TE Edward Lim
Lowcountry	RE Donald Cummings
Lowcountry	TE Alexander Dorn Mark
Metro Atlanta	TE Drew Archer
Metro Atlanta	RE James W. Wert Jr.
Metropolitan New York	TE Scott Strickman
Mississippi Valley	RE Chuck Murphy

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mississippi Valley	TE David Strain
Missouri	TE Charles Stover
Nashville	TE Mitchell Carter
Nashville	RE Bryce Sullivan
New Jersey	RE Aaron Snethen
New Jersey	TE Ted W. Trefsgar Jr.
New River	TE John W. Downs
New York State	TE Christopher Jhu
North Florida	TE Tommy Peterson
North Texas	TE Anton Heuss
North Texas	RE James Poteet
Northern California	TE Alex Ford
Northern California	RE Jason Greene
Northern Illinois	RE Lee Gerriettes
Northern Illinois	TE David Keithley
Northern New England	TE Ian G. Hard
Northwest Georgia	TE Job Dalomba
Northwest Georgia	RE Chuck Lokey
Ohio	TE Christopher Lee Hutchings
Ohio	RE Scott Wulff
Ohio Valley	RE Shay Fout
Ohio Valley	TE Zach Meyer
Pacific	TE Christian Bland
Pacific	RE Ron Warren
Pacific Northwest	TE Matthew H. Allhands
Pacific Northwest	RE Camden Spiller
Palmetto	TE Joshua Knott
Pee Dee	RE Carl Bazemore
Pee Dee	TE John Mark Irwin
Piedmont Triad	RE Trevor Laurence
Piedmont Triad	TE Jacob Morrison
Pittsburgh	RE David Auman
Pittsburgh	TE Ray E. Heiple Jr.
Platte Valley	RE Robert DeYoung
Platte Valley	TE Andrew Lightner
Potomac	RE Aaron Jaggard
Potomac	TE Joel C. St. Clair
Providence	RE John R. Bise
Providence	TE Joe Henry Steele III

## JOURNAL

Rio Grande	RE Arlen Biersgreen
Rio Grande	TE Daniel Ferrell Herron
Rocky Mountain	TE Matthew William Giesman
Rocky Mountain	RE EJ Nusbaum
Savannah River	RE Ty Donaldson
Savannah River	TE David Senters
Siouxlands	TE Nathan Lee
Siouxlands	RE Ben Wiener
South Florida	TE David Barry
South Florida	RE Gregory Miseyko
South Texas	TE Eric Landry
South Texas	RE Joshua Torrey
Southeast Alabama	TE Brannon Bowman
Southeast Alabama	RE Rick Clark
Southern Louisiana	TE Anthony Pyles
Southern New England	TE Daniel J. Jarstfer
Southern New England	RE Chris Shoemaker
Southwest Florida	RE Frank McCaulley
Southwest Florida	TE Aldo Omar Mondin
Suncoast Florida	TE Brent Stuart Lauder
Suncoast Florida	RE Michael Levenhagen
Susquehanna Valley	RE John Barry
Susquehanna Valley	TE Angelo Valle
Tennessee Valley	RE James Isbell
Tennessee Valley	TE Brian Salter
Tidewater	RE Timothy Nargi Jr.
Warrior	TE Derrick Brite
Westminster	RE Kerry Belcher
Westminster	TE Steven E. Warhurst
Wisconsin	TE Michael Bowman
Wisconsin	RE Steve Iler

Commissioners from the following Presbyteries were not present:

Gulfstream  
Korean Northwest  
Korean Southern  
Korean Southwest  
Korean Southwest Orange County

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Philadelphia  
Philadelphia Metro West  
South Coast  
West Hudson

Respectfully submitted,  
/s/ TE Stephen B. Tipton, Chairman      /s/ TE Edward Lim, Secretary

**OVERTURES COMMITTEE  
MINORITY REPORT  
On Overture 1**

**Motion of the Minority Report**

We, the minority, move the following to be adopted as a substitute motion to the recommendation of the Overtures Committee.

That the General Assembly answer Overture 1 in the affirmative as amended:

**Be it resolved:** That *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 be amended by deleting some current language (indicated below by strikethrough) and adding some new language (indicated below by underlining).

**35-1.** All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses, ~~except such as do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments.~~ Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency.

*No changes to BCO 35-2 through 35-7*

**35-8.** ~~The oath or affirmation to a witness shall be administered by the Moderator in the following or like terms:~~ The court shall inform the witness that, regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or affirmation is made in the presence of God and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

**Do you solemnly swear ~~promise~~, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?**

If, however, the witness cannot take an oath either for conscientious reasons or because he is not a Christian and thus not able to take a lawful oath invoking God, the Moderator shall then ask the witness the following: at any time a witness should present himself before a court, who for conscientious reasons prefers to swear or affirm in any other manner, he should be allowed to do so.

**Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?**

Such that the final text reads:

**35-1.** All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses. Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency.

*No changes to BCO 35-2 through 35-7*

**35-8.** The court shall inform the witness that, regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or affirmation is made in the presence of God and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

**Do you solemnly swear, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?**

If, however, the witness cannot take an oath either for conscientious reasons or because he is not a Christian and thus not able to take a lawful oath invoking God, the Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

**Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?**

### **Clarifying Questions Regarding the Proposed Amendment**

*What does the current BCO 35 allow and prohibit?*

*BCO* 35-1 currently prohibits courts from hearing the testimony of those who do not believe in God or a future state of rewards and punishments. Witnesses who believe in God and a future state of rewards and punishments—including Christians and non-Christian theists—are permitted to provide testimony as witnesses. Significantly, non-believers who are adherents of other religions and thus meet the theistic requirement of *BCO* 35-1 are currently permitted as valid witnesses in PCA courts.

*BCO* 35-8 currently specifies the oath to be administered to witnesses. However, the provision permits witnesses who for conscientious reasons prefer to swear or affirm in any other manner to do so. Thus, *BCO* 35-8 as currently written does not universally mandate oaths for all witnesses in PCA courts.

*What does the amendment change?*

The amendment strikes part of one sentence in *BCO* 35-1, removing the prohibition against witnesses who do not believe in God or a future state of rewards or punishments. The amendment thus expands witness eligibility so that courts may receive testimony from non-theists, alongside the Christians and non-Christian theists who are currently permitted.

The proposal also amends *BCO* 35-8 such that every witness must be informed that his oath or affirmation is offered in the presence of God and that God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. In addition to the scripted oath that is the default for Christian witnesses, there is also a scripted affirmation applicable to all witnesses with conscientious objections to oath-taking and to all non-Christian witnesses—theist and non-theist alike—who, according to WCF 22.2, are not able to take a lawful oath.

*What is the goal of the amendment?*

The goal of the amendment is to expand witness eligibility—permitting the courts of the church to hear the testimony of non-theists—so that PCA courts have access to all relevant testimony in their pursuit of truth, justice, righteousness, and faithfulness. The current provision constrains the courts of the church,

prohibiting them from receiving potentially valuable testimony from non-theists. The amendment aims to free the courts to receive relevant testimony regardless of the personal beliefs of any potential witness as the courts seek the peace and purity of the church in all their judicial deliberations and are entrusted to exercise the responsibility placed upon them by *BCO* 35-5 “to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence.”

*Is this the same Overture that the Committee on Constitutional Business (CCB) ruled as “constitutionally vague”?*

No, this is an amended version of Overture 1 that resolves the issue identified by CCB.

*Does this amendment give atheists standing in PCA courts?*

No, the amendment does not give atheists standing in PCA courts. Rather, the amendment simply gives PCA courts the right to hear their testimony and render faithful, informed judgment as shepherds of the sheep.

*Does this amendment seek to open witness eligibility to non-Christians?*

PCA courts are already permitted to receive testimony from non-Christian witnesses according to *BCO* 35-1, so long as those witnesses believe in God and a future state of rewards or punishments. Muslims, Jews, deists, pagans, and the “spiritual but not religious” may thus currently serve as valid witnesses in cases of process, while non-theists are barred from testifying. The amendment seeks to extend the eligibility already granted to non-Christian theists to non-theists. There is no compelling reason why the court may receive testimony from adherents of false religions and yet be prohibited from receiving testimony from non-theists.

*Does this amendment open witness eligibility to individuals who are not under the jurisdiction of PCA courts?*

*BCO* 35-1 already permits any non-Christian theist—who is not subject to the court’s jurisdiction or authority to discipline—to testify as a witness. As currently written, *BCO* 35-1 does not require potential witnesses to be under the court’s jurisdiction, and expanding witness eligibility to non-theists would not change this aspect of the PCA’s existing policy.

*Does this amendment remove the necessity of oath-taking from PCA courts or diminish the gravity of oaths?*



*BCO* 35-8 already permits witnesses for conscientious reasons to forego the exemplary oath and “affirm in any other manner.” As currently written, *BCO* 35-8 does not require all potential witnesses to swear an oath. The amendment’s provision for an affirmation is therefore not a novel introduction into the PCA’s existing policy.

While non-Christian theists are currently permitted to testify in the courts of the church—and, presumably, to swear the included oath in its present language by God’s name—the amendment’s added promise removes the possibility that a non-Christian witness might be asked to swear an oath by God’s name. In this way, the amendment is more consistent with the claims of *WCF* 22.2 that oaths by God’s name require “holy fear and reverence” and must not be sworn “vainly and rashly”—conditions that are impossible for non-Christians to meet. Rather than diminishing the gravity of oaths, the amendment upholds the significance and gravity of oaths, guarding against their improper use in PCA courts.

*Is this amendment specifically concerned with scenarios involving abuse?*

No, the amendment is concerned with the availability of witness testimony in every type of case that might appear before PCA courts. In any judicial matter where witness testimony is necessary, non-theist witnesses may be able to offer substantive testimony regarding an offense or provide exculpatory testimony regarding an accused individual’s innocence. The amendment thus seeks to give courts the freedom to obtain such testimony so that they might arrive at the truth, justly convicting the guilty and exonerating the innocent.

*Does this amendment confuse the role of civil and ecclesial courts?*

No, there is nothing in the amendment that attempts to take jurisdiction over criminal matters away from the civil magistrate or to wield the power of the sword. Criminal offenses ought to be reported to the civil authorities, and such authorities bear the responsibility of rendering legal judgment. Ecclesial courts are concerned with determining the truth and exercising discipline in matters of sin, many of which are non-criminal in nature and never fall under the purview of any civil magistrate. In all ecclesial matters, the amendment seeks to free the courts to receive any and all relevant testimony as they discipline sin, exonerate the falsely accused, and guard the peace and purity of the church.

*Does documentary evidence make atheist testimony unnecessary?*

No, the potential availability of documentary evidence in certain criminal matters does not render unnecessary the testimony of any witness. There are all manner of offenses and situations that are of interest to ecclesial courts that do not leave documentary evidence and thus require witness testimony for substantiation and adjudication (e.g., lying, adultery, alcoholism). Documentary evidence is in reality only available in a small fraction of cases relevant to the courts of the church. In those criminal matters that result in documentary evidence, documentation may be unavailable, incorrect, or incomplete, rendering it of little value to ecclesial courts.

Even where documentary evidence is available, documents—unlike human witnesses—cannot answer the questions posed to them by various parties seeking clarification, disputing facts, clarifying assertions, or pursuing further related information in a judicial process. The courts’ ability to hear all relevant witness testimony is therefore immensely important to their pursuit of truth and justice both when documentary evidence may be available and in the far more frequent scenarios when it is not.

*Does the admissibility of hearsay make atheist testimony unnecessary?*

No, the admissibility of hearsay does not render the first-person testimony of any witness unnecessary. If the aim of the courts is to determine the truth, the opportunity for parties to cross-examine an actual witness rather than merely receive hearsay is of profound importance, since this enables the prosecution and defense to seek clarification, dispute facts, clarify assertions, and pursue further related information that may be necessary for right judgment. What is more, if atheist testimony is indeed already functionally admissible as hearsay, it serves the interests of the court to be able to cross-examine the actual witness in order to better determine the veracity and relevance of any statements and to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to the evidence.

*What about the concern that “all atheists are liars” and thus pose a unique threat to the courts?*

It is indeed true that all non-believers “by their unrighteousness suppress the truth” (Rom 1:18) that God has revealed to all about himself. However, from this it does not follow that every non-believer always and only speaks lies. Further, it is unclear why non-theists should be understood as more egregious liars or as a unique threat in comparison to theistic adherents of false religions, who are already permitted by BCO 35-1 to serve as valid witnesses before the courts of the church. PCA courts are already empowered and entrusted to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence, including the testimony of non-Christian witnesses,

and there is no reason to believe the courts are incapable of doing so with the testimony of non-theist witnesses.

Further, a non-theist willing to lie in order to intentionally and maliciously bring harm to the church will presumably have no ethical qualms about lying concerning his belief in the supernatural in order that he be permitted to testify as a witness in the first place. Consequently, the current provisions of *BCO 35* functionally do nothing to protect the church from an individual committed to spreading lies about and within the church. Ironically, the provisions as presently constructed serve only to prohibit the testimony of an honest atheist who forthrightly acknowledges his non-belief and yet wishes to bear truthful witness to the court, even as they are impotent against the dishonest atheist who is willing to lie about his beliefs in order to be admitted as a witness. The proposed amendment, however, removes the obstacle barring the honest atheist from testifying and, rather than relying on ineffective safeguards against malicious liars, focuses attention on the court's responsibility to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to the testimony of theist and non-theist witnesses alike.

## Conclusion

We, the minority, appeal to the assembly to vote to answer Overture 1 in the affirmative as amended, thereby granting our courts access to the truth wherever it may be found so that they may faithfully and diligently perform their task of guarding and promoting the peace and purity of church.

## Minority Report Signers

TE Charles Stover  
RE Andrew Augenstein  
TE Ian Hard  
TE Matt Allhands  
TE Drew Archer  
TE Brian Salter  
TE Joshua Knott  
TE Hyung (Davie) Min Bae  
TE Caleb Blow  
RE Arlen Biersgreen  
TE Zach Meyer  
TE Kyle Hackmann

TE Geoff Ziegler  
TE John Downs  
RE Joshua Torrey  
RE Joseph Ruine  
RE Jason Greene  
RE John Mitchell  
RE Chris Sutton  
TE Chris Jhu  
TE Mitchell Carter  
RE Ron Warren  
TE Joel St. Clair  
TE Sam Kennedy

TE Jacob Morrison  
TE Tony Pyles  
TE Steve Coward  
TE Brian Park  
TE Alex Ford  
TE Mark Samuel  
RE Ewan Goligher  
RE Jim Wert  
TE Christian Bland  
TE David Keithley  
RE Aaron D. Jaggard  
RE Trevor Laurence

**51-45 Singing of a Hymn**

The Assembly sang Psalm 23 a cappella led by TE Larry Roff.

**51-46 Committee on Thanks Report**

RE Mel Duncan led the Assembly in prayer and gave the report, which was received as information. The **Resolution on Thanks** was adopted by acclamation. RE Duncan thanked TE Caleb Cangelosi serving in the historical center with research for this report. RE Duncan closed the report in prayer.

**RESOLUTION OF THANKS  
FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

FOR YOU CREATED MY INMOST BEING YOU KNIT ME TOGETHER IN MY MOTHERS WOMB! For the past week our hearts have been encouraged and knit more tightly together by four PCA Presbyteries; Blue Ridge, James River, Korean Capital and Tidewater cooperating to host the 51st General Assembly on the banks of the James River. The PCA family has enjoyed the wonderful Southern hospitality of Greater Richmond and our local churches.

We thank God for the privilege of dwelling for a season in the Old Dominion where twenty-five-year-old Samuel Davies founded the historic Polegreen Presbyterian Church in 1748, where old Hanover Presbytery was formed in 1755. We thank God for the liberty that we enjoy as Presbyterians and as Americans because of the seeds that were sown by our forefathers in the faith.

We are full of gratitude for River City Presbyterianism; the ministry of William Swan Plumer, pastor of First Church Richmond from 1834-1846, and his heart for church planting that led to the establishment of Second Church, faithfully served by Moses Drury Hoge for fifty-four years.

We also cherish the memory of the remarkable John Chavis, Revolutionary War veteran and the first African American college graduate in the United States, who studied under Witherspoon at Princeton who served Presbyterian institutions here in the Commonwealth and was a pioneer for the Reformed Faith in the African American Community.

We remember with thanksgiving the ministries of William Hill and Kennedy Smart at West End Church in Hopewell, and the early days of Tim Keller's ministry at

West Hopewell Church. It is remarkable to recall that when the PCA was formed in 1973, not a single Presbyterian congregation in Richmond joined the fledgling denomination; yet in addition to two churches that came into the PCA in the Joining and Receiving of 1983, the Lord has been at work planting churches, so that Richmond and its surrounding counties now have nine churches and three church plants. We remember fondly Dr. Howard Griffith, the founding pastor of All Saints Reformed Presbyterian Church and professor of RTS-DC, who went to be with the Lord in 2019.

We thank God for the committee chairmen, Harry Long and Rich Leino, and for all the volunteers from the four host Presbyteries. The music and worship have been God honoring and every local PCA volunteer has worked graciously for the church of Christ, serving us and the Lord with faithfulness and joy. A special word of thanks to Dr. Chapell and his PCAAC staff for their endless labors well received. God's word has been expounded powerfully by Fred Greco, Ben Robertson and Joel Kim. Our Moderator Steve Dowling has ably led us with grace and wisdom. *Semper Fidelis* Mr. Dowling!

As we enter into the second half of our first century as a denomination, our prayer is that the triune God might continue to grant us grace to "reach all the riches of full assurance of understanding and the knowledge of [His] mystery, which is Christ, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Colossians 2:2-3).

TE Jon Medlock, Northern California, Chairman  
RE Melton L. Duncan, Calvary, Secretary

#### **51-47 Appointment of Commission to Review**

The Moderator appointed as a Commission to review and approve the minutes of the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly: TE L. Roy Taylor, RE John B. White, Jr., TE Randy Schlichting, and TE Per Almquist.

#### **51-48 Adjournment and Benediction**

Upon the acclamation of the Assembly, the Moderator declared the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly adjourned at 3:19 p.m., to reconvene in Chattanooga, TN, on June 23, 2025. TE L. Roy Taylor led the Assembly in singing Psalm 133. The Stated Clerk pronounced the benediction.

## **PART III**

### **APPENDICES**

**NOTE:** Appendices A-O are included in Volume 1 of these *Minutes*.  
Appendices P-V are found in Volume 2.  
See a Table of Contents for these Appendices on the back of this page.

The Appendices include the Reports of the General Assembly Committees, Agencies, and Standing Judicial Commission as originally submitted to the General Assembly. The recommendations in this section are those originally submitted and may have been amended or not adopted by the Assembly. See Part II, Journal, to find the recommendations as they were adopted by the Assembly.

Appendix U presents the Overtures as originally submitted by the presbyteries. See the Overtures Committee report and other Committee of Commissioner reports for Assembly action on these overtures, including any amendments.

The PCA Committee and Agency budgets, as approved by the Assembly, are found in Appendix A, Attachment 2, beginning on p. 135.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

## APPENDICES CONTENTS

### REPORTS

APPENDIX A	Administrative Committee.....	115
APPENDIX B	Board of Directors .....	207
APPENDIX C	Committee on Discipleship Ministries.....	211
APPENDIX D	Committee on Constitutional Business.....	223
	Supplemental Report.....	231
APPENDIX E	Cooperative Ministries Committee .....	233
APPENDIX F	Covenant College.....	235
APPENDIX G	Covenant Theological Seminary .....	249
APPENDIX H	Geneva Benefits Group.....	291
APPENDIX I	Interchurch Relations Committee. ....	301
APPENDIX J	Mission to North America .....	303
APPENDIX K	Mission to the World .....	329
APPENDIX L	Nominating Committee.....	353
	Supplemental Report.....	389
APPENDIX M	PCA Foundation .....	397
APPENDIX N	Reformed University Fellowship.....	413
APPENDIX O	Review of Presbytery Records.....	457
APPENDIX P	Ridge Haven .....	707
APPENDIX Q	Standing Judicial Commission.....	711
	Supplemental Report.....	968
APPENDIX R	Stated Clerk.....	969
APPENDIX S	Theological Examining Committee .....	997

### OTHER ITEMS

APPENDIX T	Attendance Report .....	999
APPENDIX U	Overtures to the 51 <sup>st</sup> General Assembly .....	1047
APPENDIX V	Worship Services .....	1203



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

## **APPENDIX A**

### **REPORT OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA 2024**

#### **FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY in Richmond, VA, June 10-14, 2024**

Registration for the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to be held in Richmond, June 10-14, opened in early January. As of the writing of this report in April, over 1600 commissioners have registered. Such large interest and involvement is deeply encouraging and profoundly important as we address issues vital to our church's witness to our culture and seek God's favor and guidance for our united mission.

#### **MEETINGS OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (AC) AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA (A CORPORATION)**

The Administrative Committee handles the ecclesiastical matters committed to it by the General Assembly (*BCO* 14-1.12; *RAO* 4-2; V). The twenty-member AC is unique among the other General Assembly Committees and Agencies in that it has eleven voting members elected at-large and nine voting members representing the other nine General Assembly Committees and Agencies. Moreover, the Coordinators and Presidents of the other nine General Assembly Committees and Agencies often attend AC meetings but have no vote.

The Administrative Committee of the General Assembly also serves as the Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church in America (A Corporation) [*PCA Corporate Bylaws*, Article II Section 2]. The purpose of the corporation is to engage in any lawful act or activity for which corporations may be organized under the general Corporation Law of Delaware" (*PCA Certificate of Incorporation*). Matters requiring civil actions are handled by the PCA Board of Directors. The Board of Directors meets immediately following the stated meetings of the Administrative Committee to deal with civil actions and activities. The stated and called meetings of the AC from June 2023 to April 2024 were:

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

June 5, 2023 – Called Meeting – Zoom

June 13, 2023 – General Assembly, Memphis, Tennessee

October 5, 2023 – MTW Building, Lawrenceville, Georgia

April 18, 2024 – MTW Building, Lawrenceville, Georgia

### SUMMARY OF THE ACTIONS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

These actions of the Board of Directors are reported to the General Assembly.

No action of the General Assembly is required on the following items:

- 1) All required corporate filings of the Presbyterian Church in America (A Corporation) have been filed in the relevant states. The Presbyterian Church in America (A Corporation) is a registered Delaware corporation. The Presbyterian Church in America (A Corporation) is currently registered as a foreign corporation in Georgia, Missouri, Mississippi, and Washington.
- 2) All required corporate filings of the corporations of the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod (acquired in the Joining and Receiving of 1982) have been filed in the relevant states. **Delaware Corporations:** World Presbyterian Missions, Inc.; National Presbyterian Missions, Inc.; Christian Training, Inc. **Michigan Corporation:** Board of Home Ministries. **Pennsylvania Corporation:** Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod.
- 3) The current Officers of the Corporation (through the end of this Assembly) are: **President:** TE Robert Brunson; **Secretary and Treasurer:** Dr. Bryan Chapell (Stated Clerk); **Assistant Secretaries/Treasurers:** Dr. Dixie Zietlow (Business Administrator), Ms. Heidi Harrison (Operations Manager), Ms. Angela Nantz (Meeting Planner) [RAO 3-2.o, PCA Corporate Bylaws,” Article IV].
- 4) The Stated Clerk updated the Board of Directors on our current legal status and concerns. The PCA has been named in a lawsuit dated March 11, 2024, related to a car accident in October 2022. Our insurer is defending the claim and there is nothing further the PCA can do at this time outside of following instructions provided by the attorney or adjuster.

### ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE (AC) OFFICERS FOR THE 2024-2025 ASSEMBLY YEAR

At its 2024 spring meeting, the Administrative Committee elected the following men to serve as the 2024-2025 AC officers:

## APPENDIX A

Chairman: RE Danny McDaniel  
Vice-Chairman: RE Richard Dolan  
Secretary: TE Roger Collins

### **FUTURE ASSEMBLIES**

2025 - Chattanooga, Tennessee, the location for the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly hosted by Tennessee Valley Presbytery  
2026 - Louisville, Kentucky, the location for the 53<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly hosted by Ohio Valley Presbytery

### **TRANSLATIONS OF THE *BCO* AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**

The AC continues to make progress with foreign language (Spanish and Portuguese) translations of our *Book of Church Order (BCO)* to help our church minister to all peoples and generations.

The elders on the Spanish review committee are working hard each week to complete their work. Their goal is to have the BCO portion ready in time for General Assembly. They have had to do significant revisions because words mean different things in different Hispanic contexts. Just about every paragraph and not a small number of headings have needed to be reworked. They are working on the 2021 BCO.

“The Lord’s favor to us in 2023 was unmistakable,” says Hernando Sáenz-Oggioni, Hispanic Ministries Coordinator at Mission to North America (MNA). “We grew to 62 Hispanic Teaching Elders, 52 candidates, and 42 churches. To put it into perspective, over the past decade, we have doubled the number of PCA Hispanic pastors and more than tripled the number of Hispanic candidates for the gospel ministry in the PCA”. That said, I’m sure other Latin American contexts will make use of our BCO. Chairman Luis Garcia is working on translating the 2022 and 2023 change packets for us.

The Portuguese BCO translation team has also made good progress, having translated the BCO through Chapter 32 at this time. We praise God for the work this group has accomplished so far to bring this much needed project to a reality. There are a growing number of Brazilian-heritage pastors and churches in the PCA.

With the help of Korean heritage leaders, the AC has also continued to update the Korean language version of the *BCO*. We realize that we cannot reach across language barriers by waiting for significant growth of ethnic

communities and various nationalities in our churches before providing services to the rapidly growing populations of our nation. Instead, we reach people groups by serving them before they are established in our church communities.

### **STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION (SJC)**

The Standing Judicial Commission is one of the treasures of the PCA, with members of differing perspectives typically rising above partisan debates and internet suppositions to issue decisions according to how sworn testimony aligns with our Standards. The Lord has blessed our entire denomination through the dedication and sacrificial service of these men pursuing their responsibilities with integrity.

The SJC is not separately funded but operates administratively as a subcommittee of the AC (*RAO* 17-1). The Stated Clerk serves as Clerk of the Commission and parliamentarian (*OMSJC* 3-8). Since the meeting of the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the 24 members of the SJC have handled approximately 25 cases this past year. For a report of the cases handled by the SJC, see the Standing Judicial Commission Report, p. 2001 of this *Handbook*.

### **THEOLOGICAL EXAMINING COMMITTEE (TEC)**

The AC provides administrative assistance and arrangements for the Theological Examining Committee (TEC) that evaluates the theological commitments of the first- and second-tier employees of our Permanent Committees and Agencies. For a report of the Committee's examinations, see the Theological Examining Committee Report, p. 1101 of this *Handbook*.

### **COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES COMMITTEE (CMC)**

The AC provides administrative assistance and arrangements for the Cooperative Ministries Committee (CMC), and the Stated Clerk is a member and serves as secretary (*RAO* 7-4.c). The CMC is designed to unite the leaders of our various agencies and institutions with the elected leaders of the General Assembly in coordinated ministry to advance the mission of the PCA as a whole. The simple goal is to have all the horses in the harness pulling in the same direction. That goal is achieved by relational camaraderie as well as by ministry strategizing, denominational assessment, and shared insights regarding best practices and resources for advancing Christ's mission in our challenging times.

The CMC met on January 17, 2024. Committee and Agency leaders shared challenges, goals, and prayers. See the Cooperative Ministries Committee Report, p. 321 of this *Handbook*.

### **INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE (IRC)**

The AC provides administrative assistance to the Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC), and the Stated Clerk is an *ex officio* member and secretary. The IRC, which met on September 13, 2023, and March 26, 2024, corresponds and maintains relationships with churches and organizations with whom we have fraternal or ecclesiastical relations. The Committee has invited Fraternal Delegates to address the General Assembly. Delegates will also be welcomed to the General Assembly at a luncheon hosted by IRC members and the IRC Committee of Commissioners members.

In response to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, the IRC continues to explore requests that the PCA join the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC). At its spring meeting, the IRC voted to respond this way:

The IRC recommends that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly follow the recommendation the IRC made to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, namely that the IRC follow the specific guidelines of the ICRC's membership procedures by having members of the PCA's IRC attend the next meeting of the ICRC (which is ordinarily required before membership application can be made) in 2026 to investigate and determine first-hand if formal membership is appropriate for the PCA, and return with a recommendation for the General Assembly to join or not.

Our founding fathers strongly believed that we in the PCA constituted a blessed branch, but not the only branch, of Christ's true church. That is why we, as a denomination, seek cooperative ministry and understanding with like-minded and Bible-believing organizations. Supporting the mission and faith of those serving Christ with us leverages our resources, furthers our Savior's mission, and links us with those of like faith for matters of legal and legislative protection.

Nevertheless, we have wrestled since our founding with what level of affiliation to have with organizations that are not exactly like us. The question

persists: When does an affiliation move from mission cooperation to mission compromise? The IRC is elected to gather accurate information to help us make such determinations because we know that inaccurate perceptions can drive unfortunate decisions in the quick assessments of a General Assembly. For the IRC Report, see p. 901 of this *Handbook*.

### **PRESBYTERY CLERKS CONFERENCE**

The annual training conference for Presbytery Clerks was held December 1-2, 2023. The AC has an important duty of facilitating communication among clerks for sharing knowledge and experience, and one way we do this is through the annual Presbytery Clerks Conference, which provides instruction for new clerks as well as a forum where experienced clerks can compare notes and discuss challenges they face. The AC office also provides tools to this group (e.g., the Clerks' Handbook and presbytery portal) to help all clerks in their work. The staff of the AC works hand-in-hand with presbytery clerks to serve the whole church in a unified effort that enables local presbyteries and churches to thrive in accordance with our mission and standards.

### **LAWSUITS**

The AC navigates legal matters at the denominational level for the PCA. While we dealt with a number of legal matters this past year, none were of serious consequence for the denomination as a whole. The PCA has been named in a lawsuit dated March 11, 2024, related to a car accident in October 2022. Our insurer is defending the claim, and the PCA can do nothing further at this time except follow the instructions provided by the attorney or adjuster.

### **FINANCIAL MATTERS**

In the year of our 50<sup>th</sup>-anniversary celebration with its associated expenses and the continuing impact of inflation, God has blessed the funding of the Administrative Committee. First of all, God has blessed our development efforts. In 2023, Undesignated Contributions came in at \$1,539,548 and Designated at \$286,844, for a total of \$1,826,392. In the same year, we had Earned Income of \$1,801,179 and Interest Income of \$26,822, bringing Total Revenues to \$3,654,393.

Our thanks go out to our Development Team, which is organized by Karen Cook and implemented by Paul Kooistra, Wayne Herring, and Craig Wilkes, with several other AC staff and Committee members contributing.

- The annual audits of the AC and the PCA Office Building were completed as required (*RAO* 14-7.h).
- The PCA Committees and Agencies have submitted their 2025 proposed budgets for approval by the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly (these may be found on p. 401 of this *Handbook*).
- The AC evaluated the Committee and Agency Chief Administrative Officer compensation guidelines as required (*BCO* 14-1.13). The Committees and Agencies state CAO compensation as separate line items or notes in their respective proposed budgets presented to the Assembly. The AC annually reviews compensation guidelines. Every four years the Committees and Agencies do an in-depth study of comparable CAO compensations. We completed an in-depth study in the fall of 2021.
- The AC reviewed the General Assembly Commissioner's Registration fee as required (*RAO* 9-4) and is recommending no increase this year.<sup>1</sup> (Please be aware that scholarships are available for those with qualifying need.)
- The 2023 true cost of unfunded mandates was \$608.45 per commissioner, which exceeds the current \$525 TE and \$300 RE Assembly Registration Fee.
- The AC reviewed the required contributions of other General Assembly Committees and Agencies to the AC (*RAO* 5-4.a) and is making appropriate recommendations.
- The AC reviewed the requested Annual Administrative Fee paid by ministers to the AC (*RAO* 5-4.c) and is recommending no increase this year.
- As a point of information, 2025 building occupancy costs were discussed.
- The AC approved auditors for the various Committees and Agencies as requested and is making appropriate recommendations to the Assembly.

---

<sup>1</sup> Commissioners should note that the General Assembly Registration fees do not fully cover all the costs associated with the General Assembly, that not all commissioners pay the full fee, and that the AC Funding Plan adopted by the General Assembly in 2012 recommended that the General Assembly Registration fees more realistically cover costs. About one-third of the costs of the Assembly's annual meeting are underwritten by Exhibitors. The larger costs to commissioners are usually not the registration fee but travel, hotel, and meal expenses.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Certificate of Compliance” forms were signed by AC members and collected for the file (as part of the Conflict of Interest Policy, per *M21GA*, 1993, 21-64, pp. 174ff).

### PERSONNEL

We give thanks for the faithful and diligent service of all of the staff of the Administrative Committee/Office of the Stated Clerk. We praise God for the genuine faith and committed hearts of the men and women who serve the administrative and legal responsibilities of the entire PCA with sacrificial dedication and great expertise. Additional responsibilities of the AC are fulfilled by the PCA Historical Center (see Attachment 1) and *by Faith*.

The AC staff presently includes Bryan Chapell, Dixie Zietlow, Richard Doster, Heidi Harrison, Paul Kooistra, Angela Nantz, Wayne Sparkman, Roy Taylor, Margaret Baker, Karen Cook, Ashley Davis, Erika Derr, Anna Eubanks, Karen Frey, Wayne Herring, Larry Hoop, Monica Johnston, Margie Mallow, Billy Park, Craig Wilkes, Per Almquist, Priscilla Lowrey and John Robertson. Several staff members work remotely and/or part-time.

The AC evaluated the job performance of Stated Clerk Bryan Chapell as required by *RAO* 3-3.d and unanimously recommends the election of Dr. Bryan Chapell as Stated Clerk of the PCA for the Assembly year 2024-2025.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the General Assembly elect Dr. Bryan Chapell for another term as Stated Clerk
2. That the Assembly commend Stated Clerk Dr. Bryan Chapell, Business Administrator Dr. Dixie Zietlow, and the entire staff of the Administrative Committee for their faithful and effective labors for the Lord and their skillful and joyful service to the ministers, churches, presbyteries, permanent committees, agencies, and General Assembly in promoting the unity, purity, and mission of the Presbyterian Church in America in the past year.
3. That **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery, “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments,” be answered in the affirmative.

Grounds:

The proposed *Rules of Assembly Operations (RAO)* changes were drawn up by Ascension Presbytery in consultation with the PCA’s Stated Clerk. The overture changes will clarify that the Overtures

Committee should determine the procedures of the General Assembly's *RAO*. The *overture* changes will also mandate that the General Assembly's Permanent Committees or Agencies which are affected by future, proposed *RAO* changes be consulted by the *Overtures Committee* before deciding upon such changes. Such a proposal wisely requires consultation of those who are most likely to be informed about, and affected by *RAO* changes, while leaving the process for approving *RAO* amendments with the *Overtures Committee*. The proposed changes in this *overture* thus provide protection of the Assembly's Committees or Agencies from uninformed decisions while enabling the Assembly to effect changes to the *RAO* through the body authorized to make such amendments.

4. That the *Overtures Committee* recommend that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery, "Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy," to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it.

Rationale:

This *overture* was not received by the AC in time for any Permanent Committee or Agency to consider prior to the 51st General Assembly in 2024. The AC also received the *overture* too late (April 3—AC meeting materials were sent to members April 5) to prepare an informed recommendation for the AC.

5. That the *Overtures Committee* recommend that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery, "Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency," to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it.

Rationale:

This *overture* was not received by the Administrative Committee (AC) in time for any Permanent Committee or Agency Board (or their legal counselors) to consider prior to the 51st General Assembly in 2024. The AC also received the *overture* too late (April 11—AC meeting materials were sent to members April 5) for its staff, officers, or legal counsel to review in order properly to inform the AC at its spring meeting regarding an AC recommendation to the General Assembly.

6. That the Administrative Committee 2025 budget of \$3,702,519 be approved.
7. That the PCA Building 2025 budget of \$395,907 be approved.

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

8. That the CDM 2025 budget of \$2,693,700 be approved.
9. That the CC 2025 budget of \$36,674,848 be approved.
10. That the CTS 2025 budget of \$10,506,366 be approved.
11. That the Geneva 2025 budget of \$6,310,798 be approved.
12. That the MNA 2025 budget of \$30,237,191 be approved.
13. That the MTW 2025 budget of \$76,032,310 be approved.
14. That the PCAF 2025 budget of \$2,419,270 be approved.
15. That the RUF 2025 budget of \$59,495,241 be approved.
16. That the RH 2025 budget of \$4,220,000 be approved.
17. That the “2025 Budgeted Partnership Shares and Ministry Asks of PCA Ministry Partners by the Participating General Assembly Ministries” be approved.

2025 Partnership Share Fund					Ministry Asks
Participating Ministries of the PCA	2025 Total Expense Budget	P.S. Fund	% of Total	Per Capita Calculation*	\$ Per Member
AC <sup>1</sup>	\$3,702,519	\$1,962,000	4.84%	\$6.43	\$8
CDM	\$2,693,700	\$1,299,750	3.21%	\$4.26	\$7
CC <sup>2</sup>	\$36,674,848	\$2,500,000	6.17%	\$8.20	\$10
CTS	\$10,506,366	\$2,000,000	4.93%	\$6.56	\$10
MNA	\$30,237,191	\$11,768,008	29.02%	\$38.58	\$28
MTW	\$76,032,310	\$9,759,555	24.07%	\$31.99	\$30
RUF	\$59,495,241	\$10,010,323	24.69%	\$32.82	\$18
RH	\$4,220,000	\$1,250,000	3.08%	\$4.10	\$4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$223,562,175</b>	<b>\$40,549,636</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$132.93</b>	<b>\$115</b>

\* Based on the total number of “Communicant Members” of 305,045 as of December 31, 2023, according to the PCA Administrative Committee.

**GENERAL NOTE**

Gifts designated "spread per Partnership Shares" (or some equivalent) and the totally undesignated gifts (which amount to less than \$3,000 a year) will be spread according to the "Ministry Ask" column (by percentages of the total).

**SPECIFIC COMMITTEE AND AGENCY NOTES**

1. The PCA Administrative Committee requests that you contribute on the basis of 0.35% of total tithes and offerings (excepting contribution to capital campaigns for such efforts as new buildings). In the same manner, CDM would like to be supported on the basis of 0.20% of total tithes and offerings. Please support us in this way if you are able to do so.
2. By giving \$10 per member to Covenant College, churches qualify for the Church Scholarship Promise program at Covenant College.
18. That the Assembly take note that the 2023 Audit performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan on the Administrative Committee was received and reviewed as required by *RAO* 14-7.h.
19. That the Assembly take note that the 2023 Audit performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan on the PCA Building Fund was received and reviewed as required by *RAO* 14-7.h.
20. That Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan, PC, be approved as auditors for the Administrative Committee and the Committee on Discipleship Ministries for the calendar year ending December 31, 2024.
21. That Capin, Crouse, & Company be approved as auditors for the Committee on Mission to the World and the Committee on Mission to North America for the calendar year ending December 31, 2024.
22. That Carr, Riggs & Ingram, LLP, be approved as auditors for the Committee on Reformed University Fellowship for the calendar year ending December 31, 2024.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

23. That the Assembly receive the charts below as the acceptable response to the GA requirement for an annual report on the cost of the AC s mandated responsibilities.

**2023 Unfunded Mandates**  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY COSTS**

Year	# of Commissioners	Total Costs	Cost per Commissioner	Amount of Fee Allotted to GA	Total Avg Standard Fee
2018		\$628,815	\$409	\$350	\$450
2019	1652	\$729,515	\$442	\$350	\$450
2021	2114	\$844,600	\$400	\$350	\$450
2022	2385	\$920,326	\$386	\$350	\$450
2023	2301	\$1,104,136	\$480	\$350 (TE) \$300 (RE)	\$457*

\* The TE standard fee rose to \$525 and the RE standard fee dropped to \$300 in 2023 (approved by the 49<sup>th</sup> GA).

**AC GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESPONSIBILITIES**

Description	2023 Total <sup>2</sup>	Per Commissioner
Committee on Constitutional Business	\$15,125	\$6.57
General Assembly <sup>1</sup>	\$1,104,136	\$479.85
Interchurch Relations Committee	\$18,880	\$8.21
Nominating Committee <sup>2</sup>	\$23,324	\$10.14
Standing Judicial Commission	\$238,558	\$103.68
Theological Examining Committee <sup>3</sup>	\$0	\$0
	<u>\$1,400,023</u>	<u>\$608.45</u>

<sup>1</sup> Review of Presbytery Records is included in the General Assembly Total. In 2023, RPR cost \$48,856. Production and delivery of the General Assembly Minutes costs will be reflected in the 2024 financials.

<sup>2</sup>The expense of the Nominating Committee is shared by the PCA Committees and Agencies.

## APPENDIX A

<sup>3</sup>The Theological Examining Committee did not incur any material expenses in 2023 as per their report to the AC.

24. That the registration fee remain at \$525 (TEs) and \$300 (REs) for the 2025 General Assembly, with \$350 of the TE fee allocated to the GA expenses, \$50 for publication of the GA Minutes, and \$125 allocated to the Standing Committee cost center for the expenses that include the Standing Judicial Commission; and the full \$300 RE fee allocated to GA expenses. Honorably retired or emeritus elders would continue to pay \$150. Elders coming from churches with annual incomes below \$150,000, as per their 2023 statistics, may register for \$300.
25. That the plan outlined below for the payment of the required contribution from the PCA Committees and Agencies to the PCA Administrative Committee be approved.

PLAN: Committees and Agencies are asked to pay in one of the following three options:

1. Semiannual – one-half paid in January and one-half paid in July.
2. Quarterly – one-fourth paid the first month of each quarter: January, April, July, and October.
3. Monthly – one-twelfth paid on the first of each month.

NOTE: The chart shows the agreed-upon amounts for 2025.

AC	None
CDM	\$11,500
CC	\$11,500
CTS	\$11,500
MNA	\$11,500
MTW	\$11,500
PCAF	\$11,500
GEN	\$11,500
RH	\$11,500
<u>RUF</u>	<u>\$11,500</u>
Total	\$103,500

26. That the Annual Administration Fee paid by ministers be set at \$100 for 2025.
27. That the General Assembly set the request to Presbyteries for GA Host Committee assistance at \$500 for 2025.
28. That the Assembly approve the minutes of the Board of Directors for April 20, 2023, and October 5, 2023.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

29. That the Assembly approve the minutes of the Administrative Committee for April 20, 2023, June 5, 2023, June 13, 2023, and October 5, 2023.
30. That **Overture 33** from TE Benjamin Inman to Eastern Carolina Presbytery and rejected by the Presbytery at its stated meeting, to “Erect Ad Interim Committee on the Book *Jesus Calling*”, be answered in the negative.

Grounds:

The Administrative Committee recommends that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly not approve this Overture on the grounds that it has no “plan for how sufficient, designated funds for the Ad Interim Committee will be raised,” as required by *RAO* 9-3.

\*Note: This overture was received after the Spring meeting of the Administrative Committee and can only receive this informal recommendation from the Stated Clerk’s Office unless other Administrative Committee business requires a called meeting prior to the General Assembly.

## **Attachment 1**

### **PCA Historical Center Annual Report to the Administrative Committee**

Some, though not all, of you know of my wife Janet's passing this last September. We had celebrated our 47<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in May, and she was able to attend the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly with me in June, but began to decline in August. Suffering from kidney failure, she had been on dialysis for five years and that process is particularly hard on the heart, and it was a massive heart attack which caused her death on September 24, 2023.

Janet was truly an elect lady, an avid reader, and an ardent student of Scripture. So it was very fitting that after her death that there were donations to the PCA Historical Center in her memory, with one particular donation, a rather large one, given on condition that a collection be established in her name. In keeping with that request, we now have the Janet L. Sparkman Collection for Presbyterian Women [<https://pcahistory.org/mo/sparkmanj/index.html>]. The creation of this collection is turning out to be a convenient index point for materials which were already preserved here, while also serving as a gathering point for materials which are now being added to our resources using the funds provided by our thoughtful donor. The architecture of this Collection's home page is still rather rough, but it gives at least a glimpse of what the Collection will contain.

Other of the funds donated in Janet's memory will be used to advance our work of preserving the recordings of past PCA General Assemblies. We had previously arranged for the migration of reel-to-reel recordings from 1973-1978, and recently completed work underway on the 1979 and 1980 Assembly recordings, along with many of the cassette tapes holding oral history interviews with PCA founding fathers. The next step will be to post the content of these recordings in mp3 format to the Historical Center's web site where we pray they will prove to be of great use.

### **Collection Development**

To mention some of the collections and materials received in 2023, these include:

An accrual to the James Perry Manuscript Collection



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Advent and Good Friday Chapels, Covenant Theological Seminary. Two large ring binders with photocopies of sheet music utilized in chapel services.

Cassette tape recordings of Francis A. Schaeffer and various L'Abri staff or related speakers.

An important accrual to the R. Laird Harris Manuscript Collection, received in two large boxes (1.0 cu. ft. each); 6 Hollinger boxes, 0.5 cu. ft. each; and three binders.

An accrual to the Joseph H. Hall Manuscript Collection, consisting of files compiled by Dr. Joseph Hall regarding the life and ministry of Samuel Doak.

PCA Administrative Committee records, thirteen boxes, including one with the time-keeping lights built by RE Walter Lastovica and used by him in his work as time keeper for a number of years at PCA General Assemblies.

Review of Presbytery Records, six cubic feet of materials.

I should also note that the PCA Historical Center is blessed to have fairly large manuscripts collections for each of the former Stated Clerks of the PCA: Dr. Morton H. Smith [1973-1988; 16 years of service; 24 cu. ft. of material in this collection]; Dr. Paul R. Gilchrist [1988-1998; 11 years of service; 44 cu. ft. in this collection]; and Dr. L. Roy Taylor [1998-2020; 22 years of service; 22 cu. ft. in this collection]. The work of arrangement and description for each of these collections has recently been completed and work is now underway to post to our web site the finding aids (or indexes) for each of these collections.

And most recently, Rev. Brian DeJong has donated materials from his research into the life and ministry of Rev. Arthur Perkins, which research led to the publication of his book, *Standing Against Tyranny: The Life and Legacy of Arthur Perkins* (2023). We are pleased to add this new collection, which has been received as a separate collection under Rev. DeJong's name, while noting that it provides additional materials in support of the Perkins collection [<https://www.pcahistory.org/mo/perkins/index.html>]

**Research Library** [<https://www.pcahistory.org/HCLibrary/index.html>]

Work continues to add many of our already existing volumes to the Historical Center's **online catalog** [<https://www.librarycat.org/lib/pcahc>] while keeping up with the entry of recently added titles. In all of 2023 there were 305 titles added to our library, with roughly equal coverage for contemporary publications and original editions of nineteenth-century works. A typical value-added feature for our online catalog is the inclusion of the table of contents for most books listed. Some entries still lack that feature but in time all or nearly all should have it.

Among the many notable additions to the Historical Center's research library, the standout is probably that of thirteen bound volumes of *The Christian Beacon* (1944-1958), along with unbound issues covering the date range 1936-1985. This collection was received as a de-accession from the Buswell Library at Covenant Theological Seminary and now provides us with one of the best collections of this title in the nation. The *Beacon*, along with *Christianity Today* [1936-1949], the *Presbyterian Guardian*, and *The Independent Board Bulletin*, were the conservative journals of record during the years of the modernist controversy, and the PCA Historical Center has complete or near-complete collections of each of these journals.

### Web Site Development

Claire Wilkinson joined our team last summer as an assistant and initially as an unpaid intern. As a remote worker she was asked to learn the software coding behind our site and was equipped with a subscription to Adobe's Dreamweaver software, to aid in that effort. By summer's end and just before returning to school, she had a template ready for implementation throughout our web site. This process of implementation is now underway and we hope to complete full implementation by year's end. The web site already looks a lot better because of her work. Claire will graduate in May of 2024 with her master's degree in public history and her employment with us will end at that time.

In related matter, at my request Mr. John Dunahoo has set up a new email address for Historical Center use, one which should ease the eventual transition from my tenure to that of my successor, though I still hope to be here for many more years. The new email address, now in place, is [archivist@pcanet.org](mailto:archivist@pcanet.org) and this address is also intended as a help if I were simply unavailable at any time, allowing an assistant to read and reply to patron requests.

### **Historical Center Staffing & Work Assignments**

**John Abraham Sullivan** was hired early in the summer of 2023 to replace Jay Mallow, who was leaving for a full-time position in the library at Missouri Baptist University. John Abraham is in his final year of the M.Div. program at Covenant Seminary and has been working for us as a project archivist, with focus on arrangement and description of the PCA Stated Clerk collections. After graduation he will be taking up Ph.D. studies at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland.

**Evan Kvale** is an entering student at Covenant Seminary and it is my strong hope to keep him employed here at the Historical Center throughout his planned four years of working towards the M.Div. degree. The range of work and the skills involved here at the PCA Historical Center are diverse and it is important to have more than just one person who knows their way around all that is involved in our day to day operation. In that light, Evan's employment is crucial, and I am working to train him in as many different aspects of the work here as I can. Primarily he is working as a project archivist and has thus far completed arrangement and description of several manuscript collections (Lavern Rayburn, R. Laird Harris, and currently working with the Will Barker collection).

**Claire Wilkinson** – see above under Web Site Development to read of Claire and her job responsibilities at the PCA Historical Center.

### **Projects for the Coming Year**

(1.) Tracking the development of the Southern Presbyterian *Book of Church Order*, as reported on the pages of *The Christian Observer*, 1865-1880. This project is a holdover from last year but still one which I think would make for a very useful compilation. It will involve scanning the many newspaper columns that reported on the debates and development of the PCUS *Book of Church Order*. With the text of many paragraphs in our PCA BCO still either unchanged or nearly so from what was found in the old PCUS BCO, that nineteenth-century coverage should be quite interesting and even useful.

(2.) Mr. Kvale is currently working to compile an author-title index for at least the first ten years of *The Independent Board Bulletin*, which was the official house organ of the Independent Board for Presbyterian Foreign Missions (IBPFM), an agency formed under the efforts of J. Gresham Machen and for which effort he was later defrocked by the PCUSA. This project is part of a long-standing effort at the PCA Historical Center, whereby we have

sought to lift such publications out of obscurity and make their content more readily available through the compilation of author-title indexes. These indexes can be accessed at <https://www.pcahistory.org/HCLibrary/index.html> and Evan's work on the IBPFM *Bulletin* will be added to this list soon.

(3.) General Assembly exhibit : Taking advantage of the time-keeper's "clock" built by RE Walter Lastovica (see above under Collection Development), I'm working to prepare an exhibit that focuses on the less well known of our founding fathers, Walter having been one of those stalwarts who worked behind the scenes but who were invaluable in the role they played in the early days of the Presbyterian Church in America.

### **Historical Center Advisory Committee**

Members of the Historical Center Advisory Committee include:

Rev. Brannon Bowman, pastor of the Millbrook Presbyterian Church, Millbrook, AL.

Rev. Caleb Cangelosi, senior pastor of the Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church, Madison, MS.

Mr. David Cooper, Ruling elder at First Presbyterian Church, Chattanooga, TN, and former Wire Editor for the Chattanooga Times Free Press.

Dr. Robert Davis Smart, Lead pastor at Christ Church, Normal, IL.

Mrs. Laura Ledbetter Dowling, mother of seven homeschooled children and wife of RE Steve Dowling.

Miss Lannae Graham, former archivist at the Presbyterian Historical Foundation, Montreat, NC.

Dr. Sean Michael Lucas, senior pastor of the Independent Presbyterian Church, Memphis, TN.

Dr. Ken McHeard, Associate Pastor of Christian Formation at First Presbyterian Church of Augusta, Georgia.

Dr. Otis W. Pickett, University Historian at Clemson University.

Dr. Barry Waugh, author and independent researcher, Greenville, SC.

### **Ex-officio members of the Advisory Committee include:**

Dr. Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk of the Presbyterian Church in America.

Dixie Zietlow, Business Manager for the Stated Clerk's Office & the Administrative Committee.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Respectfully submitted,

/s/RE Wayne Sparkman, Th.M., C.A., and Director of the PCA  
Historical Center.

## **Attachment 2**

### **PROPOSED BUDGETS PCA COMMITTEES AND AGENCIES**

#### **ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

##### **I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

###### **Budget philosophy**

The budget is built primarily on the job description of the Stated Clerk in the *RAO*, which determines the services that are to be provided by the Office of the Stated Clerk to churches, presbyteries, Committees and Agencies, and to the General Assembly. The General Assembly has also placed the Historical Center and *byFaith* Magazine under the general oversight and in the budget of the AC, as well as the Standing Committees and the SJC.

###### **General Comments**

Many of the activities and responsibilities of the Administrative Committee are directly affected by the activity and growth of the PCA, which in turn are reflected in annual budget increases for many line items. The economic inflation rate also affects many budget items.

The budgets are presented in a format to comply with the standards for not-for-profit organizations adopted by the Financial Accounting Standards (FASB). The FASB standards provide a definition of “supporting activities” which they call “management and general.” Therefore, compensation for the stated Clerk and his staff is allocated according to the estimated time spent by each person in “program,” administration, and fund-raising areas.

## **Economic Assumptions**

As we approach the 2025 budget, we have the following considerations in mind:

### **A. Stated Clerk/Administration**

- 1.0% PCA Growth Rate (2022-2023 reported PCA church growth rate)
- National Consumer Price Index (CPI) of 6.5% for 2022 and 3.4% for 2023. The February 2024 CPI was 3.2% (Source: Investopedia)
- U.S. unemployment rate of 3.7%, December 2023 (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics)
- Projected median healthcare cost increase of 7% for 2024 (Int'l Foundation of Employee Benefit Plans (IFEBC) as reported by Society of Human Resources Management (SHRM)
- The full-time equivalent (FTE) employees budgeted for 2025 is 17.

### **B. PCA Office Building**

- Current building occupancy cost is \$14/sq ft. Please see the 2023 AC minutes for recent actions on rent amounts (BF 04/23-22.1, BF 04/23-22.2, BF 10/23-7)

## **II. Major Changes in the Budget**

The main changes in the budget are due to inflation management and the transition of *byFaith* magazine to digital-only delivery.

## **III. Income Streams and Development Plans**

The PCA AC Development plans are increasing in man hours and in effectiveness as we advance the ministries of the whole PCA. Earned income and individual donor streams are expected to grow gradually, therefore the support of each PCA church is needed.

#### **IV. Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

- There was no “Major Ministry” unimplemented in 2023.

#### **V. Present & Future**

- The Spanish *BCO* is nearing completion, and a first draft of the Portuguese *BCO* is nearing the halfway point. We are increasing the number of documents and communications we translate into Korean.

#### **VI. Notes to Line Items**

General Note: To begin catch-up on past inflationary effects, staff salary and benefits are increasing by 7%.

Line 6: The News Office is expected to incur lower operating expenses as the impact of digital-only delivery fully takes hold.



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE						
PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET						
DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PROGRAMS	MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	FUND RAISING	CAPITAL ASSETS	TOTALS	% OF TOTALS
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>						
1 Contributions (1)	\$ 1,962,000	\$ -	\$ -		\$ 1,962,000	51.45%
2 Fees	1,701,750	0	0		1,701,750	44.62%
3 Interest	0	20,000	0		20,000	0.52%
4 Others	130,000	0	0	0	130,000	3.41%
<b>5 TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>3,793,750</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,813,750</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>						
6a Coordinator Sal, Hsng & Benefits	261,000	14,500	14,500	0	290,000	7.60%
6b Staff Salary & Benefits	1,719,704	64,050	139,000	0	1,922,754	50.42%
<b>6 Total Staff Salary &amp; Benefits</b>	<b>1,980,704</b>	<b>78,550</b>	<b>153,500</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>2,212,754</b>	<b>58.02%</b>
7 Travel	256,600	15,000	6,000	0	277,600	7.28%
8 Rent	54,100	15,000	2,000	0	71,100	1.86%
9 Janitor/Grounds	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
10 Mail/Ship	45,750	500	11,000	0	57,250	1.50%
11 Office Supplies	15,300	6,000	500	0	21,800	0.57%
12 Telephone	12,500	2,000	500	0	15,000	0.39%
13 Maintenance	0	1,000	0	0	1,000	0.03%
14 Leased Equipment	21,000	4,500	0	0	25,500	0.67%
15 Dues/Subscription	70,310	15,000	800	0	86,110	2.26%
16 Insurance	39,265	1,500	1,500	0	42,265	1.11%
17 Interest	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
18 Printing	206,350	500	13,000	0	219,850	5.76%
19 Staff Training/Develop.	5,000	0	0	0	5,000	0.13%
20 Promotion/Appeals	9,000	0	0	0	9,000	0.24%
21 Foundation	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
22 Planning	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
23 Professional Services	533,700	20,000	4,500	0	558,200	14.64%
24 Taxes	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
25 Utilities	5,000	0	0	0	5,000	0.13%
26 Contingencies	26,000	10,000	2,000	0	38,000	1.00%
28 Depreciation	19,090	38,000	0	0	57,090	1.50%
<b>29 TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>3,299,669</b>	<b>207,550</b>	<b>195,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,702,519</b>	<b>95.59%</b>
<b>30 Operating Surplus/Deficit</b>	<b>494,081</b>	<b>(187,550)</b>	<b>(195,300)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>111,231</b>	<b>2.92%</b>
31 LESS Depreciation	19,090	38,000	0	0	57,090	1.50%
<b>32 NET OPERATING EXP.</b>	<b>3,280,579</b>	<b>169,550</b>	<b>195,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,645,429</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS:</b>						
33 Capital Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
<b>34 TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0.00%</b>
<b>26 TOTAL NET BUDGET</b>	<b>3,280,579</b>	<b>169,550</b>	<b>195,300</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3,645,429</b>	<b>95.59%</b>
<b>36 SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>513,171</b>	<b>(149,550)</b>	<b>(195,300)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>168,321</b>	<b>4.41%</b>
(1) Partnership Shares --- (contributions required from churches to fulfill responsibilities)						

# APPENDIX A

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE								
BUDGETS COMPARISONS STATEMENT								
FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET								
	2021	2022	2023	2024	PROPOSED BUDGET		2024 TO 2025	
					2025	% OF	CHANGE IN BUDGET	
DESCRIPTION	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	PROPOSED	TOTALS	\$	%
SUPPORT & REVENUE								
1 Contributions (1)	\$ 1,781,000	\$ 1,881,000	\$ 1,921,000	\$ 1,996,000	\$ 1,962,000	51.45%	\$ (34,000)	-1.70%
2 Fees	1,053,500	1,173,500	1,538,500	1,623,500	1,701,750	44.62%	78,250	4.82%
3 Investments	2,000	5,000	2,000	10,000	20,000	0.52%	10,000	100.00%
4 Others	300,664	321,962	130,000	120,000	130,000	3.41%	10,000	8.33%
TOTAL SUPPORT								
5 & REVENUE	3,137,164	3,381,462	3,591,500	3,749,500	3,813,750	100.00%	64,250	1.71%
OPERATING EXPENSES								
6 News Office	507,220	551,030	702,393	650,700	402,042	10.54%	(248,658)	-38.21%
7 Historical Center	157,560	163,740	178,273	177,400	190,177	4.99%	12,777	7.20%
8 Committees & Agencies	122,650	127,750	156,850	167,400	170,552	4.47%	3,152	1.88%
9 Churches & Presbyteries	590,100	643,800	704,300	722,700	778,217	20.41%	55,517	7.68%
10 Stats & Publications	240,620	264,530	284,650	305,150	310,360	8.14%	5,210	1.71%
11 Standing Comm.	377,050	405,300	396,500	424,600	454,456	11.92%	29,856	7.03%
12 Gen. Assembly	708,300	680,150	825,736	922,000	993,865	26.06%	71,865	7.79%
TOTAL								
13 PROGRAMS	2,703,500	2,836,300	3,248,702	3,369,950	3,299,669	86.52%	(70,281)	-2.09%
14 Management & General	122,940	126,400	152,639	169,060	207,550	5.44%	38,490	22.77%
15 Fund Raising	143,660	146,050	164,490	179,090	195,300	5.12%	16,210	9.05%
TOTAL MGMT. & FUND RAISING	266,600	272,450	317,129	348,150	402,850	10.56%	54,700	15.71%
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	2,970,100	3,108,750	3,565,831	3,718,100	3,702,519	97.08%	(15,581)	-0.42%
18 OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	167,064	272,712	25,669	31,400	111,231	2.92%	79,831	254.24%
19 LESS Depreciation	23,000	23,800	32,981	29,250	57,090	1.50%	27,840	95.18%
20 NET OPERATING EXPENSES	2,947,100	3,084,950	3,532,850	3,688,850	3,645,429	95.59%	(43,421)	-1.18%
OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS:								
21 Capital Expenditures								
22 Principal Loan Pmts								
23 Building Loss/(Gain)								
TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	
25 TOTAL EXPENSES	2,947,100	3,084,950	3,532,850	3,688,850	3,645,429	95.59%	(43,421)	-1.18%
26 NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) EXCLUDING DEPRECIATION	190,064	296,512	58,650	60,650	168,321	4.41%	107,671	2.89%
27 Equity Transfer Profit/(Loss)								
28 NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	190,064	296,512	58,650	60,650	168,321	4.41%	107,671	2.89%
(1) Partnership Share --- (contributions required from churches to fulfill responsibilities)								

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE						
FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL HISTORY						
FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET						
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
DESCRIPTION		ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL	ACTUAL
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>						
1 Contributions -Designated & Undesignated Income (1)		\$ 1,595,390	\$ 1,992,737	\$ 1,503,522	\$ 1,575,771	\$ 1,826,392
2 Fees (Earned Income)		1,307,220	394,157	1,580,658	1,718,681	1,801,178
3 Investments		8,233	6,880	10,458	17,177	26,821
4 Others						
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp;</b>						
5 REVENUE		2,910,843	2,393,774	3,094,638	3,311,629	3,654,392
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>						
7 News Office		467,533	483,052	560,824	591,131	551,741
8 Historical Center		141,535	144,968	143,884	151,432	162,297
9 Committees & Agencies		110,896	124,241	134,363	137,173	147,894
10 Churches & Presbyteries		532,240	516,911	545,281	608,697	672,971
11 Stats & Publications		252,365	243,360	237,201	307,408	301,726
12 Standing Comm.		311,597	346,984	300,229	387,776	375,770
13 Gen. Assembly		729,408	335,958	844,600	920,326	1,104,136
<b>TOTAL</b>						
14 PROGRAMS		2,545,574	2,195,474	2,766,382	3,103,942	3,316,535
15 Management & General		117,147	111,833	127,767	176,203	185,922
16 Fund Raising		120,550	104,883	116,196	114,897	144,877
<b>TOTAL MGMT. &amp;</b>						
17 FUND RAISING		237,697	216,716	243,962	291,100	330,798
<b>TOTAL OPERATING</b>						
18 EXPENSES		2,783,270	2,412,190	3,010,344	3,395,043	3,647,333
19 OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)		127,573	(18,416)	84,294	(83,413)	7,059
20 LESS Depreciation & Dispositions		20,844	25,099	32,750	32,981	30,824
<b>21 NET OPERATING EXPENSES</b>						
		2,804,114	2,437,289	3,043,094	3,428,023	3,678,157
<b>OTHER CAPITAL</b>						
<b>ITEMS:</b>						
22 Capital Expenditures		40,644	55,352	7,313	7,528	206,039
23 Principal Loan Pmts						
24 Other Items - Dishonored Pledges						
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL</b>						
25 EXPENDITURES		40,644	55,352	7,313	7,528	206,039
26 TOTAL EXPENSES W/O Depreciation		2,823,914	2,467,541	3,017,656	3,402,570	3,853,372
<b>NET OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>						
27 EXCLUDING DEPRECIATION		127,573	(18,416)	84,294	(83,413)	7,059
28 Equity Transfer		28,209	21,615	25,804	(50,052)	50,360
<b>NET SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>						
29 EXCLUDING DEPRECIATION		155,782	3,198	110,097	(133,465)	57,419

# APPENDIX A

PCA OFFICE BUILDING PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET							
	DESCRIPTION	TOTAL PROGRAMS	MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	FUND RAISING	CAPITAL ASSETS	TOTALS	% OF TOTALS
SUPPORT & REVENUE							
1	Contributions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
2	Investments	0	6,000	0	0	6,000	1.69%
3	Fees	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
4	Rent	0	348,698	0	0	348,698	98.31%
5	TOTAL REVENUES	0	354,698	0	0	354,698	100.00%
OPERATING EXPENSES							
6	Staff Salary & Benefits	0	68,000	0	0	68,000	19.17%
7	Travel	0	1,000	0	0	1,000	0.28%
8	Rent	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
9	Janitor/Grounds	0	50,000	0	0	50,000	14.10%
10	Mail/Ship	0	150	0	0	150	0.04%
11	Office Supplies	0	1,000	0	0	1,000	0.28%
12	Telephone	0	1,000	0	0	1,000	0.28%
13	Maintenance	0	50,000	0	0	50,000	14.10%
14	Leased Equipment	0	100	0	0	100	0.03%
15	Dues/Subscription	0	2,100	0	0	2,100	0.59%
16	Insurance	0	40,000	0	0	40,000	11.28%
17	Interest	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
18	Printing	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
19	Staff Training/Develop.	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
20	Promotion/Appeals	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
21	Foundation	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
22	Planning	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
23	Professional Services	0	42,000	0	0	42,000	11.84%
24	Taxes	0	3,000	0	0	3,000	0.85%
25	Utilities	0	60,000	0	0	60,000	16.92%
26	Contingencies	0	16,000	0	0	16,000	4.51%
27	Depreciation	0	61,557	0	55,981	117,538	33.14%
28	TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES	0	395,907	0	55,981	451,888	127.40%
29	Operating Surplus/Deficit	0	(41,209)	0	(55,981)	(97,190)	-27.40%
30	LESS Depreciation	0	61,557	0	55,981	117,538	33.14%
31	NET OPERATING EXPENSES	0	334,350	0	0	334,350	94.26%
OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS:							
32	Capital Expenditures	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
32a	Loss (Gain) on Investments	0	0	0	0	0	
33	Depreciation Reserve	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
34	TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
35	TOTAL NET BUDGET	0	334,350	0	0	334,350	94.26%
36	SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)	\$0	\$20,348	\$0	\$0	\$20,348	5.74%

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PCA OFFICE BUILDING							
BUDGETS COMPARISON STATEMENT							
FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET							
	2022	2023	2024	2025	%	2024 TO 2025	
DESCRIPTION	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	BUDGET	OF TOTALS	\$	%
SUPPORT & REV							
1 Contributions	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%	\$0	0.00%
2 Fees	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
3 Investments	6,000	6,000	6,000	6,000	1.69%	0	0.00%
4 Rent	298,884	298,884	398,512	348,698	98.31%	(49,814)	-16.67%
TOTAL SUPPORT & REVENUE	304,884	304,884	404,512	354,698	100.00%	(49,814)	-16.34%
OPERATING EXP							
6 Capital Fund	55,981	55,981	55,981	55,981	15.78%	0	0.00%
7 TOTAL PROG	55,981	55,981	55,981	55,981	15.78%	0	0.00%
8 Mgmt & Gen'l	341,568	349,494	347,269	395,907	111.62%	48,638	14.24%
9 Fund Raising	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%
10 TOTAL MGMT& FUND RAISING	341,568	349,494	347,269	395,907	111.62%	48,638	14.24%
11 TOTAL OPER EXPENSES	397,549	405,475	403,250	451,888	127.40%	48,638	12.23%
12 Operating Surplus/(Def)	(92,665)	(100,591)	1,262	(97,190)	-27.40%	(98,452)	0.00%
13 Depreciation					0.00%	0	#DIV/0!
14 NET OPERATING EXPENSES	397,549	405,475	403,250	451,888	127.40%	48,638	12.23%
CAPITAL ASSETS							
15 Capital Additions							
16 TOTAL OPER& CAPITAL EXP	397,549	405,475	403,250	451,888	127.40%	48,638	12.23%
16 Loss (Gain) from Investments	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
17 SURPLUS/(DEF)	(\$92,665)	(\$100,591)	\$1,262	(\$97,190)	-27.40%	(\$98,452)	106.25%

# APPENDIX A

PCA OFFICE BUILDING					
FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL HISTORY					
FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET					
DESCRIPTION	2019 ACTUAL	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>					
1 Contributions	\$100	\$237	\$100	\$100	\$100
2 Fees					
3 Investments	294,506	223,053	222,397	(267,911)	211,192
4 Rent	298,884	298,884	298,884	298,884	312,592
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>593,490</b>	<b>522,174</b>	<b>521,381</b>	<b>31,073</b>	<b>523,884</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>					
6 Capital Fund	55,981	55,981	55,981	55,981	55,981
<b>7 TOTAL PROGRAM</b>	<b>55,981</b>	<b>55,981</b>	<b>55,981</b>	<b>55,981</b>	<b>55,981</b>
8 Management & General	341,068	315,674	285,709	323,640	335,814
9 Fund Raising					
<b>10 TOTAL MGMT &amp; FUND RAISING</b>	<b>341,068</b>	<b>315,674</b>	<b>285,709</b>	<b>323,640</b>	<b>335,814</b>
<b>11 TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>397,049</b>	<b>371,655</b>	<b>341,690</b>	<b>379,621</b>	<b>391,795</b>
<b>12 OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>196,441</b>	<b>150,519</b>	<b>179,690</b>	<b>(348,548)</b>	<b>132,089</b>
13 Less Depreciation and Dispositions					
<b>14 NET OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>397,049</b>	<b>371,655</b>	<b>341,690</b>	<b>379,621</b>	<b>391,795</b>
<b>OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS</b>					
15 Other Items	**	**	**	**	**
<b>16 TOTAL OPERATING &amp; CAPITAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>397,049</b>	<b>371,655</b>	<b>341,690</b>	<b>379,621</b>	<b>391,795</b>
<b>17 NET OPERATING SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)</b>	<b>\$196,441</b>	<b>\$150,519</b>	<b>\$179,690</b>	<b>(\$348,548)</b>	<b>\$132,089</b>
**					
Equity Transfer	196,441	150,519	179,690	(348,548)	132,089
<b>Investments Include:</b>					
3 Realized Gain(Loss) on Investments	28,603	96,429	123,688	14,949	30,390
3 Unrealized Gain(Loss) on Investments	232,623	100,307	73,965	(309,211)	155,568
3 Investment Income	33,281	26,317	24,744	26,351	42,932

## **COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

### **I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

The attached budget represents the anticipated financial activities associated with the ministry to connect and equip those in the PCA involved in discipleship ministry. The staff of CDM works to consult with and train practitioners in the local church, particularly through national, regional, local and virtual training events. Participants include ministers of discipleship, elders, Bible teachers, small group leaders, Sunday school teachers, and the staff and volunteers who work in ministries to children, youth, and adults. CDM also offers resources for those in the local church by providing helpful materials on the CDM website, publishing the work of PCA members, recommending resources available in the broader Church, and operating the PCA Bookstore.

*The Book of Church Order* states, “It is the responsibility of every member and every member congregation to support the whole work of the denomination as they be led in their conscience held captive to the Word of God.” (BCO 14-4) Currently, 28% of particular PCA churches contribute to CDM and the permanent committee and staff are grateful for the generosity shown by these churches. We pray more will join them in support of CDM’s essential ministry.

Underlying budget assumptions include:

- a tapering rate of inflation—nevertheless persistent higher costs due to recent years’ cumulative inflation.
- health insurance premiums are projected to increase 20% from the actual paid in 2024.
- moderate growth in giving from churches and greater need for gifts from individuals to supplement churches that do not give according to the Ministry Ask.
- CDM anticipates 13.3 FTE employees in 2025 which is an increase of .5 over 2024.
- CDM continues to provide mailroom and technology services to the committees and agencies in the building and is reimbursed accordingly.

## **II. Major Changes in Budget**

The budget for 2025 presents an 8.2% net increase primarily due to higher operating costs. As noted, inflation is putting extreme upward pressure on all expenses, especially committee and team meetings, conference expenses, occupancy cost, and staff compensation. While inflation has persisted, church giving has not increased at a commensurate rate (1.2%), thus putting increasing pressure on CDM's general fund reserve.

## **III. Income Streams**

CDM has four revenue streams: 1) church contributions, 2) individual contributions, 3) revenues from the sale of resources, and 4) registration fees for conferences and training. CDM's primary source of unrestricted income for the ministry is contributions from 28% of particular PCA churches. In light of the ministry responsibilities given to CDM by the General Assembly, the "Ministry Ask" is set at \$7 per communicant member. If every PCA congregation were to give at this level, CDM would be fully funded and able to accomplish what the Assembly has directed.

Since a majority of PCA congregations do not contribute to the ministry of CDM, and others are unable to give the \$7 "Ministry Ask," the staff of CDM works to solicit donations from individuals, local church women's groups, and the PCA Foundation. Additionally, the staff seeks to find creative ways to enhance revenue through sales of products, attendance at events, and receipt of fees for services provided to churches and the other committees and agencies.

CDM desires to be a wise steward of the funds God has provided and offer the very best service to PCA churches. As CDM engages with and receives feedback from leaders in churches, the staff is convinced a percentage request is more helpful to those who contribute to General Assembly committees. Consequently, CDM asks churches to give a minimum of .20% (.0020) of the congregation's total tithes and offerings, excluding capital budget items.



#### IV. Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year

In an effort to bring the scope of the ministry of CDM in line with the giving from PCA churches, the staff and permanent committee have focused on the areas of ministry to women, children, and resource development. Due to financial constraints, these ministries are forced to operate below budget by forgoing ministry opportunities, using volunteers wherever possible and limiting staff compensation. CDM continues to seek funding from churches and individuals to grow and fully staff ministries to youth and men in the denomination.

#### V. Notes on Budget Line Items

- **Contributions and Support** (Budget Comp., line 1) represent all donated funds by churches, individuals, and organizations.
- **Other Revenue** (Budget Comp., line 2) consists of book and curriculum sales, conference and training fees, reimbursements for postage and other services, and the net change in CDM's investments held at the PCA Foundation. This line item is projected to increase, representing anticipated growth in book sales, greater participation in conferences and training opportunities.
- **Training and Certification** (Budget Comp., line 3) reflects a fifth year of the Children's Ministry Certification program and second full year of a NextGen Certification program.
- The **Women's Ministry** (Budget Comp., line 4) is budgeted to increase 21.7% due to greater participation in annual and regional conferences as well as growth in the WE and International Women's Ministries programs.
- CDM continues, in a limited way, to help local churches that request assistance in developing **Men's Ministries** (Budget Comp., line 5)
- **NextGen Ministry** (Budget Comp., line 6) represents the cost of the CDM coordinator working with a part-time consultant and ministry team and a national conference.

## APPENDIX A

- **Children's Ministry** (Budget Comp., line 7) is projected to decrease as part of the staff compensation is temporarily shifted to **Children's Worship and Prayer** (Budget Comp, line 8) initiative. This line item presents CDM's second year of activity provided for by a five-year, \$1.25 million grant.
- **Seniors Ministry** (Budget Comp, line 9) indicates expenses associated with constituting a ministry team to begin addressing this important area of ministry.
- **Publications and Curriculum** (Budget Comp., line 10) includes the costs associated with developing and producing between eight and twelve studies and curricula.
- The increase of budgeted expenses for the **Bookstore** (Budget Comp., line 11) corresponds to the projected increase in sales revenue (line 2) and increased rent. Bookstore sales have increased since 2017, except for the year of the pandemic onset.
- **Reachout Adventures** (Budget Comp, line 12) is projected to increase to reflect the cost of the revision of the *Upward Bound* theme.
- **Management and General** (Budget Comp., line 13) In addition to staff costs, this line item includes the **Audit Fees** (Proposed, line 26), and CDM's share of **Liability Insurance** (Proposed, line 17) as well as fees that are mandated to CDM by the General Assembly such as Nominating Committee and Administrative Committee fees. See **General Assembly Shared Expenses** (Proposed, line 25)
- The line-item **Committee/Agency Services** (Budget Comp., line 14) represents mailroom and technology services provided to the other committees and agencies and are reimbursed 100% to CDM. This is expected to decline as mailroom and technology services are needed less since two committees operate remotely.
- **Fund Raising** (Budget Comp., line 17) represents the costs associated with contacting churches, presbyteries and individuals and informing them about the ministry of CDM and their potential role in supporting

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

the ministry. This item includes 20% of the CDM Coordinator and his associated expenses as well as two part-time staff assistants.

- The Coordinator, his part time assistant and related expenses are allocated to the various expense categories as follows: Training and Certification 10%, Fund Raising 20%, Administration 15%, Bookstore 5%, Women's Ministry 10%, Youth Ministry 10%, Children's Ministry 10%, and Publications and Curriculum 20%.

## APPENDIX A

### Committee on Discipleship Ministries Proposed 2025 Budget

	<u>Total Programs</u>	<u>Management &amp; General</u>	<u>Fund Raising</u>	<u>Capital Assets</u>	<u>Totals</u>	<u>% of Totals</u>
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>						
1 Contributions and Support	\$852,656	\$300,524	\$126,569	\$20,000	\$1,299,750	48.16%
2 Other Revenues	\$1,263,650	135,100.00	\$200	\$0	\$1,398,950	51.84%
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT AND REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,116,306</b>	<b>\$435,624</b>	<b>\$126,769</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$2,698,700</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>						
3 Coordinator Salary and Housing	\$108,615	\$25,065	\$33,420	\$0	\$167,100	6.19%
4 Coordinator Benefits	\$22,230	\$5,130	\$6,840	\$0	\$34,200	1.27%
5 Staff Salary and Benefits	\$737,110	\$235,010	\$55,280	\$0	\$1,027,400	38.07%
6 Inventory Purchases	\$460,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$460,000	17.05%
7 Supplies	\$3,296	\$648	\$156	\$0	\$4,100	0.15%
8 Telephone & Internet	\$5,936	\$1,261	\$303	\$0	\$7,500	0.28%
9 Technology Resources	\$64,652	\$2,795	\$672	\$0	\$68,120	2.52%
10 Printing	\$15,050	\$0	\$7,500	\$0	\$22,550	0.84%
11 Postage & Shipping Materials	\$97,133	\$21,508	\$2,010	\$0	\$120,650	4.47%
12 Miscellaneous	\$4,948	\$9,123	\$780	\$0	\$14,850	0.55%
13 Subscriptions, Books, Materials	\$2,011	\$326	\$34	\$0	\$2,370	0.09%
14 Equipment Rental/Maint.	\$3,106	\$12,720	\$173	\$0	\$16,000	0.59%
15 Depreciation	\$11,649	\$2,702	\$650	\$0	\$15,000	0.56%
16 Occupancy Cost	\$68,090	\$25,419	\$1,441	\$0	\$94,950	3.52%
17 Liability Insurance	\$0	\$28,000	\$0	\$0	\$28,000	1.04%
18 Consultants, Prof. Services, Reps.	\$50,450	\$8,500	\$3,000	\$0	\$61,950	2.30%
19 Travel	\$94,235	\$1,625	\$3,000	\$0	\$98,860	3.66%
20 General Assembly Expense	\$16,625	\$1,575	\$2,500	\$0	\$20,700	0.77%
21 Staff Development / Book Allowance	\$1,995	\$345	\$60	\$0	\$2,400	0.09%
22 Graphics/Design	\$43,120	\$0	\$2,500	\$0	\$45,620	1.69%
23 Promotion and Advertising	\$26,000	\$0	\$7,000	\$0	\$33,000	1.22%
24 Video Acquisition and Production	\$36,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$36,000	1.33%
25 G.A. Shared Expenses	\$0	\$18,500	\$0	\$0	\$18,500	0.69%
26 Audit Fees	\$0	\$15,000	\$0	\$0	\$15,000	0.56%
27 Facilities, Events and Activities	\$146,325	\$75	\$100	\$0	\$146,500	5.43%
28 Committee and Team Meetings	\$34,500	\$23,000	\$0	\$0	\$57,500	2.13%
29 Honorariums and Royalties	\$74,880	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$74,880	2.77%
30 Vehicles	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	0.00%
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,127,955</b>	<b>\$438,326</b>	<b>\$127,419</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,693,700</b>	<b>99.81%</b>
Surplus/(Deficit) from operations	(\$11,649)	(\$2,702)	(\$650)	\$20,000	\$5,000	
<b>LESS DEPRECIATION</b>	<b>(\$11,649)</b>	<b>(\$2,702)</b>	<b>(\$650)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>(\$15,000)</b>	<b>-0.56%</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH OUTLAYS</b>	<b>\$2,116,306</b>	<b>\$435,624</b>	<b>\$126,769</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$2,678,700</b>	<b>99.26%</b>
<b>OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS</b>						
31 Capital Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$20,000	\$20,000	0.74%
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	
<b>TOTAL NET BUDGET</b>	<b>\$2,116,306</b>	<b>\$435,624</b>	<b>\$126,769</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>\$2,698,700</b>	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Committee on Discipleship Ministries Budget Comparisons Statement for Proposed 2025 Budget

	Unaudited 2023 <u>Actual</u>	Approved 2023 <u>Budget</u>	Approved 2024 <u>Budget</u>	Proposed 2025 <u>Budget</u>	Budget % <u>of Totals</u>	2025 - 2024 Change in Budget	
						<u>in \$</u>	<u>in %</u>
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>							
1 Contributions and Support	\$678,780	\$840,000	\$1,258,440	\$1,299,750	48.2%	\$41,310	3.3%
2 Other Revenues	\$1,364,281	\$1,206,000	\$1,234,800	\$1,398,950	51.8%	\$164,150	13.3%
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>\$2,043,060</b>	<b>\$2,046,000</b>	<b>\$2,493,240</b>	<b>\$2,698,700</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$205,460</b>	<b>8.2%</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>							
<b>TRAINING</b>							
3 Training and Certification	\$38,565	\$71,418	\$95,019	\$88,966	3.3%	(\$6,053)	-6.4%
4 Women's Ministries	\$306,267	\$367,640	\$360,870	\$439,243	16.3%	\$78,374	21.7%
5 Men's Ministries	\$3,617	\$4,000	\$6,500	\$6,500	0.2%	\$0	0.0%
6 NextGen Ministries	\$39,077	\$32,789	\$74,512	\$99,389	3.7%	\$24,878	33.4%
7 Children's Ministries	\$180,521	\$209,854	\$200,686	\$173,288	6.4%	(\$27,398)	-13.7%
8 Children's Worship and Prayer	\$41,024	\$0	\$324,640	\$304,217	11.3%	(\$20,423)	-6.3%
9 Seniors Ministry	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$3,500	0.1%	\$3,500	n/a
<b>RESOURCES</b>							
10 Publications and Curriculum	\$100,982	\$101,979	\$107,934	\$124,980	4.6%	\$17,046	15.8%
11 PCA Bookstore	\$750,804	\$672,830	\$725,667	\$786,671	29.2%	\$61,004	8.4%
12 VBS Reachout Adventures	\$79,693	\$95,323	\$55,199	\$101,199	3.7%	\$46,001	83.3%
<b>Total Programs</b>	<b>\$1,540,549</b>	<b>\$1,555,833</b>	<b>\$1,951,025</b>	<b>\$2,127,955</b>	<b>78.85%</b>	<b>\$395,192</b>	<b>20.3%</b>
13 Management & General	\$228,685	\$227,340	\$253,698	\$275,701	10.2%	\$22,004	8.7%
14 Committee/Agency Services	\$144,706	\$105,846	\$133,939	\$124,625	4.6%	(\$9,314)	-7.0%
15 CDM Committee	\$19,342	\$19,000	\$23,000	\$23,000	0.9%	\$0	0.0%
16 Depreciation	\$18,166	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$15,000	0.6%	\$0	0.0%
17 Fund Raising	\$94,677	\$122,981	\$116,578	\$127,419	4.7%	\$10,841	9.3%
<b>Total Management / Fund Raisin</b>	<b>\$505,575</b>	<b>\$490,167</b>	<b>\$542,215</b>	<b>\$565,745</b>	<b>21.0%</b>	<b>\$52,048</b>	<b>9.6%</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$2,046,124</b>	<b>\$2,046,000</b>	<b>\$2,493,240</b>	<b>\$2,693,700</b>	<b>99.8%</b>	<b>\$447,240</b>	<b>17.9%</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) from Operations</b>	<b>(\$3,064)</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>		<b>\$0</b>	
<b>LESS DEPRECIATION</b>	<b>(\$18,166)</b>	<b>(\$15,000)</b>	<b>(\$15,000)</b>	<b>(\$15,000)</b>	<b>-0.6%</b>	<b>\$0</b>	
<b>TOTAL CASH OUTLAYS</b>	<b>\$2,027,959</b>	<b>\$2,031,000</b>	<b>\$2,478,240</b>	<b>\$2,678,700</b>		<b>\$447,240</b>	
<b>OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS</b>							
18 Capital Expenditures	\$64,518	\$15,000	\$15,000	\$20,000	0.7%	\$5,000	33.3%
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL ITEMS</b>	<b>\$64,518</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$15,000</b>	<b>\$20,000</b>	<b>0.2%</b>	<b>\$5,000</b>	<b>33.3%</b>
<b>TOTAL NET BUDGET</b>	<b>\$2,092,477</b>	<b>\$2,046,000</b>	<b>\$2,493,240</b>	<b>\$2,698,700</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>\$205,460</b>	<b>8.2%</b>

# APPENDIX A

## Committee on Discipleship Ministries Five Year Summary for Proposed 2025 Budget

	<u>2019</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2020</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2021</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2022</u> <u>Actual</u>	<u>2023</u> <u>Actual</u> (Unaudited)
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>					
1 Contributions and Support	\$694,146	\$669,010	\$604,680	\$598,294	\$678,780
2 Other Revenues	\$1,052,659	\$1,075,623	\$1,351,717	\$1,119,625	\$1,364,281
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>\$1,746,806</b>	<b>\$1,744,633</b>	<b>\$1,956,397</b>	<b>\$1,717,919</b>	<b>\$2,043,060</b>
<b>OPERATING EXPENSES</b>					
<b>TRAINING</b>					
3 Training and Certification	\$56,047	\$48,427	\$43,330	\$49,461	\$38,565
4 Women's Ministries	\$240,969	\$241,520	\$191,307	\$262,167	\$306,267
5 Men's Ministries	\$0	\$1,854	\$2,844	\$4,098	\$3,617
6 Youth Ministries	\$23,696	\$22,740	\$23,443	\$27,558	\$39,077
7 Children's Ministries	\$166,110	\$144,503	\$169,309	\$218,109	\$180,521
8 Teach Us to Worship	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$41,024
9 Seniors Ministries	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
<b>RESOURCES</b>					
10 Publications and Curriculum	\$72,805	\$69,981	\$114,672	\$84,544	\$100,982
11 PCA Bookstore	\$576,429	\$555,552	\$643,529	\$682,987	\$750,804
12 VBS Reachout Adventures	\$6,527	\$100,040	\$67,777	\$89,053	\$79,693
<b>Total Programs</b>	<b>\$1,142,583</b>	<b>\$1,184,616</b>	<b>\$1,256,210</b>	<b>\$1,417,976</b>	<b>\$1,540,549</b>
13 Management & General	\$216,927	\$186,877	\$193,864	\$213,268	\$228,685
14 Committee/Agency Services	\$158,275	\$140,270	\$143,020	\$137,606	\$144,706
15 CE Committee	\$15,361	\$10,118	\$6,721	\$22,287	\$19,342
16 Depreciation	\$11,209	\$15,842	\$13,998	\$5,884	\$18,166
17 Fund Raising	\$79,601	\$90,036	\$79,304	\$82,353	\$94,677
<b>Total Management / Fund Raising</b>	<b>\$481,373</b>	<b>\$443,143</b>	<b>\$436,906</b>	<b>\$461,397</b>	<b>\$505,575</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,623,956</b>	<b>\$1,627,759</b>	<b>\$1,693,116</b>	<b>\$1,879,373</b>	<b>\$2,046,124</b>
<b>Surplus/(Deficit) from Operations</b>	<b>\$122,849</b>	<b>\$116,874</b>	<b>\$263,281</b>	<b>(\$161,454)</b>	<b>(\$3,064)</b>
<b>LESS DEPRECIATION</b>	<b>(\$11,209)</b>	<b>(\$15,842)</b>	<b>(\$13,998)</b>	<b>(\$5,884)</b>	<b>(\$18,166)</b>
<b>TOTAL CASH OUTLAYS</b>	<b>\$1,612,748</b>	<b>\$1,611,917</b>	<b>\$1,679,119</b>	<b>\$1,873,489</b>	<b>\$2,027,959</b>
<b>OTHER CAPITAL ITEMS</b>					
18 Capital Expenditures	\$14,775	\$12,427	\$1,680	\$4,465	\$64,518
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL ITEMS</b>	<b>\$14,775</b>	<b>\$12,427</b>	<b>\$1,680</b>	<b>\$4,465</b>	<b>\$64,518</b>
<b>TOTAL NET EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$1,627,523</b>	<b>\$1,624,345</b>	<b>\$1,680,799</b>	<b>\$1,877,954</b>	<b>\$2,092,477</b>

**COVENANT COLLEGE  
PROPOSED BUDGET  
FISCAL YEAR ENDING JUNE 30, 2025**

**I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

General Comments

- 1) Covenant College operates as an institution of higher education in an increasingly difficult and competitive market. Since the college is largely dependent on tuition and auxiliary fees for its revenues, attracting qualified students is essential to sustainable operations. In recent years, the cost of higher education has come under increased scrutiny and changing enrollment and demographic patterns have created challenges for many institutions, including Covenant College.
- 2) The college is working hard to grow enrollment and is seeing encouraging results in recruiting efforts. The economic impact of smaller incoming classes persists, however, as the cohort progresses through the four years. That being said, the college is projected to see an increase of 33 total students year over year.
- 3) For the past number of years, the college has worked diligently to mitigate the effects of inflation. Again this year, the college is only allowing for non-negotiable budget increases. The lone exception is a 2% raise for all employees making less than \$100,000, which is the vast majority of employees.

Economic Assumptions Used in Budgeting for the next fiscal year

- 280 new students entering in fall 2025
- Continued expense increases due to inflationary pressures
- A 2% increase in employee base wages and benefits for select employees
- A draw from the endowment of 5% of the weighted three-year average value

**II. Major Changes in Budget**

Covenant College is committed to sound financial planning and good stewardship of its resources. The attached budget proposes a 4% increase

in tuition and a 4% increase in room and board fees for the coming year. These increases, along with the budgetary adjustments, allow the college to maintain its low student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1 and to provide high quality residential programs.

The proposed budget does not provide for any significant changes in programs or program spending.

The budget that is presented to the General Assembly includes \$3.4 million in depreciation, which is a non-cash expense. While the college is committed to living within its means, in the coming fiscal year we are expecting to experience a deficit. This deficit will be funded from free cash flow resulting from our non-cash depreciation expense, and by drawing upon our line of credit. This line of credit is secured by board designated endowment funds which were generated from surpluses in previous fiscal years.

### **III. Income Streams**

Tuition and fees charged to students, gifts from donors (individuals and churches), fees for services, and gains from investing the college and foundation endowments constitute the four primary streams of income for the college.

The majority of college costs are paid by the students and their families, who are the direct beneficiaries. The college works with each family in an attempt to find an affordable path to attendance. The attraction and retention of students is essential to the financial health of the college and our retention rates remain above industry norms.

Restricted and unrestricted gifts for scholarships and operations, received from churches and individuals, make up roughly \$3 million dollars of the operating budget. Churches historically have given about \$1 million of that amount each year. Churches that participate in the Church Scholarship Promise program are able to realize an additional scholarship benefit for their students.

The college provides other services for fees as well. Offering housing in its residential rental properties, operating the college bookstore, and



delivering conference services provide for a modest income stream that nets about \$300,000 each year before allocation of facilities costs.

Finally, the combined endowment of the college and the Covenant College Foundation provide resources directly to the annual operating budget of the college for general operations and student scholarships. Due to the growth of the endowment, we anticipate drawing almost \$2.4 million for operations and scholarships.

#### **IV. Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

There were no major ministry items not implemented in the last year.

#### **V. Notes to Budget “line items”**

##### **Accounting Format & Other Notes**

The college uses the NACUBO (National Association of College and University Business Officers) definitions of revenue and expense categories. This ensures that the college will be able to directly compare various ratios with other colleges and assess our effectiveness in accordance with our assessment systems. While the categories do not exactly parallel the definitions used by the Accounting and Financial Reporting Guide for Christian Ministries, there is some similarity. NACUBO categories including Instructional, Academic Support, Library, Student Services, Public Service and Student Aid, and Auxiliary services (Room and Board) are considered "Program Services."

- Budget Comparison Note 1 - Net Tuition & Fees decreasing from the prior year budget due to a prior year budget miss. Fiscal year 2025 budget will actually see tuition growth from fiscal year 2024.
- Budget Comparison Note 2 – Room and Board income increasing due to projected increase in total students living in campus housing and to increase in fees.
- Budget Comparison Note 3 – Independent Operations increasing due to increased utilization of the campus for summer camps.
- Budget Comparison Note 4 – Unrestricted Gifts increasing to align with historical precedent.

## APPENDIX A

- Budget Comparison Note 5 – Restricted Gifts increasing to reflect \$1.4 million of new giving anticipated to fund admissions initiatives.
- Budget Comparison Note 6 – Endowment Support is anticipated to remain flat inclusive of foundations gifts. The variance is a function of the foundation endowment proceeds being disaggregated from the college endowment proceeds.
- Budget Comparison Note 7 – Salaries and wages increasing due primarily to an inflationary increase of 2% in base compensation for select employees as well as specific hires funded through restricted gifts.
- Budget Comparison Note 8 – Supplies increasing largely due to funded admissions and marketing initiatives.
- Budget Comparison Note 9 – Contracts and Leases are increasing due largely to increased food costs and an increased student population.
- Budget Comparison Note 10 – Year over year, we are projecting an improvement, on a cash basis approaching \$500,000.

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## COVENANT COLLEGE

### PROPOSED BUDGET

For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

	Programs	Independent Operations	Management & General	Advancement /Development	Capital	Total	% of Total Revenue
<b>Revenues</b>							
Net Tuition & Fees	14,100,084					14,100,084	42.9%
Auxiliary Income	10,013,571					10,013,571	30.5%
Independent Operations		1,750,000				1,750,000	5.3%
Other Income	384,271					384,271	1.2%
Gifts & Support Income						-	
Unrestricted Gifts	2,500,000					2,500,000	7.6%
Restricted Gifts	2,400,000					2,400,000	7.3%
Endowment Support	1,700,000					1,700,000	5.2%
Total Gifts & Support Income	6,600,000					6,600,000	20.1%
Total Revenues	31,097,926	1,750,000				32,847,926	100.0%
<b>Operating Expenses</b>							
Salaries & Benefits							
Salaries	10,907,578	144,642	1,932,337	1,637,352		14,621,909	44.5%
Benefits	2,889,254	46,352	596,632	402,943		3,935,181	12.0%
Total Salaries & Benefits	13,796,832	190,994	2,528,969	2,040,295	-	18,557,090	56.5%
Travel & Professional Activities	1,107,431	2,425	107,655	265,451		1,482,962	4.5%
Insurance	44,517	2,000	98,649	-		145,166	0.4%
Supplies	808,706	670,520	1,115,644	271,021		2,865,891	8.7%
Contracts & Leases	4,797,568	7,000	576,034	15,244		5,395,846	16.4%
Acquisitions	47,177	-	-	-		47,177	0.1%
Other Expenses	488,536	320,346	305,388	-		1,114,270	3.4%
Allocation of Maintenance Costs	3,257,301	162,606	195,090	24,750		3,639,747	11.1%
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	3,426,699	3,426,699	10.4%
Total Operating Expenses	24,348,067	1,355,891	4,927,429	2,616,761	3,426,699	36,674,848	111.7%
Operating Surplus (Deficit)	6,749,859	394,109	(4,927,429)	(2,616,761)	(3,426,699)	(3,826,922)	-11.7%
Less: Depreciation	-	-	-	-	3,426,699	3,426,699	10.4%
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)	6,749,859	394,109	(4,927,429)	(2,616,761)	-	(400,223)	-1.2%
<b>Non-Operating Activities</b>							
Capital Expenditures					1,600,000	1,600,000	4.9%
Change in Cash					1,600,000	(2,000,223)	-6.1%

# APPENDIX A

## COVENANT COLLEGE BUDGET COMPARISON For the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

	FY 2023 Actual	FY 2024 Budget	Proposed FY 2025 Budget	% of Total Revenue	FY 2024 to FY 2025 Change in Budget \$ %	
<b>Revenues</b>						
Net Tuition & Fees	13,092,452	14,361,572	14,100,084	42.9%	(261,488) <sup>1</sup>	-1.8%
Auxiliary Income	7,622,301	8,671,292	10,013,571	30.5%	1,342,279 <sup>2</sup>	15.5%
Independent Operations	1,750,982	1,490,809	1,750,000	5.3%	259,191 <sup>3</sup>	17.4%
Other Income	417,971	242,634	384,271	1.2%	141,637	58.4%
Government Support	889,821					
Gifts & Support Income						
Unrestricted Gifts	2,532,802	2,000,000	2,500,000	7.6%	500,000 <sup>4</sup>	25.0%
Restricted Gifts	2,231,652	1,020,000	2,400,000	7.3%	1,380,000 <sup>5</sup>	135.3%
Endowment Support	2,482,411	2,339,000	1,700,000	5.2%	(639,000) <sup>6</sup>	-27.3%
Total Gifts & Support Income	7,246,865	5,359,000	6,600,000	20.1%	1,241,000	23.2%
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>31,020,392</b>	<b>30,125,307</b>	<b>32,847,926</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2,722,619</b>	<b>9.0%</b>
<b>Operating Expenses</b>						
Salaries & Benefits						
Salaries	13,330,080.9	14,145,143	14,621,909	44.5%	476,766	3.4%
Benefits	3,783,386	3,861,291	3,935,181	12.0%	73,890	1.9%
Total Salaries & Benefits	17,113,467	18,006,434	18,557,090	56.5%	550,656 <sup>7</sup>	3.1%
Travel & Professional Activities	1,538,404	1,388,414	1,482,962	4.5%	94,548	6.8%
Insurance	148,028	141,967	145,166	0.4%	3,199	2.3%
Supplies	2,364,709	2,338,781	2,865,891	8.7%	527,110 <sup>8</sup>	22.5%
Contracts & Leases	5,075,138	4,805,290	5,395,846	16.4%	590,556 <sup>9</sup>	12.3%
Acquisitions	36,161	55,478	47,177	0.1%	(8,301)	-15.0%
Other Expenses	1,048,644	923,355	1,114,270	3.4%	190,915	20.7%
Maintenance Costs	3,557,610	3,403,596	3,639,747	11.1%	236,151	6.9%
Depreciation	3,426,367	3,272,407	3,426,699	10.4%	154,292	4.7%
<b>Total Operating Expenses</b>	<b>34,308,528</b>	<b>34,335,722</b>	<b>36,674,848</b>	<b>111.7%</b>	<b>2,339,126</b>	<b>6.8%</b>
<b>Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>(3,288,136)</b>	<b>(4,210,415)</b>	<b>(3,826,922)</b>	<b>-11.7%</b>	<b>383,493</b>	<b>-9.1%</b>
Less: Depreciation	3,426,367	3,272,407	3,426,699	10.4%	154,292	4.7%
<b>Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)</b>	<b>138,231</b>	<b>(938,008)</b>	<b>(400,223)</b>	<b>-1.2%</b>	<b>537,785</b>	<b>-57.3%</b>
<b>Non-Operating Activities</b>						
Capital Expenditures	1,520,862	1,600,000	1,600,000	4.9%	-	0.0%
<b>Change in Cash</b>	<b>(1,382,631)</b>	<b>(2,538,008)</b>	<b>(2,000,223)</b>	<b>-6.1%</b>	<b>537,785 <sup>10</sup></b>	<b>-21.2%</b>

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## COVENANT COLLEGE FIVE YEAR FINANCIAL HISTORY For the Proposed Budget for the Fiscal Year Ending June 30, 2025

	Audited Financial Statement Actual Performance				
	2023	2022	2021	2020	2019
<b>Revenues</b>					
Net Tuition & Fees	13,092,452	13,528,319	13,219,181	14,102,280	14,984,956
Auxiliary Income	7,622,301	7,487,245	6,733,319	5,453,025	7,468,901
Independent Operations	1,750,982	1,643,720	481,672	794,173	1,484,220
Other Income	417,971	327,990	368,208	627,665	894,438
Income on Investments	647,277	437,245	302,595	293,341	277,438
Government & Grants	889,821	2,109,774	1,590,047	4,458,581	394,280
Net Assets Released from Restrictions	4,714,063	3,321,225	2,646,824	2,956,656	2,933,986
Unrestricted Gift Income	<u>1,885,525</u>	<u>2,061,399</u>	<u>1,828,282</u>	<u>2,744,465</u>	<u>3,813,566</u>
	31,020,392	30,916,917	27,170,128	31,430,186	32,251,785
<b>Operating Expenses</b>					
Instructional	9,199,831	9,246,311	8,330,733	8,994,817	9,391,177
Academic support	1,055,857	1,036,287	961,325	974,585	1,180,720
Student services	7,464,065	7,544,041	6,513,745	6,626,033	6,480,925
Library	875,288	869,090	804,473	835,353	855,433
Public service	188,141	182,095	174,169	172,038	181,845
Auxiliary enterprises	5,399,886	4,944,249	4,913,556	4,685,466	4,891,535
Independent operations	2,627,054	2,723,685	1,873,431	2,111,618	2,711,168
Institutional support	4,740,560	4,404,839	4,103,648	3,371,210	3,792,960
Advancement / Development	<u>2,757,846</u>	<u>2,374,021</u>	<u>2,081,830</u>	<u>1,877,217</u>	<u>2,104,962</u>
	34,308,528	33,324,618	29,756,910	29,648,337	31,590,725
Change in Net Assets from Operations	<u>(3,288,136)</u>	<u>(2,407,701)</u>	<u>(2,586,782)</u>	<u>1,781,849</u>	<u>661,060</u>
Less: Depreciation	<u>3,426,367</u>	<u>3,326,813</u>	<u>3,364,722</u>	<u>3,450,433</u>	<u>3,433,428</u>
Net Operating Surplus (Deficit)	<u>138,231</u>	<u>919,112</u>	<u>777,940</u>	<u>5,232,282</u>	<u>4,094,488</u>
<b>NonOperating Activities</b>					
Contributions received for Long-Term Purposes	2,538,348	3,146,887	5,732,185	2,972,840	1,928,827
Income from sale of Tax Credits	-	-	-	-	1,359,166
Income (loss) on Investments	194,379	(1,438,784)	2,202,614	(196,499)	118,737
Income (loss) on Endowment Investments	1,980,608	(9,346,366)	9,862,432	488,385	1,563,580
Capital Expenditures	<u>(1,520,862)</u>	<u>(1,918,950)</u>	<u>(1,066,250)</u>	<u>(1,268,850)</u>	<u>(1,607,231)</u>
Total NonOperating Activities	<u>3,192,473</u>	<u>(9,557,213)</u>	<u>16,730,981</u>	<u>1,995,876</u>	<u>3,363,079</u>

## **COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY 2024-2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

### **I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

#### **A. Ministry Impact**

Covenant Theological Seminary is a ministry of the Presbyterian Church in America training pastors, counselors, and others who seek to minister in Christ's church. Our purpose is to glorify the triune God by training his servants to walk in God's grace, minister God's Word, and equip God's people—all for God's mission. Our thousands of alumni serve throughout the United States and in dozens of other countries. People all over the world continue to download Covenant's free online materials.

#### **B. Budget Summary**

Covenant Seminary's budget is based on revenue projections for student enrollment, gifts and donations, endowment returns, and auxiliary services (primarily student housing). We make reasonable estimates based on past trends, changes in our industry and economic environment, and institutional indicators. The Seminary faces challenges similar to other small institutions of higher education. Data and anecdotes from peers in seminaries and other small schools demonstrate that there is a common challenge in recruiting and retaining students. While the environment is challenging, we believe in the need for biblical, Christ-centered, theological training; and we are adapting so that we can continue as a leading organization in this field. Our critical financial objective is to grow enrollment in degree programs focused on the preparation of pastors. Under the leadership of President Tom Gibbs, we continue energetic engagement with denominational leaders and partners to more effectively recruit future pastors and ministry leaders to serve the PCA and the broader evangelical world. Our efforts have begun to bear fruit (see "Net Tuition" section below). We are building toward a goal of 11,000 credit hours sold, and as we do so, we are using reserve funds to finance manageable operating losses (see also section V "Notes to Budget Line Items"). This controlled use of reserve funds allows the Seminary to maintain the spending levels needed for the larger student body we are pursuing. Our plan is to begin rebuilding reserve funds by FY28.

#### **C. Net Tuition**

The Seminary uses credit hours sold (CHS) as its primary financial measure of enrollment. After two years of declining enrollment (8,452 CHS in FY22 and 7,378 CHS in FY23), we are experiencing growth. The Seminary's forecast for FY24 is 7,700 CHS, and the FY25 CHS budget is 8,500. Unlike the enrollment growth of the pandemic years, FY20 and FY21, we believe that this growth is driven by our strategic efforts (see "Budget Summary" section above).

The net tuition budget uses our historical scholarship rate of approximately 39% of gross tuition. Of the \$1,919,785 budgeted scholarships, \$1,410,180 is funded, i.e., paid for by funds donated for this purpose.

#### **D. Tuition Costs**

Tuition rates in FY25 will increase to \$610 per credit hour for MDiv and MA students and to \$680 per credit hour for DMin and ThM students. The total costs for the MDiv program remain comparable to peer seminaries. The tuition charge for a full-time student (taking 30 hours) will be \$18,300 before financial aid.

#### **E. Gifts and Donations**

The unrestricted gifts and donations budget of \$2,500,000 is an increase of 9.4% over the FY24 budget of \$2,286,000. We expect to realize a substantial part of this increase in unrestricted giving through our continuing, quiet capital campaign called "Bridge the Gap," which is focused on key Seminary donors. The overall goal for this campaign has been increased to \$1,500,000 in unrestricted donations.

#### **F. Endowment Draw**

The endowment draw percentage continues to be 5% of the endowment's average fair market value. This fair market value measurement date is one year prior to the beginning of the budgeted fiscal year. Thus, the amount of \$2,010,377 for FY25 was set before the beginning of the budget process.

#### **G. Auxiliary Services**

The occupancy rate in student housing has improved with enrollment. Because of the age of the buildings and recent inflationary pressures, we anticipate that expenses for student housing will exceed revenue again in

FY25. This negative dynamic will improve in future years as occupancy continues to improve and cost increases moderate.

### **H. Expenses**

All Seminary departments are asked to submit expense budgets to the business and finance office. The president's cabinet evaluates these budgets in light of revenue assumptions and the strategic direction of the institution. Necessary changes are discussed with departments and approved by the president with the support of the president's cabinet. The Seminary's most significant cost is personnel.

## **II. Major Changes in Budget**

This year there were no major changes in the budget.

## **III. Income Streams**

The Seminary's budgeted revenue sources in FY25 are as follows:

Tuition & Fees	36.98%
Unrestricted Giving	25.93%
Endowment*	20.86%
Temp. Restricted Gifts	9.83%
<u>Auxiliary Services</u>	<u>6.40%</u>
Total	100.0%

(\*Note that the Endowment line reflects the draw for both general operating purposes and student scholarships.)

### **A. Tuition and Fees**

The budget is based on historical trends combined with current retention and recruitment indicators. It is set before the CHS outcome for the year immediately preceding the budget year is known. Forecast adjustments are made, if necessary, after data on CHS outcomes becomes available.

### **B. Unrestricted Giving**

The development team has consistently met annual fund goals for several years. The team's direct knowledge of individual donor circumstances and broader giving trends supports an incremental percentage increase in FY25.



### **C. Endowment**

The endowment draw calculation is based on a fair market value measurement made one year before the fiscal year begins. Thus, it is a known quantity. Professional management of the endowment, combined with fiduciary oversight by the board of trustees, minimizes volatility in our long-term endowment growth expectations.

### **D. Temporarily Restricted Gifts**

Restricted gifts are counted as revenue when the gifts are spent for their restricted purposes. Our development team's interactions with peers and its direct experience informs us that donor interest in restricted giving remains strong. Overall use of restricted funds in FY25 is expected to be about the same as in FY24. The composition of these funds has changed somewhat as we have added proceeds from the Compelling Preaching Initiative, a generous grant awarded by the Lilly Endowment Inc. We have also decreased the budget for Founders scholarship awards to reflect actual results from recent years.

### **E. Auxiliary Services**

Our FY25 budget anticipates a net loss in auxiliary operations. (See the "Auxiliary Services" subsection under section I, "Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors" above.)

## **IV. Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

We did not have a major ministry that was not implemented in the past year.

## **V. Notes to Budget Line Items**

The Seminary's unrestricted reserves at the end of FY25 are budgeted to be \$1,098,528.

APPENDIX A

COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
Proposed FY25 Budget

	Instruction	Student Services	Auxiliary	Academic Support	Institutional	Institutional	Total	% of Total
					Support -- Fundraising	Support -- General and Administrative		
REVENUES								
Credit Hours Sold							8,500	
Gross Tuition	5,052,065	-	-	-	-	-	5,052,065	52.41%
Unfunded Scholarship	(509,605)	-	-	-	-	-	(509,605)	-5.29%
Funded Scholarship	(1,410,180)	-	-	-	-	-	(1,410,180)	-14.63%
Net Tuition Before Fees	3,132,280	-	-	-	-	-	3,132,280	32.49%
Fees	432,459	-	-	-	-	-	432,459	4.49%
Net Tuition & Fees	3,564,739	-	-	-	-	-	3,564,739	36.98%
Gifts and Donations								
Auxiliary Enterprises	20,000	-	-	32,000	2,300,000	148,000	2,500,000	25.93%
Released from Temporary Restriction	-	-	616,746	-	-	-	616,746	6.40%
Operational Endowment	926,709	-	-	-	-	21,070	947,779	9.83%
Endowed Student Aid	-	-	105,062	-	-	1,166,135	1,271,197	13.19%
	739,180	-	-	-	-	-	739,180	7.67%
TOTAL REVENUES	5,250,628	-	721,808	32,000	2,300,000	1,335,205	9,639,641	100.00%
EXPENSES								
Salaries & Wages	2,544,274	1,069,730	217,987	322,356	651,932	615,105	5,421,384	51.60%
Employee Benefits	668,151	346,839	75,323	91,922	206,257	224,178	1,612,669	15.35%
Advertising	6,633	52,998	1,331	-	6,390	-	67,352	0.64%
Contract Services	44,206	69,947	28,070	32,780	70,682	182,432	428,117	4.07%
Insurance, Compliance, Regulatory	78,906	27,952	57,703	1,380	6,993	36,977	209,911	2.00%
Occupancy, Utilities, & Maintenance	2,760	1,945	252,025	300	133	38	257,200	2.45%
Student Resources								
Technology	77,715	108,480	-	69,800	-	-	69,800	0.66%
Travel & Entertainment	88,523	94,868	1,115	1,530	142,240	74,808	403,083	3.84%
Other	153,240	107,908	14,683	5,590	41,073	72,577	395,071	3.76%
Facilities Allocation	655,003	283,955	78,548	85,942	105,661	90,051	1,299,160	12.37%
TOTAL EXPENSES	4,319,410	2,164,622	758,666	642,919	1,290,265	1,330,485	10,506,367	100.00%
NET INCOME before Depreciation	931,218	(2,164,622)	(36,858)	(610,919)	1,009,735	4,720	(866,726)	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY Budget Comparison FY23 - FY25

	22-23	23-24	24-25	FY25 Budget to FY23 Actual
	Actual	Budget	Budget	Favorable / (Unfavorable)
<b>REVENUES</b>				
Credit Hours Sold	7,378	7,700	8,500	1,122
<b>Gross Tuition</b>	\$4,275,376	\$4,606,490	\$5,052,065	\$776,689
Unfunded Scholarship	(486,333)	(377,221)	(509,605)	(23,272)
Funded Scholarship	(1,334,815)	(1,419,310)	(1,410,180)	(75,365)
<b>Net Tuition Before Fees</b>	<b>2,454,228</b>	<b>2,809,959</b>	<b>3,132,280</b>	<b>678,052</b>
Fees	426,578	401,689	432,459	5,881
<b>Net Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	<b>2,880,806</b>	<b>3,211,648</b>	<b>3,564,739</b>	<b>683,933</b>
Missional Training Center	41,375	34,200		(41,375)
<b>Gifts and Donations</b>	<b>3,218,038</b>	<b>2,286,000</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>	<b>(718,038)</b>
Auxiliary Enterprises	529,474	433,788	616,746	87,272
Released from Temporary Restriction	1,169,824	937,910	947,779	(222,045)
Operational Endowment	1,235,352	1,257,406	1,271,197	35,845
Endowed Student Aid	349,717	508,150	739,180	389,463
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>9,424,586</b>	<b>8,669,102</b>	<b>9,639,641</b>	<b>215,055</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>				
<b>President's Cabinet</b>				
President / Trustees	368,275	366,681	441,234	(72,959)
Strategic Operating Expenses	0		39,000	(39,000)
Operations	273,329	205,101	410,904	(137,575)
<b>Total President's Cabinet</b>	<b>641,604</b>	<b>571,782</b>	<b>891,138</b>	<b>(249,534)</b>
<b>Academics</b>				
Instruction	1,609,710	1,720,024	1,844,867	(235,157)
Compelling Preaching Initiative			255,709	
Disability Ministry	28,551	16,750	16,750	11,801
Field Education	38,257	26,291	31,693	6,564
Doctor of Ministry	104,566	91,335	88,553	16,213
Master of Theology (Th. M.)	3,000	3,060	3,182	(182)
Online Education	147,637	208,642	218,026	(70,389)
Counseling	648,704	733,964	810,788	(162,084)
World Missions	9,731	24,020	13,415	(3,684)
Francis Schaeffer Institute	129,514	132,841	136,962	(7,448)
Church Planting	98,887	121,999	132,285	(33,398)
Seattle Site	560			560
Nashville Site	1,787			1,787
<b>Total Academics</b>	<b>2,820,904</b>	<b>3,078,926</b>	<b>3,552,030</b>	<b>(731,126)</b>
<b>General</b>				
Library	413,700	413,776	445,314	(31,614)
Student Life	319,730	356,140	394,715	(74,985)
Registration & Academic Advising	213,611	243,990	261,189	(47,578)
Financial Aid Administration	125,530	123,549	120,613	4,917
Development	667,665	787,456	951,547	(283,882)
Communications	352,653	391,931	412,025	(59,372)
Admissions	331,108	343,475	478,067	(146,959)
Alumni Relations	128,433	130,046	137,974	(9,541)
Business Office	360,042	369,929	379,635	(19,593)
Information Technology Services	528,388	595,044	666,417	(138,029)
Facilities	1,053,668	1,053,211	1,163,558	(109,890)
<b>General Sub-total</b>	<b>4,494,528</b>	<b>4,808,547</b>	<b>5,411,054</b>	<b>(916,526)</b>
<b>Total Educational and General</b>	<b>7,957,036</b>	<b>8,459,255</b>	<b>9,854,222</b>	<b>(1,897,186)</b>
Auxiliary Enterprises Expenses	598,157	483,765	652,144	(53,987)
Transfers to Non-operating Funds	89,759			89,759
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>8,644,952</b>	<b>8,943,020</b>	<b>10,506,366</b>	<b>(1,861,414)</b>
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME</b>	<b>779,634</b>	<b>(273,918)</b>	<b>(866,725)</b>	<b>(1,646,359)</b>

\* In years with negative net income, operating reserves are used to fund the deficit.

## APPENDIX A

### COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY Budget Comparison FY21 - FY25

	20-21 Actual	21-22 Actual	22-23 Actual	23-24 Budget	24-25 Budget
<b>REVENUES</b>					
Credit Hours Sold	9,399	8,452	7,378	7,700	8,500
<b>Gross Tuition</b>	<b>\$5,103,898</b>	<b>\$4,705,553</b>	<b>\$4,275,376</b>	<b>\$4,606,490</b>	<b>\$5,052,065</b>
Unfunded Scholarship	(1,060,091)	(403,674)	(486,333)	(377,221)	(509,605)
Funded Scholarship	(891,908)	(1,497,739)	(1,334,815)	(1,419,310)	(1,410,180)
<b>Net Tuition Before Fees</b>	<b>3,151,899</b>	<b>2,804,140</b>	<b>2,454,228</b>	<b>2,809,959</b>	<b>3,132,280</b>
Fees	195,682	248,201	426,578	401,689	432,459
<b>Net Tuition &amp; Fees</b>	<b>3,347,581</b>	<b>3,052,341</b>	<b>2,880,806</b>	<b>3,211,648</b>	<b>3,564,739</b>
Missional Training Center	33,600	37,800	41,375	34,200	
<b>Gifts and Donations</b>	<b>2,008,245</b>	<b>2,126,348</b>	<b>3,218,038</b>	<b>2,286,000</b>	<b>2,500,000</b>
<b>Auxiliary Enterprises</b>	<b>536,339</b>	<b>544,196</b>	<b>529,474</b>	<b>433,788</b>	<b>616,746</b>
Released from Temporary Restriction	1,085,444	1,442,788	1,169,824	937,910	947,779
Operational Endowment	1,267,342	1,129,404	1,235,422	1,257,406	1,271,197
Endowed Student Aid	316,141	324,021	349,717	508,150	739,180
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>8,594,692</b>	<b>8,656,898</b>	<b>9,424,656</b>	<b>8,669,102</b>	<b>9,639,641</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>					
<b>President's Cabinet</b>					
President / Trustees	386,981	370,149	368,275	366,681	441,234
Chaplain	40,737	41,732			
Strategic Academic Projects	128,233	(222)			
Strategic Operating Expenses					39,000
Operations	201,084	292,303	273,329	205,101	410,904
<b>Total President's Cabinet</b>	<b>757,035</b>	<b>703,962</b>	<b>641,604</b>	<b>571,782</b>	<b>891,138</b>
<b>Academics</b>					
Instruction	1,560,386	1,646,469	1,609,710	1,720,024	1,844,867
Compelling Preaching Initiative					255,709
Disability Ministry	18,659	20,676	28,551	16,750	16,750
Field Education	120,849	120,322	38,257	26,291	31,693
Doctor of Ministry	35,083	67,886	104,566	91,335	88,353
Master of Theology (Th. M.)	2,500	3,000	3,000	3,060	3,182
Online Education	86,675	151,794	147,637	208,642	218,026
Counseling	654,748	769,885	648,704	733,964	810,788
World Missions	1,551	23,115	9,731	24,020	13,415
Francis Schaeffer Institute	206,225	223,260	129,514	132,841	136,962
Church Planting	88,013	87,498	98,887	121,999	132,285
Seattle Site			560		
Nashville Site	2,395	1,743	1,787		
Partnership Development		60			
<b>Total Academics</b>	<b>2,777,084</b>	<b>3,115,708</b>	<b>2,820,904</b>	<b>3,078,926</b>	<b>3,552,030</b>
<b>General</b>					
Library	426,080	462,726	413,700	413,776	445,314
Student Life	291,629	341,747	319,730	356,140	394,715
Registration & Academic Advising	203,950	225,923	213,611	243,990	261,189
Financial Aid Administration	118,033	116,740	125,530	123,549	120,613
Development	695,617	754,973	667,665	787,456	951,547
Communications	400,206	375,503	352,653	391,931	412,025
Admissions	168,131	218,931	331,108	343,475	478,067
Alumni Relations	127,219	125,115	128,433	130,046	137,974
Business Office	394,163	418,021	360,042	369,929	379,635
Information Technology Services	533,330	606,568	528,388	595,044	666,417
Facilities	1,007,595	1,059,990	1,053,668	1,053,211	1,163,558
<b>General Sub-total</b>	<b>4,365,953</b>	<b>4,706,237</b>	<b>4,494,528</b>	<b>4,808,547</b>	<b>5,411,054</b>
<b>Total Educational and General</b>	<b>7,900,072</b>	<b>8,525,907</b>	<b>7,957,036</b>	<b>8,459,255</b>	<b>9,854,222</b>
Auxiliary Enterprises Expenses	520,181	573,953	598,157	483,765	652,144
Transfers to Non-operating Funds	17,113	15,687	89,759		
<b>Hope for the Future Campaign</b>	<b>82,921</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>0</b>		
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>8,520,287</b>	<b>9,115,565</b>	<b>8,644,952</b>	<b>8,943,020</b>	<b>10,506,366</b>
<b>OPERATING NET INCOME</b>	<b>74,405</b>	<b>(458,667)</b>	<b>779,704</b>	<b>(273,918)</b>	<b>(866,725)</b>
<b>NON-OPERATING ACTIVITY</b>					
Presidential Search/Transition Expense	55,039	188,999			

\* In years with negative net income, operating reserves are used to fund the deficit.

**GENEVA BENEFITS GROUP, INC.  
2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

**I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

Geneva Vision: We believe the church thrives and the gospel advances when men and women who serve PCA ministries grow spiritually and financially healthy.

Geneva Mission: We guide PCA pastors and ministry workers through the complexities of financial planning and employee benefits so they and their families are able to live generously in every season of ministry.

This budget reflects the costs incurred to administer the trust funds for Geneva Benefits Group. This budget does not reflect the financial activity in those trust funds. (Geneva's Annual Report provides complete financial activity in the trusts, including unaudited financial statements.)

**II. Major Changes in Budget**

The 2025 budget reflects a 7.6% increase from the prior year, or \$444,016. This change is funded by a 7.5% increase in trustee fees and a 9.2% increase in grant/other income sources. The increase in budgeted expenses results from a 10% increase in Operations Expenses, primarily payroll & benefit costs, to offset increasing costs, as well as two planned new hires. The total number of staff budgeted for 2025 is 32.5 FTE. This number includes the two planned new hires referenced above.

The Retirement portion of Support and Revenue increased 9.2%, or \$290,897, as higher expenses increase the overall Trustee Fees allocated to Retirement and Insurance. (See details above at II. A.; Budget Comparisons – Line 1).

The Insurance portion of Support and Revenue increased 9.2%, or \$145,449, as higher expenses increase the overall Trustee Fees allocated to Retirement and Insurance. (See details above at II. A.; Budget Comparisons – Line 2).

The Relief portion of Support and Revenue shows a 3.5% decrease, or (\$26,259). The reduction of fees is possible through the continued use of

## APPENDIX A

grant revenue provided by the Lilly Foundation. (See details above at II. A.; Budget Comparisons – Line 3 and Line 6).

The Insurance TPA income portion of Support and Revenue reflects fee income assessed by Geneva for in-house administration of the Insurance plan. Historically, there was a preference to isolate this income stream. Starting in 2025, this income will be incorporated within the Insurance Trustee Fees. (Budget Comparisons – Line 4).

The Retirement Fee Income portion of Support and Revenue represents administrative fees from the self-directed investment accounts in the Retirement Plan (reclassification/phase-out of this income began in 2023 and will not be budgeted for in 2025) and correction fees related to retirement account services. (Budget Comparisons – Line 5).

The Other Income portion of Support and Revenue reflects estimated registration income for the annual Ministerial Relief Golf Tournament and investment income from invested cash reserves. (Budget Comparisons – Line 7)

The 2025 budget reflects \$65,000 for capital expenditures, primarily office improvements and computer equipment purchases. (Proposed Budget – Line 26)

Please note that 2023 actuals are unaudited as of the drafting of the Budget Package. The 2023 audit is expected to be completed in May of 2024. (Budget Comparisons and Five-Year Comparison).

### **III. Income Stream**

Geneva's primary budgeted revenue sources are as follows:

- 1) Trustee fees charged to:
  - a. PCA Health and Welfare Benefit Trust,
  - b. Geneva Benefits Group Charitable Relief Trust
  - c. PCA 403(b)(9) Retirement Plan and Other Plans Trust
- 2) Grant Income.

**Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

Geneva began but did not complete the planned move and renovation to a larger office suite in 2023. The project is expected to be completed in early 2024.

**Notes to Budget Line Items**

Occupancy expense for the shared facility is expected to remain at the same rate as 2024, which is \$14 per square foot. (Proposed Budget – Line 15).

All fundraising activities are related to the Ministerial Relief department through our development activities, annual Relief Offering, appeals through PCA Foundation, and advertising in denominational publications (Proposed Budget – Fundraising Column). The 2025 fundraising budget includes salary and benefits expenses for the Director of Philanthropy and Donor Relations Manager.

Our General Assembly line item includes Geneva's share of the Nominating Committee expense and any Ad Hoc Committee expense; the cost of convention services, such as booth space; transportation of materials and staff to and from General Assembly; seminars and other education/information activities presented at General Assembly. (Proposed Budget – Line 11)

# APPENDIX A

GENEVA BENEFITS GROUP, INC. PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET						
DESCRIPTION	PROGRAMS	MANAGEMENT & GENERAL	FUND RAISING	CAPITAL ASSETS	TOTALS	% OF TOTALS
<b>Support &amp; Revenue:</b>						
1 Retirement		3,416,983		43,333	3,460,316	54.83%
2 Insurance		1,708,491		21,667	1,730,158	27.42%
3 Relief	157,544	373,541	187,218		718,303	11.38%
4 Investment Income		19,800			19,800	0.31%
5 Ministerial Relief Tournament Income		66,000			66,000	1.05%
6 Retirement Fee Income		5,500			5,500	0.09%
7 Grant Income	310,721				310,721	4.92%
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>468,265</b>	<b>5,590,315</b>	<b>187,218</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>6,310,798</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Operations Expenses:</b>						
<u>Salaries &amp; Benefits:</u>						
8 President's Salary & Housing	-	263,550	-		263,550	4.18%
9 President's Benefits	-	78,382	-		78,382	1.24%
10 Staff Salaries & Housing	274,085	2,605,026	72,189		2,951,300	46.77%
11 Staff Benefits	108,055	1,142,191	33,379		1,283,625	20.34%
<u>G &amp; A:</u>						
12 Advertising, Promotions & Website	2,000	10,200	4,000		16,200	0.26%
13 Computer & Office Equipment	-	119,000	-		119,000	1.89%
14 Insurance	-	76,000	-		76,000	1.20%
15 Occupancy Cost/Rent	-	117,052	-		117,052	1.85%
16 Office	1,000	126,712	600		128,312	2.03%
17 Postage	1,200	17,900	16,000		35,100	0.56%
18 Printing	5,000	44,671	30,000		79,671	1.26%
19 Professional Services	5,000	379,120	18,000		402,120	6.37%
20 Telephone	-	14,700	-		14,700	0.23%
21 Training & Professional/Ministry Dues	3,100	96,945	100		100,145	1.59%
22 Travel	68,825	392,365	12,950		474,140	7.51%
23 General Assembly Expense	-	40,500	-		40,500	0.64%
24 Ministerial Relief Tournament Expense	-	66,000	-		66,000	1.05%
<b>Total Operations Expenses:</b>	<b>468,265</b>	<b>5,590,315</b>	<b>187,218</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6,245,798</b>	<b>98.97%</b>
25 Surplus/(Deficit) from Operations:	-	-	-	<b>65,000</b>	<b>65,000</b>	
<b>Capital Assets:</b>						
26 Capital Expenditures				<b>65,000</b>	65,000	1.03%
27 Depreciation		91,000			91,000	
28 Less Depreciation		(91,000)			(91,000)	
<b>Total Capital Assets:</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>1.03%</b>
<b>Total Operations &amp; Capital:</b>	<b>468,265</b>	<b>5,590,315</b>	<b>187,218</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>6,310,798</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>GENEVA BENEFITS GROUP, INC.</b> <b>FIVE-YEAR COMPARISON</b>					
DESCRIPTION	2019 ACTUAL	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL
<b>Support &amp; Revenue:</b>					
1 Retirement	1,907,140	1,687,730	2,017,516	2,248,986	2,647,047
2 Insurance	968,324	845,005	1,008,758	1,124,493	1,323,524
3 Relief	285,236	321,344	583,270	645,396	793,145
4 Insurance TPA Income	43,660	44,768	45,077	46,638	47,748
5 Retirement Fee Income	31,371	31,845	42,863	35,468	16,082
6 Grant Income	-	-	401,601	30,487	227,834
7 Other Income (Loss)	35,878	84,855	50,585	58,637	41,033
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>3,271,608</b>	<b>3,015,547</b>	<b>4,149,669</b>	<b>4,190,105</b>	<b>5,096,413</b>
<b>Operations Expenses:</b>					
<i>Programs:</i>					
8 Ministerial Relief	319,223	253,578	184,008	117,756	102,736
Total Programs:	319,223	253,578	184,008	117,756	102,736
<i>Supporting Activities:</i>					
9 Administration	2,782,656	2,815,165	3,332,538	3,790,211	4,455,891
10 Fund Raising (Relief)	15,392	69,246	62,151	117,310	131,377
11 General Assembly Expense	49,939	857	22,501	31,286	23,355
Total Supporting Activities:	2,847,987	2,885,268	3,417,190	3,938,807	4,610,624
<b>Total Operations Expenses:</b>	<b>3,167,210</b>	<b>3,138,846</b>	<b>3,601,198</b>	<b>4,056,563</b>	<b>4,713,360</b>
12 Depreciation	20,946	40,356	43,458	48,554	77,431
13 Surplus(Deficit) after Depreciation	83,452	(163,655)	505,013	84,988	305,623
<b>Capital Assets:</b>					
14 Capital Additions	**	**	**	**	**
<b>Total Operations &amp; Capital:</b>	<b>3,188,156</b>	<b>3,179,202</b>	<b>3,644,657</b>	<b>4,105,117</b>	<b>4,790,790</b>
<b>Net Revenue over (under) Expense including depreciation</b>	<b>83,452</b>	<b>(163,655)</b>	<b>505,013</b>	<b>84,988</b>	<b>305,623</b>

Administrative Costs reflected in this budget are incurred to administer the trust funds for Retirement, Insurance and Relief. This budget does not reflect the financial activity in those trust funds.

** Capital Additions		\$123,390 + 47,538	\$52,372 + 36,425	\$88,902 + 43,485	\$52,147 + (84,349)	\$701,751 + (31,038)
		Purchase of office equipment, computers, improvements, company car + equity transfer of building and furnishings	Purchase of office equipment, computers, improvements + equity transfer of building and furnishings	Purchase of office equipment, computers, improvements + equity transfer of building and furnishings	Purchase of office equipment, computers + equity transfer of building and furnishings	Purchase of office equipment, computers + equity transfer of building and furnishings ***

# APPENDIX A

<b>GENEVA BENEFITS GROUP, INC.</b> <b>BUDGET COMPARISONS STATEMENT</b> <b>FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET</b>							
DESCRIPTION	2023 ACTUAL	2023 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET	PROPOSED BUDGET 2025 BUDGET	% OF TOTALS	2024 TO 2025 CHANGE IN BUDGET	
						IN \$	IN %
<b>Support &amp; Revenue:</b>							
1 Retirement	2,647,047	2,647,047	3,169,419	3,460,316	54.83%	290,897	9.2%
2 Insurance	1,323,524	1,323,524	1,584,709	1,730,158	27.42%	145,449	9.2%
3 Relief	793,145	793,145	744,562	718,303	11.38%	(26,259)	-3.5%
4 Insurance TPA Income	47,748	45,000	45,500	-	0.00%	(45,500)	-100.0%
5 Retirement Fee Income	16,082	38,000	36,500	5,500	0.09%	(31,000)	-84.9%
6 Grant Income	227,834	-	228,592	310,721	4.92%	82,129	35.9%
7 Other Income	41,033	48,000	57,500	85,800	1.36%	28,300	49.2%
<b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b>	<b>5,096,413</b>	<b>4,894,716</b>	<b>5,866,782</b>	<b>6,310,798</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>444,016</b>	<b>7.6%</b>
<b>Operations Expenses:</b>							
<i>Programs:</i>							
8 Ministerial Relief	102,736	143,352	434,578	468,265	7.42%	33,687	7.8%
Total Programs:	102,736	143,352	434,578	468,265	7.42%	33,687	7.8%
<i>Supporting Activities:</i>							
9 Administration	4,455,891	4,458,204	5,025,032	5,549,815	87.94%	524,783	10.4%
10 Fund Raising	131,377	226,300	174,622	187,218	2.97%	12,596	7.2%
11 General Assembly Expense	23,355	26,860	42,550	40,500	0.64%	(2,050)	-4.8%
Total Supporting Activities	4,610,624	4,711,364	5,242,204	5,777,533	91.55%	535,329	10.2%
<b>Total Operations Expenses:</b>	<b>4,713,360</b>	<b>4,854,716</b>	<b>5,676,782</b>	<b>6,245,798</b>	<b>98.97%</b>	<b>569,016</b>	<b>10.0%</b>
12 Depreciation/Disposals	77,431						
13 Surplus(Deficit) after Depreciation	305,623						
<b>Capital Assets:</b>							
14 Capital Additions **	701,751	40,000	190,000	65,000	1.03%	(125,000)	
<b>Total Operations &amp; Capital:</b>	<b>5,492,541</b>	<b>4,894,716</b>	<b>5,866,782</b>	<b>6,310,798</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>444,016</b>	<b>7.6%</b>
<b>Net Revenue over (under) Expense including depreciation and excluding equity transfer</b>	<b>(396,128)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>			

Additional Information:	2023	2023	2024	Proposed	Change in	
	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget	in \$	in %
President's Salary & Housing	220,904	201,460	232,591	263,550	30,959	13.3%
President's Benefits	65,472	60,940	70,495	78,382	7,887	11.2%

\* See Budget Note V.C.

\* Administrative costs reflected in this budget are incurred to administer the trust funds for Retirement, Insurance and Relief.

This budget does not reflect the financial activity in those trust funds.

\*\* Capital Additions for 2023 were \$701,751. Equity Transfer addition(loss) for the building is (\$31,038).

\*\*\* Pending Building Financials as of February 15, 2024.

2023 Actuals are unaudited as of the 2025 Budget submission deadline.

**MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA  
2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

**I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

The Committee on Mission to North America (MNA) is a Permanent Committee of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA), serving PCA churches and presbyteries under the nonprofit corporation of the PCA. Per Rules of Assembly Operations VI.6-2, ‘The affairs of the church involved in its extension in the United States and Canada are assigned to the Committee on Mission to North America’.

MNA accomplishes its mission to cultivate kingdom advancement through the PCA in North America through its various ministries. For over 50 years, MNA has served as the denominational committee tasked with church planting and resourcing.

MNA provides expertise with excellence to all PCA churches, presbyteries, and networks in North America by offering a suite of practical ministry resources – training, equipment, and assisting in missional purpose, serving communities to advance God’s kingdom.

MNA serves the PCA by focusing on Church Vitality and Church Planting. This focus means (is defined by) supporting PCA churches, presbyteries, and networks in all facets of planting new churches and strengthening existing churches.

As the denominational committee tasked with church planting and resourcing, MNA deploys a variety of ministries to resource particular areas of the Church, its members, and their respective areas of service within the broader kingdom.

MNA’s 10-year vision is to see the church increase within the PCA and through this effort, see the world gripped, changed, and set on fire by the gospel. The church, denomination, nation, and world will be blessed as the church grows and thrives.

By resourcing our churches for kingdom impact, by 2033, MNA will facilitate the multiplication of PCA churches in the U.S. and Canada from

1,932 to 3,000 congregations. By the grace of God, our church will prayerfully accomplish this by:

- Planting new churches
- Reducing church closures
- Expanding the diversity of the PCA
- Partnering with denominational committees and agencies
- Enfolding existing congregations into the PCA

## **II. Major Changes in Budget**

MNA is committed to good stewardship of its resources. While being good stewards of resources, MNA also understands the realities of cost of launching a bold 10-year vision as explained above. Therefore, the proposed budget includes a healthy growth rate increase to facilitate the strategic plan associated with the vision.

## **III. Income Streams**

MNA's main income streams come through constituent donations, partnership share giving, and investment income. MNA's fundraising team is currently being enhanced and equipped for increased development efforts as it relates to implementation of MNA's new vision.

## **IV. Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

All budgeted ministries were implemented in the past year.

## **V. Notes to Budget Line Items**

MNA is submitting a 2025 proposed budget that is an increase of 15.71% from the 2024 budget. Due to an increase in church planter project accounts and growth in permanent staff ministry development in conjunction with MNA's overall vision, we believe this is a realistic Total Expense Budget for 2025.

Per Capita Calculation: The 2025 Proposed *Total Expense Budget* of \$30,237,191 is adjusted using the following formula:

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2025 Proposed Total Expense Budget	\$ 30,237,191
2025 Proposed Church Planters Expense	(17,500,000)
Subtotal	12,737,191
2025 Budgeted Investment Income	(462,928)
2025 Budgeted Conference and Other Revenue	(506,255)
Total Net Partnership Share Fund	\$ 11,768,008

The per capita calculation of the *Partnership Share Fund* will be \$11,768,008 divided by the number of PCA members. The MNA Ministry Ask figure is \$28 for 2025.

The overall layout of the budget has been slightly altered to better reflect implementation of MNA's new strategic vision. Budget totals for 2023 and 2024 that were previously approved have not changed.

An overall net increase of approximately 10% in salaries and benefits is assumed. That is an aggregate of cost of living, merit increases and health insurance costs.

The cost being charged for office space in the PCA building located at 1700 N. Brown Road, Lawrenceville, GA increased during 2023. A rate of \$14 per square foot is assumed for the 2025 budget projection.

# **Mission to North America** **2025 Proposed Budget**

	Program Services	Supporting Activities			% of Total
		General/ Administrative	Development	Total	
<b>Support and Revenue</b>					
Contributions	\$ 25,758,193	\$ 2,906,315	\$ 603,500	\$ 29,268,008	96.8%
Investment Income	-	462,928	-	462,928	1.5%
Conference and Other Revenue	-	506,255	-	506,255	1.7%
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>25,758,193</b>	<b>3,875,498</b>	<b>603,500</b>	<b>30,237,191</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
MNA Coordinator Salary and Housing	-	136,500	136,500	273,000	0.90%
MNA Coordinator Benefits	-	30,763	30,762	61,525	0.20%
MNA Staff Salary and Benefits	4,544,410	1,918,272	287,738	6,750,420	22.32%
Church Planter Support	17,500,000	-	-	17,500,000	57.88%
Direct Office Expenses and Equipment	256,572	465,601	10,000	732,173	2.42%
Printing, Postage and Materials	157,521	13,650	-	171,171	0.57%
Professional Fees	30,263	455,000	-	485,263	1.60%
Projects/Grants	1,862,284	-	-	1,862,284	6.16%
Relief Operations	420,000	-	-	420,000	1.39%
Telephone, Website and Merchant Fees	63,695	207,795	5,000	276,490	0.91%
Training	81,050	10,000	-	91,050	0.30%
Travel and Conferences	617,398	415,417	133,500	1,166,315	3.86%
General Assembly	-	155,000	-	155,000	0.51%
MNA Permanent Committee Meetings	-	37,500	-	37,500	0.12%
	25,533,193	3,845,498	603,500	29,982,191	99.16%
Depreciation	225,000	30,000	-	255,000	0.84%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>25,758,193</b>	<b>3,875,498</b>	<b>603,500</b>	<b>30,237,191</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	

**Mission to North America  
Budget Comparison Statement  
For Proposed 2025 Budget**

	2023		2024		Proposed 2025	% of Total	Change in Budget	%
	Actual	Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget		\$	
<b>Support and Revenue</b>								
Contributions	\$ 20,312,503	\$ 22,689,703	\$ 25,229,962	\$ 29,268,008		96.80%	\$ 4,028,046	15.96%
Investment Income	431,407	419,890	440,884	462,928		1.53%	22,044	5.00%
Conference and Other Revenue	543,733	428,575	450,004	506,255		1.67%	56,251	12.50%
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>21,287,643</b>	<b>23,538,168</b>	<b>26,130,850</b>	<b>30,237,191</b>		100.00%	4,106,341	15.71%

<b>Expenses</b>								
<b>Program Services</b>								
Church Planting	16,303,900	16030,557	18079,500	20,178,250		66.73%	2,098,750	11.61%
Church Vitality	4,887,244	4,500,811	4,936,050	5,354,943		17.71%	418,893	8.49%
	21,191,144	20,531,368	23,015,550	25,533,193		84.44%	2,517,643	10.94%
<b>Supporting Activities</b>								
General and Administrative	2,742,780	2,054,300	2,156,800	3,652,998		12.09%	1,496,198	69.37%
Development	381,796	602,500	603,500	603,500		2.00%	-	0.00%
General Assembly	148,596	75,000	75,000	155,000		0.51%	80,000	106.67%
MNA Permanent Committee Meetings	28,330	20,000	25,000	37,500		0.12%	12,500	50.00%
	3,301,502	2,751,800	2,860,300	4,448,998		14.72%	1,588,698	55.54%
Depreciation	275,233	255,000	255,000	255,000		0.84%	-	0.00%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>24,767,879</b>	<b>23,538,168</b>	<b>26,130,850</b>	<b>30,237,191</b>		100.00%	4,106,341	15.71%

<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ (3,480,236)</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>-</b>			
-----------------------------	-----------------------	-------------	-------------	-------------	----------	--	--	--

<b>Additional Information:</b>								
	<b>2023</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024</b>	<b>Proposed</b>				
	<b>Actual</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>	<b>Budget</b>				
MNA Coordinator Salary and Housing	\$ 251,110	\$ 215,652	\$ 260,000	\$ 273,000				
MNA Coordinator Benefits	59,757	54,596	53,500	61,525				

**MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA**  
**Five Year Financial History (Actual)**

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Support and Revenue</b>					
Contributions	\$ 18,759,517	\$ 20,422,964	\$ 20,956,923	\$ 21,958,888	\$ 20,312,503
Investment Income	281,432	273,743	(215,733)	(828,811)	431,407
Conference and Other Revenue	290,547	558,860	340,975	273,495	543,733
<b>Total Support and Revenue</b>	<b>19,331,496</b>	<b>21,255,567</b>	<b>21,082,165</b>	<b>21,403,572</b>	<b>21,287,643</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
<b>Program Services</b>					
Church Planting	13,694,580	13,345,517	13,948,519	16,962,043	16,303,900
Church Viability	3,230,253	3,404,944	4,153,739	4,157,321	4,887,244
	16,924,833	16,750,461	18,102,258	21,119,364	21,191,144
<b>Supporting Activities</b>					
General and Administrative	1,878,663	2,013,063	1,674,963	2,131,439	2,742,780
Development	594,538	533,129	333,849	372,892	381,796
General Assembly	96,863	5,726	47,409	60,162	148,596
MNA Permanent Committee Meetings	21,303	9,830	8,400	24,585	28,330
	2,591,387	2,561,748	2,064,621	2,589,078	3,301,502
Depreciation	190,204	231,675	271,210	262,491	275,233
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>19,706,424</b>	<b>19,543,884</b>	<b>20,438,089</b>	<b>23,970,933</b>	<b>24,767,879</b>
<b>Change in Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ (374,928)</b>	<b>\$ 1,711,683</b>	<b>\$ 644,076</b>	<b>\$ (2,567,361)</b>	<b>\$ (3,480,236)</b>

NOTE: regarding negative final outcomes: The deficit in any year is created by spending down the project and designated support accounts which had accumulated positive balances in previous years. Therefore, they indicate disbursement of actual cash rather than deficit spending.



## **MISSION TO THE WORLD 2025 PROPOSED CONSOLIDATED BUDGET**

### **I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Focus**

The proposed 2025 budget is based on an analysis of key factors that influence the income and expenses of Mission to the World (MTW) as it operates in a global context with a rapidly changing global economy. We start by reviewing the results of 2023 and extend these indicators into 2024 and 2025.

The year 2023 marked a comeback when it came to both stock and bond market performance after a brutal 2022. Bolstered by the combination of a solid economy, better-than-expected corporate earnings, and an apparent end to the Federal Reserve's interest rate hikes, stocks rallied 25% in 2023. Investors went into 2023 worried about inflation and expecting a recession by the second half of the year. Instead, inflation trended downward, and the economy remained solid despite the first-quarter regional banking crisis. While the Federal Reserve raised interest rates four times over the year, at their December meeting, officials signaled that no additional increases are expected, and they will likely lower rates in the coming year.

Due to the solid performance of the market, MTW's investments experienced a positive return in 2023. It is believed that it will be difficult for the U.S. to avoid a soft recession in 2024 and stock volatility is expected due to the presidential election. Therefore, we are budgeting accordingly with decreases in endowment and investments income. Also, compensation for home office staff and missionaries were adjusted for inflation in 2023 and increases are budgeted for the following two years.

Remembering that the entire program of MTW is by the grace of God, we want to give God praise for a positive year. In 2023, giving from our churches increased and MTW saw a 3% increase in giving to our missionaries. We rejoice that we were able to see our ministries fully funded and the faithful support of our donors.

### **II. Major Changes in Budget:**

Changes in budget reflect current economic conditions and a desire to be a good steward of the resources God gives us through His people. We

## APPENDIX A

carefully worked with each department to reach a balanced budget in the home office. Several minor adjustments helped reach the proposed budget. The outcome should allow us to continue to give full support to our missionaries while helping them to advance ministry.

In 2024, we plan to continually increase our engagement with national partners at a strategic level and emphasize partnerships with PCA churches and other agencies to advance church planting around the world. We will seek to open new ministries with an emphasis on church planting and other support ministries tied closely to the churches with which we work.

In 2023, we experienced a decrease of 27 long-term missionaries which was mainly attributed to the retirement of our aging missionaries. Due to the modification of the missionary selection process, all new 2023 candidates began as initial term missionaries. At the end of their initial term and if approved, the missionaries will transition to long-term missionaries. The category of short-term missionaries will then phase out in the following years which explains the decrease of 15 short-term missionaries over 2022. Praise God, we welcomed 35 new initial term missionaries in 2023.

We also experienced an increase of 17 interns and a decrease in 208 one-to-three-week trip volunteers. In 2024, we plan to increase short-term trips, so our 2024 budget reflects an increase in interns and volunteers.

<b>Ministry Personnel Plans</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>	<b>2024 Plan</b>	<b>2025 Plan</b>
Long-Term Missionaries	588	570	543	530	525
Short-Term Missionaries	59	66	51	40	30
Initial Term Missionaries	-	-	35	55	65
Intern Missionaries	48	75	92	100	120
Volunteers	290	1026	818	900	950

Efforts of the Partner Relations Department will continue to focus on raising endowment funds and increasing planned giving that will help mitigate the administrative fee for long-term missionaries and provide funding for the Partner Relations Department's strategic initiatives.

Our U.S. Operations team (U.S. Ops) continues to strengthen MTW's relationships with local churches, presbyteries, and seminaries/universities

by providing helpful resources and promoting mission opportunities. In 2023, U.S. Ops restructured the regional mobilization centers (hubs) to be more efficient and effective in the mobilizing of missionaries and partnering with churches in their respective regions.

The Information Technology Department (IT)

- 1) IT has selected a new donor portal with improved functionality requested by MTW donors and is currently working on the plan to transition MTW donors to it. The rollout is slated for March 2024.
- 2) Additionally, IT, along with the Finance Department, are planning the migration to a new merchant processor. This processor will support MTW donations with less expensive processing fees and a robust infrastructure that MTW should be able to operate on for many years to come.

### **III. Income Streams:**

Projections have been made regarding the number of missionaries, office personnel, annual income, and annual expenses. In making these projections, the following assumptions have been used:

- We anticipate that continued efforts to recruit missionaries in 2024 will show additional results during 2024, amplified by the efforts of the hubs. Beginning 2024, we are already welcoming 7 new missionaries. MTW continues to focus on its goal of mobilizing churches to send out at least 1% of their adult members for world missions.
- We plan to hold home office staff hiring in 2024 and 2025 to support the strategic initiative to control the growth of administrative fees. Any additions will be directly related to new ministry that will generate needed income.
- With 2024 projections of a mild recession, inflation to continue and other global economic factors to be unstable, we anticipate an increase in ministry costs. Therefore, it will be necessary to take specific steps to keep income and expenses in balance.

## APPENDIX A

- Income projections have assumed a gradual increase in donor giving. We have projected the support requirements of missionaries, adjusted the numbers for inflation, and balanced this with future income and growth projections. For expense projections, we analyzed the historic and economic trends and adjusted operating expenses accordingly.
- Missionary support accounts with deficit balances decreased in 2023 and our Resource Team continues to collaborate closely with each missionary account in deficit or trending toward deficit to address their ongoing support needs.
- Partnership share giving for the home office indicated an increase in 2023 and is projected to hold steady in the coming years.
- Project and team income are calculated by reviewing active and planned special projects. There was a significant decrease in project and team income in 2023 mainly due to the \$8.1 million raised for the Ukraine crisis in the previous year. We plan gradual income increases in the following two years. Our Ambassadors program continues to provide major funding for new fields, church planting, training nationals, and mercy ministry.
- Investment income projections assume a light recession toward the end of 2024 and some volatility in the stock market. We are also planning for less endowment earnings to be available for use in the general fund. The fixed monthly administrative assessment charge per missionary remains the same from 2023. With controlled or specially funded costs in the home office, we expect to keep the general fund in balance.
- The 2021 trend of increasing medical claims continued through 2023 with many of the medical claims occurring during the first half of the year. Increases in medical and pharmaceutical costs also impacted the Medical Fund which has led to a significant decrease in the fund, bringing the reserve down to \$2.1 million. As a result, the monthly health insurance premium for missionaries and office staff were increased in 2024 by 10%. Another step to reducing plan costs is to update the plan

discounting format from a preferred provider organization (PPO) to reference based pricing (RBP). We are making this move in April 2024.

**Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

All major ministry items were implemented.

**Notes to Budget**

The following three tables show the consolidated income and expense budget proposed for 2025. The first table shows the 2025 budget broken down into major components. The second table presents a historical perspective showing 2023 unaudited actual information and budget approved at General Assembly, 2024 modified budget, 2025 proposed budget and the changes in budget from 2024 to 2025. The third table shows a five-year history of income and expenses.

# APPENDIX A

MISSION TO THE WORLD PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET							
Consolidated Budget Functional Analysis	Ministry Program	Administration	Fundraising	Designated Programs	Capital Assets	Total	% of Total
<b>Income</b>							
Missionary Contributions	51,808,115	-	-	-	-	51,808,115	63.9%
Project/Team Contributions	10,820,140	-	-	-	-	10,820,140	13.3%
Unrestricted Contributions	-	1,910,435	-	-	-	1,910,435	2.4%
Medical Fund Income	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.0%
Endowment Income	-	-	-	5,231,080	-	5,231,080	6.5%
Investment Income	-	-	-	9,160,900	-	9,160,900	11.3%
Other Income	2,125,220	24,980	-	-	-	2,150,200	2.7%
<b>Total Income</b>	64,753,475	1,935,415	-	14,391,980	-	81,080,870	100.0%
<b>Transfers</b>	(7,165,130)	7,015,630	-	(35,500)	185,000	-	
<b>Total Income &amp; Transfers</b>	57,588,345	8,951,045	-	14,356,480	185,000	81,080,870	
<b>Expenses</b>							
Staff Personnel Costs	-	5,187,072	1,296,768	-	-	6,483,840	8.5%
Facilities & Vehicles	-	150,400	37,600	-	-	188,000	0.2%
Marketing	-	147,416	36,854	-	-	184,270	0.2%
Fees & Permits	-	40,144	10,036	-	-	50,180	0.1%
Insurance	-	144,448	36,112	-	-	180,560	0.2%
Professional Services	-	556,396	139,099	-	-	695,495	0.9%
Information Technology	-	732,192	183,048	-	-	915,240	1.2%
Distributions	-	29,696	7,424	-	-	37,120	0.0%
Ministry Expenses	-	6,848	1,712	-	-	8,560	0.0%
Office Expenses	-	12,024	3,006	-	-	15,030	0.0%
Hospitality Meals	-	77,192	19,298	-	-	96,490	0.1%
Gifts & Awards	-	46,440	11,610	-	-	58,050	0.1%
Postage & Delivery	-	92,560	23,140	-	-	115,700	0.2%
Conferences	-	70,552	17,638	-	-	88,190	0.1%
Travel Expenses	-	514,264	128,566	-	-	642,830	0.8%
Project & Team Expenses	13,609,835	-	-	-	-	13,609,835	17.9%
Missionary Personnel Costs	37,652,770	-	-	-	-	37,652,770	49.5%
Missionary Operating Expenses	5,875,400	-	-	-	-	5,875,400	7.7%
Endowment Expenses	-	-	-	27,500	-	27,500	0.0%
Investment Expenses	-	-	-	2,616,900	-	2,616,900	3.4%
Medical Claims & Expenses	-	-	-	5,495,250	-	5,495,250	7.2%
Depreciation	-	-	-	-	995,100	995,100	1.3%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	57,138,005	7,807,644	1,951,911	8,139,650	995,100	76,032,310	100.0%
<b>Consolidated Excess or Deficit</b>	450,340	1,143,401	(1,951,911)	6,216,830	(810,100)	5,048,560	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

MISSION TO THE WORLD							
PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET COMPARISON							
Consolidated Budget Comparison	2023	2023 GA	2024 GA	2025 GA	Budget	2024 to 2025	
	Unaudited Actual	Approved Budget	Modified Budget	Proposed Budget	% of Total	Change in Budget	
						\$	%
<b>Income</b>							
Missionary Contributions	48,928,610	50,091,000	50,397,000	51,808,115	63.9%	1,411,115	2.80%
Project/Team Contributions	10,490,233	11,233,800	10,604,100	10,820,140	13.3%	216,040	2.04%
Unrestricted Contributions	1,752,379	2,171,520	1,891,520	1,910,435	2.4%	18,915	1.00%
Medical Fund Income	0	5,000	0	0	0.0%	0	0.00%
Endowment Income	7,330,094	(2,464,344)	4,561,340	5,231,080	6.5%	669,740	14.68%
Investment Income	11,201,128	(245,060)	8,331,850	9,160,900	11.3%	829,050	9.95%
Other Income	2,139,238	1,885,740	2,116,355	2,150,200	2.7%	33,845	1.60%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>81,841,682</b>	<b>62,677,656</b>	<b>77,902,165</b>	<b>81,080,870</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>3,178,705</b>	<b>4.08%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>							
Staff Personnel Costs	6,217,897	6,450,273	6,258,532	6,483,840	8.5%	225,308	3.60%
Facilities & Vehicles	155,008	181,532	187,968	188,000	0.2%	32	0.02%
Marketing	136,430	173,091	182,800	184,270	0.2%	1,470	0.80%
Fees & Permits	44,245	80,902	49,732	50,180	0.1%	448	0.90%
Insurance	174,814	154,095	178,911	180,560	0.2%	1,649	0.92%
Professional Services	672,757	633,895	692,338	695,495	0.9%	3,157	0.46%
Information Technology	804,140	859,654	904,198	915,240	1.2%	11,042	1.22%
Distributions	20,267	18,350	36,500	37,120	0.0%	620	1.70%
Ministry Expenses	6,503	12,085	7,605	8,560	0.0%	955	12.56%
Office Expenses	7,859	21,466	14,739	15,030	0.0%	291	1.97%
Hospitality Meals	91,578	109,249	95,533	96,490	0.1%	957	1.00%
Gifts & Awards	37,672	41,209	56,146	58,050	0.1%	1,904	3.39%
Postage & Delivery	117,543	100,474	107,981	115,700	0.2%	7,719	7.15%
Conferences	57,021	165,808	83,675	88,190	0.1%	4,515	5.40%
Travel Expenses	504,584	1,000,137	632,993	642,830	0.8%	9,837	1.55%
Project & Team Expenses	13,474,092	13,850,716	13,451,801	13,609,835	17.9%	158,034	1.17%
Missionary Personnel Costs	35,288,079	35,396,299	36,308,150	37,652,770	49.5%	1,344,620	3.70%
Missionary Operating Expenses	5,711,925	5,302,450	5,721,165	5,875,400	7.7%	154,235	2.70%
Endowment Expenses	25,280	15,600	26,400	27,500	0.0%	1,100	4.17%
Investment Expenses	2,589,948	3,004,000	2,600,000	2,616,900	3.4%	16,900	0.65%
Medical Claims & Expenses	5,439,145	6,052,100	5,456,300	5,495,250	7.2%	38,950	0.71%
Depreciation	990,535	962,106	994,098	995,100	1.3%	1,002	0.10%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>72,567,322</b>	<b>74,585,491</b>	<b>74,047,565</b>	<b>76,032,310</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1,984,745</b>	<b>2.68%</b>
<b>Consolidated Excess or Deficit</b>	<b>9,274,360</b>	<b>(11,907,835)</b>	<b>3,854,600</b>	<b>5,048,560</b>			
<p>Note 1: Coordinator's 2024 Salary is \$164,729, housing is \$42,000, SECA is \$15,508 and benefits at \$36,700.</p> <p>Note 2: Coordinator's 2025 Salary is projected to be \$172,965, housing is \$42,000, SECA is \$16,122 and benefits at \$38,900.</p> <p>Note 3: 2023 actuals are pre-audit figures as the external audit is not complete.</p>							

# APPENDIX A

MISSION TO THE WORLD					
PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET - FIVE YEAR ACTUAL HISTORICAL DATA					
	Audited 2019	Audited 2020	Audited 2021	Audited 2022	Unaudited 2023
<b><u>Income</u></b>					
Missionary Contributions	43,009,991	42,955,517	44,911,710	47,477,887	48,928,610
Project/Field Contributions	7,148,399	7,997,728	10,883,814	17,446,253	10,490,233
Unrestricted Contributions	2,511,011	2,249,801	1,797,778	1,771,353	1,752,379
Medical Fund Income	40,036	39,336	4,683	5,228	0
Endowment Income	8,881,091	4,742,514	8,351,238	(7,264,237)	7,330,094
Investment Income	11,878,658	9,365,405	11,508,855	(4,666,848)	11,201,128
Other Income	2,411,123	1,641,163	1,948,448	2,014,620	2,139,238
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>75,880,309</b>	<b>68,991,464</b>	<b>79,406,526</b>	<b>56,784,256</b>	<b>81,841,682</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>					
Staff Personnel Costs	6,066,289	6,168,542	6,238,437	6,192,860	6,217,897
Facilities & Vehicles	228,342	154,395	175,436	153,263	155,008
Marketing	169,992	155,208	129,001	126,600	136,430
Fees & Permits	97,173	109,668	122,388	68,931	44,245
Insurance	115,856	109,268	138,725	183,116	174,814
Professional Services	884,606	597,404	555,037	627,428	672,757
Financial Expenses	13,730	0	0	0	0
Information Technology	730,889	594,959	727,437	796,543	804,140
Distributions	36,750	17,566	23,087	26,916	20,267
Ministry Expenses	19,283	15,074	5,672	8,711	6,503
Office Expenses	24,666	14,854	18,408	14,644	7,859
Hospitality Meals	103,355	40,433	60,165	96,404	91,578
Gifts & Awards	51,797	32,946	36,693	40,323	37,672
Postage & Delivery	74,647	97,809	100,575	83,420	117,543
Conferences	190,758	37,132	72,302	146,356	57,021
Travel Expenses	524,929	230,688	266,934	885,331	504,584
Project & Team Expenses	10,991,066	9,741,128	10,760,855	13,729,433	13,474,092
Missionary Personnel Costs	27,505,515	27,534,494	29,365,951	33,113,486	35,288,079
Missionary Operating Expenses	5,588,453	3,215,821	3,717,000	5,277,423	5,711,925
Endowment Expenses	76,500	1,018	18,803	16,575	25,280
Investment Expenses	2,191,620	2,245,651	2,662,894	2,942,936	2,589,948
Medical Claims & Expenses	5,071,759	5,032,685	5,453,917	6,020,195	5,439,145
Depreciation	766,926	897,331	932,654	979,226	990,535
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>61,524,901</b>	<b>57,044,074</b>	<b>61,582,371</b>	<b>71,530,120</b>	<b>72,567,322</b>
<b>Consolidated Excess or Deficit</b>	<b>14,355,408</b>	<b>11,947,390</b>	<b>17,824,155</b>	<b>(14,745,864)</b>	<b>9,274,360</b>
Note 1: The 2022 actuals include a \$21.8 million unrealized loss in investments.					
Note 2: The 2023 actuals are pre-audit figures as the external audit is not complete.					



**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION, INC.  
2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

**I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

The PCA Foundation (PCAF) is organized for the “purposes . . . of the Church of Jesus Christ, including the carrying out of the Great Commission, the support of churches, presbyteries, and other committees and agencies of the Presbyterian Church in America, and distributions to or for the use of organizations . . . that minister to man’s spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual powers.” (Article IV, PCAF Articles of Incorporation)

The purpose of the PCAF is accomplished primarily by making grants of funds contributed by individuals and families. The PCAF encourages contributions by providing information and education about, and facilitating, generous, tax-efficient contributions, and makes effective grants by enabling donors to recommend grants and providing information to donors about charitable endeavors worthy of support.

The PCAF offers the following charitable giving-granting programs: donor-advised funds, including Advise and Consult Funds, Increase Funds, and Single Charity Funds, Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Lead Trusts, Endowments, Designated Funds for churches and other PCA entities, gifts of appreciated non-cash property, bequests, and presentation of information about strategic giving and granting to individuals, and churches, presbyteries, and other groups.

The PCAF has experienced significant growth in recent years, which has provided increased funds for grants and support and education activities. As of December 31, 2023, its assets totaled \$256.8 million. Compared to the 2018 year-end total assets of \$86.4 million, it has increased \$170.4 million over the last five years. In addition to substantially increased giving, improving financial markets over that period, with 2022 being an exception, and increased awareness of the PCAF’s charitable services have been significant contributors to the PCAF’s growth.

The PCA Foundation's proposed Operating and Capital Budget for 2025 of \$2,402,945 represents a \$261,022 or 12.19% increase from the General Assembly approved budget for 2024 of \$2,141,923.

## **II. Major Changes in Budget**

The major changes in budgeted revenue included in the proposed 2025 Budget compared to 2024 Budget are increased balanced-based revenue from Increase Funds and similar funds and trusts, and a higher payout from the Advise & Consult Fund earnings. The PCAF anticipates \$46,250 in increased balanced-based charges, and \$180,000 in increased payout from earnings.

The major changes in budgeted expenses included in the proposed 2025 Budget compared to 2024 Budget are increased wages and benefits due to a new staff position added in 2024, and very high cost-of-living increases to remaining staff wages. The PCAF anticipates costs of \$288,894 for increases in existing staff wages and benefits.

## **III. Income Streams**

The PCAF is self-supported. It does not participate in the PCA's Partnership Shares Program, nor does it rely on the financial support of churches to help underwrite its operating expenses.

Approximately 74% of the PCAF's total 2024 budgeted operating revenue is interest/earnings generated on its Advise and Consult Funds®, the PCAF Endowment (consistent with prior years) and several other invested assets. Trustee fees and administrative-cost charges imposed on Increase Funds, Charitable Trusts, Endowments and other charged accounts are expected to be 23% of 2025 budgeted operating revenue. Direct charitable contributions for operational support (primarily from a small number of individuals and Board members) account for the remaining 3%. Income streams budgeted for 2025 are higher than those budgeted for in the prior year due to an increase in the projected increased assets from complex gifts.

The sources described above are attainable and sufficient to provide the 2025 budgeted operating revenues.

#### **IV. Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

There were no new major ministry plans of the PCA Foundation scheduled for implementation during 2023.

#### **V. Notes to Budget Line Items**

##### **General Comments**

The 2025 Operating and Capital Budget of \$2,402,945 represents a \$261,022 or 12.19% increase compared to the 2024 Budget of \$2,141,923.

##### **Support & Revenue**

1. The 2025 Budget for Support and Revenue is \$2,420,500, the amount needed to fund the 2025 Operating and Capital Budget.
2. Undesignated Earnings (line 1) – These payouts are from funds held by the PCA Foundation, mainly from Advise & Consult Funds and the PCAF Endowment, which help underwrite the Foundation's operating expenses. The payout percentages are set annually by the PCA Foundation's Board, and generally are somewhat correlated to the expected investment returns of the accounts. However, during times when the expected investment returns may be lower than the payout amounts needed to fund operations, reserves in these accounts are significantly more than adequate to compensate for the difference. The 2025 Budget of \$1,800,000 represents a change of \$180,000 or 11.1% from the 2024 Budget amount of \$1,620,000.
3. Account Charges (line 2) – 2025 account charges are fees and balanced-based charges on funds held for long term administration such as Increase Funds, Charitable Remainder Trusts, Charitable Lead Trusts, Endowments, and Designated Funds. The 2025 Budget amount of \$539,500 compares to the 2024 Budget amount of \$493,250, an increase of \$46,250 or 9.38%. Balanced-based charges are projected to be \$500,000, per-grant charges are projected to be \$19,500, and per-gift transaction charges for complex gifts are projected to be \$20,000.
4. Contributions (line 3) – Gifts primarily from a small number of individuals and Board members help underwrite the Foundation's

## APPENDIX A

Operating Budget. Contributions budgeted for 2025 are \$57,500, compared to \$50,000 in the 2024 Budget.

### **Operations Expenses**

1. The 2025 amount budgeted for operating expenses is \$2,419,270, compared to \$2,150,423 budgeted for 2024, an increase of \$268,847 or 12.50%.
2. Staff Wages & Benefits (lines 5, 6 and 7) – 2025 is budgeted at \$1,707,652, representing an increase of 20.36% or \$288,894 from the 2024 Budget amount of \$1,418,758. The increase results from adding a new executive assistant in 2023, a new gift planner in 2024, and higher than anticipated budgeted salary increases due to continuing high inflation.
3. The 2025 Budget for Staff Wages and Benefits of \$1,707,652 represents an increase of \$432,737 or 33.94% over the 2023 Actual expenditure of \$1,274,915. However, of this increase, \$187,525 is due to hiring a new gift planner in 2024 and \$117,713 is due to hiring an executive assistant in late 2023. The remaining increase of \$127,499 is due primarily to timing of actual hire dates compared to forecasted hire dates in previous budgets, and inflation-required increases in wage, payroll tax and retirement plan contribution expenses.
4. All Other Operating Expenses (lines 8-23) – All other operating expenses for the 2025 Budget are \$711,618, compared to \$731,665 in the 2024 Budget, a decrease of \$20,047 or 2.74%.

### **Capital Expenditures**

Capital Expenditures (line 24) – The 2025 Budget of \$16,200 consists primarily of computer hardware, software enhancements, and office furnishings for operations and donor relations.

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION, INC. PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

	2023 ACTUAL	2023 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET	GENERAL & ADMIN.	FUND RAISING	CAPITAL ASSETS	2025 TOTALS	% OF TOTAL
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>								
1. UNDESIGNATED EARNINGS	1,560,000	1,200,000	1,620,000	1,800,000	-	-	1,800,000	74.36
2. ACCOUNT CHARGES	506,183	761,000	493,250	539,500	-	-	539,500	22.29
3. CONTRIBUTIONS	39,779	50,000	50,000	-	57,500	-	57,500	2.38
4. INTEREST INCOME	27,229	15,750	16,500	23,500	-	-	23,500	0.97
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>2,133,191</b>	<b>2,026,750</b>	<b>2,179,750</b>	<b>2,363,000</b>	<b>57,500</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,420,500</b>	<b>100.00</b>
<b>OPERATIONS EXPENSES</b>								
5. PRESIDENT'S SALARY	246,560	263,528	255,000	92,307	171,428	-	263,735	10.90
6. PRESIDENT'S BENEFITS	62,940	64,374	75,294	26,707	49,599	-	76,306	3.15
7. STAFF WAGES & BENEFITS	965,415	931,978	1,088,464	827,017	540,594	-	1,367,611	56.50
8. TRAVEL EXPENSE	30,042	29,435	49,610	8,260	71,775	-	80,035	3.31
9. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	152,192	233,610	246,760	136,835	-	-	136,835	5.65
10. PROMOTION	117,318	115,500	127,780	-	159,040	-	159,040	6.57
11. OFFICE EXPENSE	108,378	117,175	94,375	66,648	27,728	-	94,375	3.90
12. POSTAGE/UPS/FED EX	7,651	12,500	12,500	2,188	6,563	-	8,750	0.36
13. TAXES & LICENSES	90	300	300	300	-	-	300	0.01
14. RENT	46,978	36,000	36,000	59,808	-	-	59,808	2.47
15. TELEPHONE	8,578	8,500	8,500	2,125	6,375	-	8,500	0.35
16. DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	13,119	7,235	13,105	4,888	9,077	-	13,965	0.58
17. TRAINING	1,417	19,000	19,000	5,600	18,400	-	24,000	0.99
18. BOARD EXPENSE	15,153	19,500	22,500	17,750	-	-	17,750	0.73
19. OFFICE INSURANCE	34,646	36,735	36,735	36,735	-	-	36,735	1.52
20. GA EXPENSE	11,861	22,000	20,000	20,000	-	-	20,000	0.83
21. ADMIN/GA NOM. CMTES.	16,186	15,000	15,000	16,250	-	-	16,250	0.67
22. MISCELLANEOUS	618	2,550	2,750	2,750	-	-	2,750	0.11
23. DEPRECIATION	29,595	24,897	26,750	22,768	9,758	-	32,525	1.34
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,868,736</b>	<b>1,959,817</b>	<b>2,150,423</b>	<b>1,348,934</b>	<b>1,070,336</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>2,419,270</b>	<b>99.95</b>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FROM OPERATIONS	264,454	66,933	29,327	1,014,066	(1,012,836)	-	1,230	0.05
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS</b>								
24. CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	393,283	18,250	18,250	-	-	16,200	16,200	0.67
25. LESS DEPRECIATION	(29,595)	(24,897)	(26,750)	-	-	(32,525)	(32,525)	(1.34)
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>363,688</b>	<b>(6,647)</b>	<b>(8,500)</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>(16,325)</b>	<b>(16,325)</b>	<b>(0.67)</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS &amp; CAPITAL</b>	<b>2,232,424</b>	<b>1,953,170</b>	<b>2,141,923</b>	<b>1,348,934</b>	<b>1,070,336</b>	<b>(16,325)</b>	<b>2,402,945</b>	<b>99.27</b>
<b>TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>(99,234)</b>	<b>73,580</b>	<b>37,827</b>	<b>1,014,066</b>	<b>(1,012,836)</b>	<b>16,325</b>	<b>17,555</b>	<b>0.73</b>

PCAF THREE YEAR COMPARISON OF INCOME, EXPENSE, SURPLUS/(DEFICIT)				
	2021	2022	2023	AVERAGE 2021-2023
BUDGET	1,507,359	1,511,564	1,953,170	1,657,364
INCOME - ACTUAL	1,388,980	1,690,415	2,133,191	1,737,529
EXPENSE - ACTUAL	1,329,884	1,647,261	1,868,736	1,615,294
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) - ACTUAL	59,096	43,154	264,454	122,235

# APPENDIX A

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION, INC. BUDGETS COMPARISON STATEMENT FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

DESCRIPTION	2023 ACTUAL	2023 BUDGET	2024 BUDGET	PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET	BUDGET % OF TOTAL	CHANGE IN BUDGET	
						IN \$	IN %
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>							
1. UNDESIGNATED EARNINGS	1,560,000	1,200,000	1,620,000	1,800,000	74.36	180,000	11.11
2. ACCOUNT CHARGES	506,183	761,000	493,250	539,500	22.29	46,250	9.38
3. CONTRIBUTIONS	39,779	50,000	50,000	57,500	2.38	7,500	15.00
4. INTEREST INCOME	27,229	15,750	16,500	23,500	0.97	7,000	42.42
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT/REVENUE</b>	<b>2,133,191</b>	<b>2,026,750</b>	<b>2,179,750</b>	<b>2,420,500</b>	<b>100.00</b>	<b>240,750</b>	<b>11.04</b>
<b>OPERATIONS EXPENSES</b>							
<b>PROGRAMS</b>							
5. NONE	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
<b>TOTAL PROGRAMS</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>SUPPORT SERVICES</b>							
6. GENERAL & ADMIN.	1,151,421	1,211,966	1,329,513	1,348,934	55.73	19,421	1.46
7. FUND RAISING	717,316	747,851	820,910	1,070,336	44.22	249,427	30.38
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT SERVICES</b>	<b>1,868,736</b>	<b>1,959,817</b>	<b>2,150,423</b>	<b>2,419,270</b>	<b>99.95</b>	<b>268,847</b>	<b>12.50</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS EXPENSES:</b>	<b>1,868,736</b>	<b>1,959,817</b>	<b>2,150,423</b>	<b>2,419,270</b>	<b>99.95</b>	<b>268,847</b>	<b>12.50</b>
<b>SURPLUS (DEFICIT) OPERATION</b>	<b>264,454</b>	<b>66,933</b>	<b>29,327</b>	<b>1,230</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>(28,097)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS:</b>							
8. CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	393,283	18,250	18,250	16,200	0.67	(2,050)	(11.23)
9. (LESS DEPRECIATION)	(29,595)	(24,897)	(26,750)	(32,525)	(1.34)	(5,775)	21.59
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES:</b>	<b>363,688</b>	<b>(6,647)</b>	<b>(8,500)</b>	<b>(16,325)</b>	<b>(0.67)</b>	<b>(7,825)</b>	<b>-</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS &amp; CAPITAL:</b>	<b>2,232,424</b>	<b>1,953,170</b>	<b>2,141,923</b>	<b>2,402,945</b>	<b>99.27</b>	<b>261,022</b>	<b>12.19</b>
<b>TOTAL SURPLUS/(DEFICIT):</b>	<b>(99,234)</b>	<b>73,580</b>	<b>37,827</b>	<b>17,555</b>	<b>0.73</b>	<b>(20,272)</b>	<b>-</b>

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION, INC.  
FIVE YEAR ACTUAL REVENUE AND EXPENSE TRENDS

2019-2023

	2019 ACTUAL	2020 ACTUAL	2021 ACTUAL	2022 ACTUAL	2023 ACTUAL
<b>SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>					
1. UNDESIGNATED EARNINGS	1,040,000	546,000	710,000	1,170,000	1,560,000
2. ACCOUNT CHARGES	285,174	333,395	503,271	450,033	506,183
3. CONTRIBUTIONS	29,731	294,370	163,414	76,584	39,779
4. INTEREST INCOME	19,076	6,415	12,295	(6,202)	27,229
<b>TOTAL SUPPORT &amp; REVENUE</b>	<b>1,373,981</b>	<b>1,180,180</b>	<b>1,388,980</b>	<b>1,690,415</b>	<b>2,133,191</b>
<b>OPERATIONS EXPENSES</b>					
5. PRESIDENT'S SALARY	222,400	227,200	240,424	254,536	246,560
6. PRESIDENT'S BENEFITS	42,900	48,800	55,919	62,940	62,940
7. STAFF WAGES & BENEFITS	554,882	533,597	598,304	723,805	965,415
8. TRAVEL EXPENSE	7,555	3,421	37,021	23,212	30,042
9. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES	54,890	68,673	56,407	196,356	152,192
10. PROMOTION	88,911	84,572	92,264	132,729	117,318
11. OFFICE EXPENSE	52,195	47,057	98,697	105,857	108,378
12. POSTAGE/UPS/FED EX	15,013	11,367	12,396	11,246	7,651
13. TAXES & LICENSES	192	260	187	141	90
14. RENT	29,016	29,016	29,016	29,016	46,978
15. TELEPHONE	7,900	8,307	7,747	7,970	8,578
16. DUES & SUBSCRIPTIONS	5,270	1,405	1,639	2,937	13,119
17. TRAINING	2,976	348	21,000	2,536	1,417
18. BOARD EXPENSE	17,617	8,224	10,944	19,067	15,153
19. OFFICE INSURANCE	17,643	20,108	26,019	27,275	34,646
20. GA EXPENSE	19,438	2,000	13,396	6,125	11,861
21. ADMIN./GA NOM. CMTES.	14,419	11,549	12,660	21,739	16,186
22. MISCELLANEOUS	166,166	1,656	68	1,752	618
23. DEPRECIATION	25,151	15,339	15,775	18,023	29,595
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS EXPENSES</b>	<b>1,344,534</b>	<b>1,122,899</b>	<b>1,329,884</b>	<b>1,647,261</b>	<b>1,868,736</b>
SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) FROM OPERATIONS	29,447	57,281	59,096	43,154	264,454
<b>CAPITAL ASSETS</b>					
24. CAPITAL EXPENDITURES	40,178	6,260	5,307	41,781	393,283
25. LESS DEPRECIATION	(25,151)	(15,339)	(15,775)	(18,023)	(29,595)
<b>TOTAL CAPITAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>15,027</b>	<b>(9,079)</b>	<b>(10,468)</b>	<b>23,758</b>	<b>363,688</b>
<b>TOTAL OPERATIONS &amp; CAPITAL</b>	<b>1,359,561</b>	<b>1,113,820</b>	<b>1,319,416</b>	<b>1,671,019</b>	<b>2,232,424</b>
<b>TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	<b>14,420</b>	<b>66,360</b>	<b>69,564</b>	<b>19,396</b>	<b>(99,234)</b>

**RIDGE HAVEN  
BREVARD, NC – CONO, IA  
2025 PROPOSED GENERAL ASSEMBLY BUDGET**

**I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

It is a joy and honor to see such growing interest in the ministry of Ridge Haven. As we seek to faithfully steward the ministry God has placed before us, our hope is that we can continue to increase and improve opportunities for people to come and grow in the gospel through time spent here. This means pursuing avenues for continued measured growth as we expand within our means and develop leaders not only for lives in camp ministry, but also for callings in other avenues of ministry.

The Lord saw fit to bring 13,761 people through Ridge Haven in 2023, spread out over 50 weeks. Our desire to become a truly year-round ministry has been realized and with this comes exciting options for ministry growth as we add a new Event Office / Coffee Shop and additional staff houses onto our Brevard property and activity pool to our Cono campus. Additionally, we are tackling numerous upkeep and infrastructure projects now that we have settled in from our recent campaign and are preparing for faithful steps forward to come.

Our primary need remains additional experienced staff, not only as we fill out multiple positions in Brevard, but key leadership roles at Cono as well. And, as always, we strive to develop leaders that might continue to carry the ministry of Ridge Haven to the entire PCA in North America. Therefore, we are launching the Explorers Project to provide hands on training and development for leaders interested in exploring their gifts for ministry.

**II. Major Changes in Budget**

We anticipate continued growth in ministry along with needed infrastructure and capital to support, which also includes increased payroll to support the Explorers Project. Also, the addition of a Development Officer and a Coffee Shop led to increased expenditure on those items.



### **III. Income Stream**

Ridge Haven receives support/revenue from the following sources:

- Camp, conference, and retreat fees (includes food service and camp store/ bookstore revenue).
- Facility, house rentals, and Cono School and farmland rental.
- Contributions (includes partnership shares and direct contributions).
- Minor sources of revenue, which include resident fees (water/sewer fees, road assessments, etc.), and interest-bearing bank accounts.

### **Major Ministry Not Implemented in the Past Year**

We were hoping to start work on our new Cono swimming pool and outdoor sand volleyball court last fall but had to delay until this spring to secure all the funding. Thus, we were not able to use them to help benefit our recruitment. We finally broke ground on both March 11, 2024, anticipating that they will be finished in time for our full eight weeks of summer camp at Cono. Likewise, we postponed construction of our Event Office / Coffee Shop until 2024.

### **2025 Budget Line Items Notes (Notes refer to all three inserts below.)**

**Line 2, Property** – This line item includes revenue from lot maintenance fees, water hookups, water usage fees, and road maintenance fees from 18 lots which are contiguous to our main campus. The amount budgeted each year reflects the predictable aspects of this revenue, i.e. the principal and interest being paid on lot leases being bought over time, the annually collected lot lease maintenance fees, water usage fees, and a portion of the road maintenance fees. This line item also includes our farmland rental and rental houses at Cono.

**Line 3 & 4, Contributions** – related to expected upcoming projects.

**Line 6, Miscellaneous** – Includes refund of state sales tax, amortization of lot leases, Right-of-Way land sales, staff rentals, and interest revenue. In 2021, this also included our Payroll Tax Refund.

## APPENDIX A

**Line 7, Payroll and Benefits** – Includes payroll and benefits for 27 year-round employees including the Executive Director, part-time staff, plus over 100 seasonal staff both for Ridge Haven Brevard, and Ridge Haven Cono. Speakers, and musicians' honorariums are included in this category, as well as payroll taxes and workers' compensation insurance. The Executive Director's Salary is projected at \$69,000.00 along with on campus housing, and benefits (\$17,889.12).

**Line 9, Office and Administrative** – Includes major expense items, including commercial insurance, telephone fees, office and housekeeping supplies, loan interest and bank fees, and audit and legal fees.

**Line 11, Facilities & Maintenance** – Includes all maintenance, upkeep, repairs, deferred maintenance, real estate taxes, and refuse expenses. Also includes vehicle parts and service, fuel costs, and equipment leases. Increased due to added capital buildings along with need to outsource more ongoing projects.

**Line 13, Ministry** – Includes ministry supplies, registration software fees, and travel and other expenses associated with our camp for inner-city kids, which we underwrite 100%.

**Line 14, Recruitment & Development** – Includes all printing costs, promotional ads and media productions, recruitment initiatives, trips, and development officers and recruiters salaries.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>Ridge Haven 2025 Budget</b>		
<b>DESCRIPTION</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>% totals</b>
<b>Support/Revenue</b>		
1. Ministry Income	2,700,000	63%
2. Property	160,000	4%
3. Contributions - Brevard	1,000,000	23%
4. Contributions - Cono	250,000	6%
5. Bookstore & Vending	185,000	4%
6. Miscellaneous	25,000	1%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 4,320,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Operating Expense</b>		
7. Payroll & Benefits	2,500,000	59%
8. Bookstore/Vending	100,000	2%
9. Office & Admin. Expense	210,000	5%
10. Food Service Department	285,000	7%
11. Facilities & Maintenance	600,000	14%
12. Utilities	245,000	6%
13. Ministry	180,000	4%
14. Recruitment & Development	100,000	2%
15. Water & Sewer Systems		
16. Depreciation	*	
17. Capital Campaign		
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>4,220,000</b>	<b>100%</b>
* Depreciation is on the Balance Sheet.		

APPENDIX A

Foster Home 2025 Budget Comparison							
DESCRIPTION	2023 BUDGET	2023 ACTUAL	2024 BUDGET	2025 BUDGET	2025 Budget %	CHANGE 2023 actual-2025 Budget \$	CHANGE 2023 actual- 2025 Budget %
Support Revenue							
1. Monthly Income	2,400.00	2,360.861	2,600.000	2,700.000	62%	339.139	14%
2. Property	1.50.000	132.868	160.000	160.000	4%	27.132	20%
3. Contributions - Board	8.50.000	1,094.124	900.000	1,000.000	23%	194.124	29%
4. Contributions - Care	300.000	342.803	350.000	250.000	6%	(402.803)	-68%
5. Bedside Care - Visitation	1.50.000	175.207	175.000	185.000	4%	9.593	6%
6. Miscellaneous	1.50.000	53.680	20.000	25.000	1%	(28.680)	-53%
Total Income	\$ 4,000.000	\$ 4,566.633	\$ 4,205.000	\$ 4,250.000	100%	(299.633)	-25%
Operating Expense							
7. Payroll & Benefits	1,600.000	1,414.881	2,100.000	2,500.000	99%	1,085.119	77%
8. Bedside Visitation	12.50.000	63.630	140.000	100.000	2%	(36.370)	-57%
9. Office & Admin Expense	180.000	212.069	240.000	210.000	3%	(22.069)	-1%
10. Food Service Department	250.000	222.010	275.000	285.000	7%	61.990	29%
11. Facilities & Maintenance	380.000	494.056	550.000	600.000	14%	105.944	21%
12. Linens	200.000	206.776	240.000	245.000	6%	38.224	19%
13. Laundry	9.50.000	81.963	175.000	180.000	4%	(98.037)	120%
14. Recruitment & Development	6.50.000	20.880	100.000	100.000	2%	79.120	379%
15. Water & Sewer Systems							
16. Depreciation	+	+	+	+	+		
17. Capital Expenditure	1,100.000	-	-	-	0%	-	
Total Expenses	\$ 3,995.000	\$ 2,717.265	\$ 3,820.000	\$ 4,250.000	100%	1,502.735	552%

1) Figures shown in red are the Budget Short

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Ridge Haven Five Year Comparison					
Description	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
<b>Income</b>					
1. Ministry Income	1,403,802	747,660	1,602,285	2,165,844	2,360,861
2. Property	112,248	110,044	149,948	147,473	132,868
3. Contributions - Brevard	767,604	861,731	912,837	1,861,002	1,094,124
4. Contributions - Cono	209,491	484,297	313,062	197,630	742,893
5. Bookstore & Vending	83,157	58,647	96,290	140,778	175,207
6. Miscellaneous	78,996	15,688	246,672	17,198	53,680
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 2,655,298</b>	<b>\$ 2,278,067</b>	<b>3,321,093</b>	<b>\$ 4,529,925</b>	<b>\$ 4,559,633</b>
PPP Forgiveness			471,300		
			<b>3,792,393</b>		
<b>Expense</b>					
7. Payroll & Benefits	986,213	959,504	1,121,745	1,384,145	1,414,881
8. Bookstore Vending	60,903	27,371	52,191	116,758	63,630
9. Office & Admin. Expense	161,740	141,593	174,714	172,362	212,069
10. Food Service Department	172,805	101,218	191,547	230,731	223,010
11. Facilities & Maintenance	250,086	253,796	373,647	352,801	494,056
12. Utilities	110,175	147,852	137,254	165,280	206,776
13. Ministry	63,816	43,844	47,991	93,805	81,963
14. Recruitment & Development	18,195	3,561	6,685	618	20,880
15. Water & Sewer Systems	25,661	38,172			
16. Depreciation	144,000	*	*	*	*
17. Capital Campaign	7,500	0.00	653,771	1,849,363	
18. Cono Expense	302,737	**	**	**	**
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>\$ 2,303,831</b>	<b>\$ 1,716,911</b>	<b>3,510,069</b>	<b>\$ 4,365,863</b>	<b>\$ 2,717,265</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income (loss)</b>	<b>\$ 351,467</b>	<b>\$ 561,156</b>	<b>282,325</b>	<b>\$ 164,062</b>	<b>\$ 1,842,368</b>
* Depreciation is on the Balance Sheet					
** Cono and Brevard are combined above					

## **REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP 2025 PROPOSED BUDGET**

### **The RUF Mission:**

The mission of Reformed University Fellowship is to build the church now and for the future by reaching students for Christ and equipping students to serve both in the United States and globally.

### **I. Economic Considerations and General Ministry Factors**

- This budget reflects our continuing growth as we develop new RUF works on campuses worldwide. For 2025, we project to have over 200 campus ministries worldwide.
- The proposed 2025 budget for the entire ministry is \$59,495,241.
- There is a net increase in ministry expenses of 13% from the 2024 approved budget and a 7.5% increase over 2023 actuals.
- There is an overall net increase of 11% in salaries and related adjustments to benefits of 11% for all existing staff positions from the approved 2024 budget and a net increase of 7.5% from 2023 actuals.
- In general, we are predicting a 7.5% increase from 2023 actuals.

### **II. Major Changes in Budget**

The only significant change to the budget in 2025 is the impact of the execution of the 50-year Capital Campaign.

### **III. Income Streams**

Income for the 2025 budget is projected to come from contributions (87%), medical fund (7%), conference revenues (4%) and other revenue (0.4%).

### **IV. Major Ministry Items Not Implemented**

The only major ministry item planned for 2025 is a continuing capital campaign.

### **V. Notes to Budget Line Items**

All other categories are projected at a moderate 7.5%.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP  
FIVE YEAR COMPARISON STATEMENT  
FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET

	2019 Actual	2020 Actual	2021 Actual	2022 Actual	2023 Actual	Inc/Dec
<b>Income</b>						
Contributions	42,304,277	43,489,957	44,875,780	44,340,677	46,980,864	2,640,187
Interest Income	2,059,320	1,416,633	821,211	(1,949,803)	873,183	2,822,985
Gain/Loss on Disposal of Assets	(2,426)	(1,293)	(51,676)	(4,627)	(39,541)	(34,914)
Medical Fund Income	3,522,355	3,718,287	3,950,201	3,797,369	3,959,128	161,759
Conferences	1,285,399	280,955	174,283	1,323,223	2,041,257	718,034
Other Revenue	101,295	89,243	5,400,293	183,864	224,109	40,245
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>49,270,219</b>	<b>48,993,783</b>	<b>55,170,091</b>	<b>47,690,704</b>	<b>54,039,001</b>	<b>6,348,297</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Personnel	30,375,447	32,133,387	33,543,646	34,764,191	37,324,711	2,560,520
Audit/Bank and Payroll Fees	511,379	544,879	562,963	620,879	694,022	73,142
Denominational Costs	140,419	55,651	155,084	141,615	153,688	12,073
Committee Expense	1,219,166	102,623	98,482	911,216	1,216,645	305,429
Conferences	1,239,204	468,740	685,054	1,445,690	2,129,811	684,121
Depreciation	71,987	58,479	90,042	110,515	92,719	(17,796)
Fundraising	637,214	486,931	486,182	481,679	530,720	49,040
Honorarium	78,669	16,163	(6,587)	40,989	22,467	(18,522)
Insurance-Liability	82,958	86,449	96,478	116,565	91,768	(24,797)
Marketing	34,646	22,674	10,024	65,234	61,033	(4,202)
Ministry Relations	871,755	602,312	1,082,680	1,086,283	994,441	(91,842)
Misc	159,737	119,257	96,422	117,117	146,746	29,629
Ministry Support	236,183	296,353	241,299	167,096	39,543	(127,553)
Professional/Personal	255,857	312,075	489,753	566,100	597,788	31,689
Programming	1,368,303	1,626,749	4,458,089	4,087,838	2,997,638	(1,090,200)
Facilities	1,106,179	1,127,939	1,212,298	1,082,257	896,582	(185,675)
Service Contracts	416,411	113,166	228,219	307,986	566,597	258,611
Travel	729,790	365,420	465,683	915,012	1,027,501	112,489
Recruitment/Assessment/Training	1,164,502	388,683	1,498,594	1,833,127	1,759,991	(73,136)
Medical Claims & Expenses	3,485,733	2,815,231	3,779,866	3,570,421	4,677,697	1,107,276
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>44,185,539</b>	<b>41,743,162</b>	<b>49,274,272</b>	<b>52,431,809</b>	<b>56,022,107</b>	<b>3,590,298</b>

# APPENDIX A

FOR PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET					
Consolidated Budget Comparison	2023 Audited Actual	2023 Approved Budget	2024 Approved Budget	2025 GA Proposed Budget	Budget % of Total
<b>Income</b>					
Contributions	46,980,864	52,423,000	46,996,844	52,020,241	87%
Interest Income	873,183	650,000	370,000	850,000	1%
Gain/Loss on Disposal of Assets	(39,541)	(3,000)	(4,700)	(25,000)	0.0%
Medical Fund Income	3,959,128	4,148,550	3,800,000	4,300,000	7%
Conferences	2,041,257	1,300,000	1,400,000	2,100,000	4%
Other Revenue	224,109	100,000	100,000	250,000	0.4%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>54,039,001</b>	<b>58,618,550</b>	<b>52,662,144</b>	<b>59,495,241</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>					
Personnel	37,324,711	36,295,000	36,283,587	40,124,064	67%
Audit/Bank and Payroll Fees	694,022	620,650	644,151	746,073	1%
Denominational Costs	153,688	176,400	150,516	165,214	0.3%
Committee Expense	1,216,645	131,250	979,557	1,307,894	2%
Conferences	2,129,811	1,300,000	1,554,117	2,289,547	4%
Depreciation	92,719	90,000	118,803	99,672	0.2%
Fundraising	530,720	536,025	517,805	570,524	1%
Honorarium	22,467	105,000	44,063	24,152	0.0%
Insurance-Liability	91,768	122,063	125,308	98,651	0.2%
Marketing	61,033	75,600	70,127	65,610	0.1%
Ministry Relations	994,441	1,155,000	1,120,659	1,069,024	2%
Misc	146,746	105,000	125,901	157,752	0.3%
Ministry Support	39,543	262,500	93,919	42,509	0.1%
Professional/Personal Development	597,788	540,750	608,557	642,623	1%
Programming	2,997,638	1,945,000	1,983,721	3,222,461	5%
Facilities	896,582	1,645,000	1,163,426	963,826	2%
Service Contracts	566,597	315,000	331,085	609,092	1%
Travel	1,027,501	577,500	983,638	1,104,564	2%
Recruitment/Assessment/Training	1,759,991	1,680,000	1,970,612	1,891,990	3%
Medical Claims & Expenses	4,677,697	4,148,550	3,838,203	4,300,000	7%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>56,022,107</b>	<b>51,826,288</b>	<b>52,707,755</b>	<b>59,495,241</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Consolidated Surplus or Deficit</b>	<b>(1,983,106)</b>	<b>6,792,262</b>	<b>(45,611)</b>	<b>0</b>	
Coordinator's 2024 Salary is \$222,789 and benefits are \$78,792.					
Coordinator's 2025 Salary is projected to be \$222,789 and benefits are \$82,432 (5% increase for benefits).					



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP						
PROPOSED 2025 BUDGET						
	Ministry Program	Administration	Fundraising	Designated	Total	% of Total
<b>Income</b>						
Ministry Contributions	44,499,715	0	0	0	44,499,715	78%
Unrestricted Contributions	0	0	2,300,000	3,000,000	5,300,000	9%
Interest Income	0	0	0	850,000	850,000	1%
Gain/Loss on Disposal of Assets	0	(25,000)	0	0	(25,000)	0.0%
Medical Fund Income	0	0	0	4,300,000	4,300,000	8%
Conferences	2,100,000	0	0	0	2,100,000	4%
Other Revenue	75,000	175,000	0	0	250,000	0.4%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>46,674,715</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>2,300,000</b>	<b>8,150,000</b>	<b>57,274,715</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
Personnel	32,574,064	6,250,000	1,300,000	0	40,124,064	67%
Audit/Bank and Payroll Fees	596,073	150,000	0	0	746,073	1%
Denominational Costs	135,214	30,000	0	0	165,214	0.3%
Committee Expense	1,257,894	50,000	0	0	1,307,894	2%
Conferences	2,284,547	5,000	0	0	2,289,547	4%
Depreciation	0	99,672	0	0	99,672	0.0%
Fundraising	350,524	0	220,000	0	570,524	1%
Honorarium	24,152	0	0	0	24,152	0.0%
Insurance-Liability	0	98,651	0	0	98,651	0.2%
Marketing	35,610	0	30,000	0	65,610	0.1%
Ministry Relations	932,024	137,000	0	0	1,069,024	2%
Misc	157,752	0	0	0	157,752	0.3%
Ministry Support	42,509	0	0	0	42,509	0%
Professional/Personal Development	627,623	15,000	0	0	642,623	1%
Programming	3,222,461	0	0	0	3,222,461	5%
Facilities	938,826	25,000	0	0	963,826	2%
Service Contracts	499,092	110,000	0	0	609,092	1%
Travel	354,564	750,000	0	0	1,104,564	2%
Recruitment/Assessment/Training	1,151,990	740,000	0	0	1,891,990	3%
Medical Claims & Expenses	0	0	0	0	4,300,000	7%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>45,184,919</b>	<b>8,460,323</b>	<b>1,550,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>59,495,241</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Consolidated Surplus or Deficit</b>	<b>1,489,796</b>	<b>(8,310,323)</b>	<b>750,000</b>	<b>8,150,000</b>	<b>(2,220,526)</b>	

Coordinator's 2023 Salary is \$222,789 and benefits are \$77,907.

Coordinator's 2024 Salary is projected to be \$222,789 and benefits are \$81,802 (5% increase for benefits).

## **PREFACE TO THE 2025 PARTNERSHIP SHARES STATEMENT FOR THE PCA GENERAL ASSEMBLY MINISTRIES**

The working definition under which the 2025 Partnership Share Budgets have been calculated is as follows.

*As a general statement, “Partnership Shares” describes the amount of money needed to cover the anticipated total expenses of a ministry minus earned income and minus funds designated to specific individuals who are missionaries, church planters, campus ministers, and staff (unless the ministry also guarantees the full compensation of the employee), as well as specific capital funds or similar designated monies. This portion of the approved expense budget is dependent on contributions from the PCA churches and individuals. In every case the “Partnership Share” is permitted to be at least the General Administrative and Overhead portion of the particular ministry’s total budget.*

Two important numbers for each participating ministry are provided by the Partnership Share and Ministry Ask calculations. First, the numbers located in the column labeled “Per Capita Calculation” are obtained by a per capita giving formula, which divides the Partnership Share Fund amount for each General Assembly Ministry by the total number of communicant members last reported to and accumulated by the Office of the Stated Clerk.

A second set of numbers under the column labeled “Ministry Ask” is provided for churches. The “Ministry Ask” is the amount of money each Committee or Agency is asking the churches of the PCA to give if the church would like to give to PCA Ministries on a “per member” basis. The amount listed in this column is generally an estimate of what each Committee and Agency needs to receive from each *donor* church per member in order for the Committee or Agency to raise their full budget approved by the PCA General Assembly.

**These two numbers provide churches and individuals with important factors as they seek to decide how to give to the PCA General Assembly Committees and Agencies. All PCA Ministries struggle to raise Partnership Share funds, and none of the PCA ministries would be sustained without generous donors who give far beyond the Partnership Share. Please assist as generously as you are able.**

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In short, the Partnership Shares calculation is based on the inaccurate assumption that all churches have the same giving capacity per member and that all churches will give to all committees and agencies. The Ministry Ask is a more realistic figure.

## 2025 Budgeted Partnership Shares and Ministry Asks of PCA Ministry Partners by the Participating General Assembly Ministries

2025 Partnership Share Fund					Ministry Asks
Participating Ministries of the PCA	2025 Total Expense Budget	P.S. Fund	% of Total	Per Capita Calculation*	\$ Per Member
AC <sup>1</sup>	\$3,702,519	\$1,962,000	4.84%	\$6.43	\$8
CDM	\$2,693,700	\$1,299,750	3.21%	\$4.26	\$7
CC <sup>2</sup>	\$36,674,848	\$2,500,000	6.17%	\$8.20	\$10
CTS	\$10,506,366	\$2,000,000	4.93%	\$6.56	\$10
MNA	\$30,237,191	\$11,768,008	29.02%	\$38.58	\$28
MTW	\$76,032,310	\$9,759,555	24.07%	\$31.99	\$30
RUF	\$59,495,241	\$10,010,323	24.69%	\$32.82	\$18
RH	\$4,220,000	\$1,250,000	3.08%	\$4.10	\$4
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>\$223,562,175</b>	<b>\$40,549,636</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>\$132.93</b>	<b>\$115</b>

\* Based on the total number of "Communicant Members" of 305,045 as of December 31, 2023, according to the PCA Administrative Committee.

**GENERAL NOTE**

Gifts designated "spread per Partnership Shares" (or some equivalent) and the totally undesignated gifts (which amount to less than \$3,000 a year) will be spread according to the "Ministry Ask" column (by percentages of the total).

**SPECIFIC COMMITTEE AND AGENCY NOTES**

1. The PCA Administrative Committee requests that you contribute on the basis of 0.35% of total tithes and offerings (excepting contribution to capital campaigns for such efforts as new buildings). In the same manner, CDM would like to be supported on the basis of 0.20% of total tithes and offerings. Please support us in this way if you are able to do so.
2. By giving \$10 per member to Covenant College, churches qualify for the Church Scholarship Promise program at Covenant College.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

## APPENDIX B

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS Presbyterian Church in America Minutes, April 20, 2023

The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church in America (a corporation) held a scheduled regular meeting on April 20, 2023, at the MTW building in Lawrenceville, Georgia. President Bob Brunson called the meeting to order at 3:30 p.m.

The following men were in attendance:

TE Blake Altman, Hills and Plains, <b>MNA</b>	RE Pat Hodge, Calvary
TE Jon Anderson, Blue Ridge, Alternate	TE Steve Jeantet, Suncoast Florida
TE Bob Brunson, Metro Atlanta	RE Danny McDaniel, Houston Metro
TE Roger Collins, Mississippi Valley	TE Jim Richter, Tennessee Valley, <b>MTW</b>
RE David Nok Daniel, Southern New England	TE Jerry Schriver, Metro Atlanta
TE Kevin DeYoung, Central Carolina;	TE Richard Smith, <b>RH</b>
TE Michael Dixon, Fellowship;	TE Jason Sterling, Evangel, <b>RUF</b>
RE Richard Dolan, Georgia Foothills;	TE Martin Wagner, Evangel <b>PCAF</b>
TE Brian Habig, Calvary; <b>CTS</b>	RE Alan Walters, Mississippi Valley, Alternate
TE Tom Harr, New Jersey, <b>CDM</b>	RE James Wert Jr., Metro Atlanta, <b>GEN</b>

Members absent:

RE Frank Cohee, Providence, RE Martin Moore, Georgia Foothills, **CC**

Staff present:

TE Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk  
TE John W. Robertson, Business Administrator  
RE Richard Doster, *byFaith* Editor  
TE Larry Hoop, *byFaith* News Editor  
Ms. Heidi Harrison, Operations Manager

Guests present:

TE Cameron Anderson, Ridge Haven Executive Director; TE Cartee Bales, MTW Senior Director of Field Operations; TE Ed Dunnington, Geneva President; TE Stephen Estock, CDM Coordinator; RE Derek Halvorson, CC President; TE Tom Gibbs, CTS President; RE Will Huss, RUF Coordinator; TE Irwyn Ince, MNA Coordinator; RE Tim Townsend, PCA Foundation President

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

A quorum was declared. TE Blake Altman opened in prayer.

Several items were presented for information and were discussed as such. The following items were presented for action:

**BD-04/23-1** to approve the minutes of the October 6, 2022 meeting.  
**MSP**

**BD-04/23-5** That the following groups be approved to use PCA titling so long as their communications prominently display such disclaimer language as approved by the PCA's attorney:

The statements and opinions appearing on this website [chat room, social media site, publication, etc. as applicable to where material is hosted] are those of their respective authors. The PCA has neither reviewed nor approved them, and the authors are not speaking on behalf of the PCA. While the authors might be members of a PCA congregation, there is no affiliation with or sponsorship by the PCA of this website [chat room, social media site, publication, etc. as applicable to where material is hosted].

- “Pastors & Elders (Presbyterian Church in America) – Unofficial” – Facebook Group (Zack Carden)
- “TEs and REs in the PCA (Unofficial)” – Facebook Group (Rich Leino)
- Relational Wisdom 360 – GA Seminar (Ken Sande)

**MSP**

The meeting adjourned with prayer by TE Richard Smith at 3:35 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/signature on file/

TE Robert Brunson, President

/signature on file/

TE Bryan Chapell, Secretary/Treasurer

## **BOARD OF DIRECTORS Presbyterian Church in America Minutes, October 5, 2023**

The Board of Directors of the Presbyterian Church in America (a corporation) held a regular meeting on October 5, 2023, at the MTW building in Lawrenceville, Georgia. President Bob Brunson called the meeting to order at 2:15 p.m.

The following men were in attendance:

TE Hugh Barlett, Missouri, **CTS**  
TE Bob Brunson, Central Georgia  
RE Dave Cias, Houston Metro  
RE Frank Cohee, Providence  
TE Roger Collins, Mississippi Valley  
TE Michael Dixon, Fellowship  
TE Tom Harr, New Jersey **CDM**  
TE Jason Helopoulos, Great Lakes  
RE Pat Hodge, Calvary  
TE Hansoo Jin, Korean Capital, **MNA**

TE Josh Martin, Calvary, **RUF**  
RE Danny McDaniel, Houston Metro  
RE Martin Moore, Georgia Foothills, **CC**  
RE EJ Nusbaum, Rocky Mountain, Alternate  
TE Richard Phillips, Calvary, Alternate  
TE Jim Richter, Tennessee Valley, **MTW**  
TE Jerry Schriver, Metro Atlanta, Advisor  
TE David Hall, Fellowship **RH**  
TE Martin Wagner, Evangel **PCAF**  
RE Alan Walters, Tennessee Valley

Members absent:

RE Richard Dolan, Georgia Foothills; TE Andrew Field, Metropolitan New York; **GEN**, TE Steve Jeantet, Suncoast Florida

Staff present:

TE Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk  
TE John W. Robertson, Retiring Business Administrator  
RE Richard Doster, *byFaith* Editor  
Ms. Heidi Harrison, Operations Manager  
Dr. Dixie Zietlow, Business Administrator Pro Tem

Guests present:

TE Ed Dunnington, Geneva President; TE Stephen Estock, CDM Coordinator;  
TE Tom Gibbs, CTS President; RE Will Huss, RUF Coordinator; TE Irwyn Ince, MNA Coordinator; Ms. Diana Mercado, MTW Finance Director, RE Tim Townsend, PCA Foundation President

A quorum was declared. TE Michael Dixon opened in prayer.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Several items were presented for information and were discussed as such. The following items were presented for action:

**BD-10/23-1** to approve the minutes of the April 20, 2023 meeting.  
**MSP**

**BD-10/23-3** Grant to the PCA Business Administrator permission to open additional bank accounts and to close any current accounts as seems best for the operations of the Administrative Committee and the PCA Office Building. Before any action is taken the Officers Committee will be consulted and fully informed.  
**MSP**

**BD-10/23-4** That the following men be approved to serve as the MNA Disaster Response Board of Directors:

Class of 2023

TE Don Ward

Class of 2024

RE Bob Howell

Class of 2025

DE Dick Forrester

TE Jeff Elliott

Class of 2026

DE Michael Denton

**MSP**

TE Bryan Chapell gave a report on the legal issues facing the denomination, as well as trademark issues which have now all been resolved.

The meeting adjourned with prayer by TE Tom Harr at 2:25 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

/signature on file/

TE Robert Brunson, President

/signature on file/

TE Bryan Chapell, Secretary/Treasurer

## APPENDIX C

### REPORT OF DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

In giving his followers the command to make disciples, Jesus promised to be with them until the end of the age (Matt. 28:19-20). We can grow weary in our calling as we face an increasingly secular world where covenant children become “nones” and rudeness characterizes so much personal interaction. Yet, Jesus is with us. He will complete what God declared through the prophet:

**“For the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD as the waters cover the sea.”** (Habakkuk 2:14 ESV)

Jesus accomplishes that work as His people make disciples, teaching them all He commanded.

The mission of the Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM) is to help leaders in the PCA make disciples in the local church by connecting them to people and resources. CDM's motto is "making disciples by connecting people to people and people to resources." Below is a brief report on the ways CDM staff members and ministry partners have been stewards of the opportunities God has provided over the last year.

#### **Connecting People to People – National Training Conferences**

To serve the PCA, CDM provides opportunities for leaders in discipleship ministry to come together for training and encouragement. In August 2023, CDM offered a virtual training platform for those in children's ministry (CM). Over 60 churches from 19 states, Asia, and Africa participated. Some of them used the videos as part of their annual volunteer training. In October, a small group of student ministry (SM) workers gathered in the Detroit area for CDM's inaugural Nextgen Conference. Attendees provide great feedback to help the team plan for the 2024 event at Chapelgate PC in the Baltimore area.

CDM hosted the largest group ever for the February 2024 Women's Ministry Leadership Training. Over 525 women from around the world gathered to

consider how covenant theology shapes ministry to women (WM). The staff is also preparing for the largest group ever registered for the children's ministry LEAD retreat in April 2024.

### **Connecting People to People – Leadership Development**

In addition to the large group gatherings, CDM also provides opportunities for leaders to develop in smaller groups with more focused training. Feedback on the CM Certification program continues to reveal the need for, and benefit of, this video-based training. The permanent committee certified 23 students in the 2023 class for a total of more than 170 people who have completed the program. The 2024 class began in January with 36 students from across the PCA. The initial group of SM certification students began in September 2023 and will complete their course later this year.

CDM continued offering continuing education in the "Certification Plus" program for those who have received the certification. These seminary-level courses are offered in partnership with Covenant Theological Seminary and Reformed Theological Seminary (Jackson campus).

For WM leaders, CDM partnered with Downtown PC in Greenville, SC, to host over 70 part-time and full-time staff members in the W4 (Women Working with Women) gathering. based on feedback from participants, this meeting provides great opportunities for sharing ideas, encouragement, and networking. The group represents PCA churches of all sizes and from all regions. It is a great expression of variety brought together by a common theology.

In 2023, Ms. Karen Hodge, CDM WM Coordinator, launched a cohort-based mentoring program for younger leaders (ages 30-40) in which she identified 24 women to consider the history and philosophy of WM in the PCA. In January 2024, that group of 24 identified another group of even younger leaders (ages 20-30) to receive similar training. This is not only a great picture of CDM's commitment of multi-generational ministry but also an opportunity to hear from rising leaders how timeless biblical principles are applied today.

CDM has been very encouraged by the response to recent ministry initiatives. After the 2023 Assembly seminars, the Wives of Elders (WE) Ministry has seen incredible growth. Approximately 2,000 women are connected with WE. Ministry liaison Ms. Meaghan May has organized 396 cohorts of 5 women

each for encouragement, advice, and support. CDM trainer Ms. Connie Miller has worked to expand the CDM WM International (WMI). WMI is working to partner with MTW, Christ Covenant Church (Matthews, NC), and Briarwood PC (Birmingham, AL) to provide training to women in Africa, Asia, Europe, and South America.

### **Connecting People to People – Regional Conferences "Made for More"**

In September 2023 CDM will launch a series of 8 regional gatherings designed for women from age 9 to 99+. These conferences are a partnership between CDM WM and CM, a local PCA church, Harvest USA, and Created for a Purpose. The Friday-Saturday format will provide an opportunity for multi-generational connection around the topics of creational design and gospel identity. In 2024 there will be conferences in Birmingham, AL (September 13-14), San Diego, CA (September 27-28), Colorado Springs, CO (October 18-19), Naples, FL (November 8-9), and Annapolis, MD (November 15-16). In 2025, gatherings will be in Charlotte, NC (January 31-February 1), Dallas, TX (April 4-5), and Naperville, IL (May 2-3). Registration for all of the locations is open. Go to [\*\*women.pcacdm.org/made-for-more\*\*](https://women.pcacdm.org/made-for-more) for more information.

### **Connecting People to People – Local Church Training and Consultation**

CDM staff members daily connect with PCA leaders through emails, phone calls, and video meetings. Often these connections consist of helping the leader think through an issue by sharing with them the experiences and/or resources from another PCA congregation. In this work, CDM uses denominational connections to function as a broker of relationships and resources. Periodically, PCA congregations will ask members of the CDM staff or ministry teams to conduct training for ministry staff and volunteers (e.g., WM training, CM training, parenting, officer training).

### **Connecting People to Resources – Blogs and Podcasts**

The CDM websites provide an avenue to the experience of ministry team members and ministry partners. Blog posts for CM, SM, and WM provide practical help and ministry encouragement. The WM enCourage blog has almost 38,000 visitors per month with a pool of 25 regular authors of all ages and experience.

CDM offers podcasts for SM and WM. The PCA Nextgen podcast is available on iTunes and Spotify. The episodes feature the experiences and advice of student ministry leaders on a variety of topics. The WM enCourage podcast has grown to over 2,000 listeners per week, including people in South America, the United Kingdom, Ireland, South Africa, Malaysia, and Australia.

### **Connecting People to Resources – Teach Us to Worship**

In October 2023, CDM launched the Teach Us to Worship (TUTW) ministry initiative funded by a competitive grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc. This initiative will develop resources and training to help PCA incorporate children into the worship and prayer life of the congregation. Work has begun to update and expand CDM's "Teach Me to Worship" curriculum. In April TUTW will lead a pre-conference seminar on children and worship as part of the annual CM leadership retreat (LEAD Retreat).

### **Connecting People to Resources – ESL Curriculum**

CDM was privileged and excited to partner with MNA to produce a new ESL curriculum that agrees with the PCA's biblical convictions. Over recent years, the curriculum MNA-ESL staff recommended had changed to reflect LGBTQ+ affirming content. *Neighbor to Neighbor—Uniting through English* is written by MNA-ESL ministry partners and published/distributed by CDM. There are 5 levels planned. The student and teacher books for the Introductory level were available to churches in March 2024. Student and teacher books for Levels 1 and 2 are scheduled to be available by the end of Summer 2024. Levels 3 and 4 are scheduled for 2025.

### **Connecting People to Resources – PCA Bookstore and Reachout Adventures**

The PCA Bookstore ([pcabookstore.com](http://pcabookstore.com)) provides a wide variety of resources. CDM staff members or trusted partners review items included in the PCA Bookstore and consider how the resource(s) might be used by people serving in the PCA. Some customers have expressed gratitude for a place where they can focus their search for resources and escape the somewhat overwhelming results from queries on the Internet. Additionally, through the PCA Bookstore, CDM passes along the discounts we receive in order to provide churches with greater discounts, especially for group orders (5 or more books).

## APPENDIX C

<b>Recent CDM Resources and Publications</b>		
<i>The Song of Advent</i>	Caleb Click	Advent devotional
<i>The Advent Investigator</i>	Jamye Doerfler	Advent devotional for youth
<i>Alongside Care</i>	Christina Fox, ed.	primer on engaging the gifts of women leaders in congregational care
<i>What Is Presbyterian?</i>	Kevin Hale	primer on PCA theology and polity
<i>Hebrews</i>	Sarah Ivill	study on the Book of Hebrews
<i>Road Talk</i> (Vols 1 & 2)	John Kwasny	family devotional guides for the car
<i>Meal Talk</i>	John Kwasny	family devotional guides for mealtimes
<i>No Empty Word</i>	Paula Miles	study on the Book of Hosea
<i>Neighbor to Neighbor</i>	MNA ESL	ESL curriculum for PCA churches
<i>Beneath the Cross</i> (series)	Lisa Wallover	scripts for Tenebrae services

This year CDM continued to update the Reachout Adventures curriculum, used primarily for VBS programs (**[reachoutadventures.com](http://reachoutadventures.com)**). The 4 rotating themes provide a unique and engaging way to study Joshua, Luke, Genesis, and Jonah. The 2024 theme “Olympion” was redesigned according to feedback from actual and potential users. The curriculum is provided in more of an *a la carte* format. The resources are primarily digital, more flexible, and easier to use. CDM is working with children’s ministry leaders to revise and adapt the other themes to better serve the current programs of local churches.

In the CDM budget, the PCA Bookstore and Reachout Adventures are treated as separate cost centers designed to operate on at least a “break-even” basis (i.e., the cost of inventory, staff salaries, floor space, storage, postage, etc., is covered by sales revenue). Sales of the 2023 Reachout Adventures theme improved so that it essentially broke-even after the costs of updating the curriculum. Bookstore sales continue to be strong. In 2023, the PCA Bookstore covered expenses and contributed over \$45,000 to the overall CDM ministry.

### **Financial Review**

The ministry of CDM is funded through a combination of revenue sources:

1. giving from churches (*BCO* 14-1.4),
2. giving from individuals,
3. revenue from the sale of resources,
4. revenue from conference fees, and

5. various reimbursements for ministry expenses.

CDM's finances had a positive but unusual finish in 2023. The grant from the Lilly Endowment, Inc., along with the transfer of floor space to Geneva Benefits, resulted in an exceptional influx of cash. This cash resulted in a large increase in investments, but the funds are already committed to pay expenses for the TUTW ministry and the increased rental rate approved by the Administrative Committee. Outside of those restricted funds, CDM ended the year with an operating loss of \$3,000. Unrestricted contributions from churches increased by \$5,049 (1.2%) and from individuals by \$3,060 (4.5%). Other areas of revenue also increased but were not able to keep up fully with the increase in expenses, resulting in a small operating loss (0.1% of total expenses). The members of the permanent committee rejoice at God's provision for 2023 and in earlier years.

Since the beginning of the denomination, CDM's primary source of unrestricted income has been support from PCA congregations (BCO 14-1). However, only **28%** of PCA particular churches contribute financially to the ministry of CDM. The staff and committee members are grateful for those churches who partner with CDM, but the large number of PCA churches who choose not to financially support the ministry is discouraging. Because of the limited support from PCA congregations, CDM has been hindered in providing a full range of resources for churches, especially in ministry to youth, men, and older adults.

### **Conclusion to the CDM Report**

The Committee on Discipleship Ministries strengthens the church by connecting you to the people and resources you need for discipleship ministry. We are thankful for the opportunity to help PCA churches develop discipleship ministries that are Word-based and relationally driven in order to see the world filled with the knowledge of the glory of the LORD.

### **Recommendations**

1. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the meetings of the Permanent Committee for the Committee on Discipleship Ministries on September 7-8, 2023, and March 7-8, 2024.

2. That the General Assembly receive the 2023 audit performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith, and Jordan, and approve the same firm for the 2024 audit.
3. That the General Assembly encourage churches and individuals to contribute generously to the “**Love Gift Legacy**” (**pcacdm.org/wm-love-gift**). For 2023, the funds were used by CDM to publish *Neighbor to Neighbor*, a new ESL curriculum designed by MNA. For 2024, CDM will use the funds to develop and promote resources and training for CDM's Women's Ministry International (WMI), which includes partnerships with MTW and ministries such as the UK Partnership and City to City Latin America.
4. That the General Assembly encourage individuals, local churches, and presbyteries to utilize the many free resources available on the CDM websites (**pcacdm.org** [especially resources for leaders]; **children.pcacdm.org** [children]; **women.pcacdm.org** [women]; **pcanextgen.org** [youth]; **pcabookstore.com**). These resources are developed by PCA leaders for PCA leaders.
5. That the General Assembly encourage local churches to consider and use **Reachout Adventures** from CDM for Summer programming (**reachoutadventures.com**). This reformed and covenantal curriculum was written by PCA members. The 2024 theme is *Olympion*, which corresponds well with the Paris Olympic Games in July. *Olympion* considers the redemption story in the Book of Joshua as it challenges children to run the race of faith. The 2025 theme will be *Upward Bound*, which focuses on the Gospel of Luke.
6. That the General Assembly encourage individuals and local churches to consider and utilize the excellent print and digital curricula from Great Commission Publications (GCP), e.g., *Show Me Jesus* and *Kids' Quest Catechism Club* for children, *G2R Genesis to Revelation* Bible studies for preteens to teens—including *G2R God's Promises*—and *So What?* Bible studies for youth. *Digging Deeper: Exploring Shorter Catechism* is a 2-volume, 2-year study of the *Westminster Shorter Catechism*, designed for youth and adults desiring to go deeper in the Christian faith. GCP also provides excellent training resources for ministry staff and volunteers.
7. That the General Assembly give thanks to RE Denny Crowe, TE Charles Johnson, TE David Lindberg, and Mrs. Melanie Cogdill for their faithful service as members of and adviser to the Permanent Committee.
8. That the General Assembly re-elect TE Stephen Estock to serve as the Coordinator for the Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM).



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend *RAO 11-5* to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

### Grounds

CDM believes the overture will be a helpful amendment to the *RAO*. The proposed change will clarify the process for how the Assembly authorizes an *RAO* amendment while protecting the right of the General Assembly's Committees and Agencies to speak to any proposed changes affecting them. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the Administrative Committee.

10. That the General Assembly approve the 2025 CDM budget as presented by the Administrative Committee.
11. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery "Amend *BCO 14-1* Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

### Grounds

CDM sees value in the recommended change but would like more time to consult with the leaders of the other Committees and Agencies and consider potential consequences of such a change on the daily operations of CDM's ministry. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is also wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the Administrative Committee.

12. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery "Amend *BCO 23* to Address Dissolution of Call for Those Employed by a Committee or Agency" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

### Grounds

CDM would like more time to consult with the leaders of the other Committees and Agencies and consider potential consequences of such a change on daily operations of CDM's ministry. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is also wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the Administrative Committee.

**ATTACHMENT 1****RECIPIENTS OF THE CDM  
CERTIFICATION FOR CHILDREN’S MINISTRY****The 2023 Class**

The 2023 certification class completed their course work in January 2024. After receiving the final projects and the recommendations of mentors and/or elders, the CDM permanent committee in March 2024 authorized the CDM staff to present certificates to the 23 students listed below. This certification acknowledges the recipient has demonstrated competency in the knowledge, skills, and character necessary for children’s ministry leaders in the PCA.

Name	Church	City
<b>Kathleen Anders</b>	Willow Creek Church	Winter Springs, FL
<b>Christina Baumgartner</b>	Harbor City Church	San Diego, CA
<b>Ellen Chandlee</b>	Christ Community Church	Helena, AL
<b>Anna Disharoon</b>	Grace PC of Chesapeake	Chesapeake, VA
<b>Nicole Dorton</b>	Tates Creek Presbyterian Church	Lexington, KY
<b>Jennifer Downs</b>	Restoration Presbyterian Church	Dacula, GA
<b>Lucy Freeman</b>	Trinity Presbyterian Church	Montgomery, AL
<b>Erin Ferguson</b>	Alexandria Presbyterian Church	Alexandria, VA
<b>Rachel Kennedy</b>	Ambassador Presbyterian Church (ARP)	Apex, NC
<b>Julie Lamb</b>	Midtown Church	Indianapolis, IN
<b>Beth Anne Lesshafft</b>	New Life PCA, Drescher	Drescher, PA
<b>Katie Lown</b>	Southpointe Community	Nolensville, TN
<b>Catie Lumpkin</b>	Altadena Valley Presbyterian	Birmingham, AL
<b>Katherine Malanoski</b>	City Church of Richmond	Richmond, VA
<b>Whitney McCarley</b>	Northeast Presbyterian Church	Columbia, SC
<b>Carol McCullough</b>	Redeemer Presbyterian Church	Anna, TX
<b>Megan Outhaus</b>	Calvary Reformed Presbyterian	Hampton, VA
<b>Laura Park</b>	Living Faith Presbyterian	La Mirada, CA
<b>Laura Potts</b>	Hope Presbyterian Church	Ochelata, OK
<b>Zadie Randle</b>	Raymond Presbyterian Church	Raymond, MS
<b>Korina Slabach</b>	Christ Presbyterian Church	Georgetown, TX
<b>Becky Toney</b>	City Reformed Church	Pittsburgh, PA
<b>Heather Williams</b>	Grace PC of Chesapeake	Chesapeake, VA

## ATTACHMENT 2

### REPORT FROM THE PUBLISHING MINISTRY OF GREAT COMMISSION PUBLICATIONS (GCP)

Great Commission Publications (GCP) is the official publishing ministry of the PCA and the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC). This joint publishing ministry was established by their respective General Assemblies in 1975. GCP publishes high-quality Reformed and covenantal curriculum for all ages. This full-orbed system of curriculum is based solely upon the **Bible** as the **Word of God** and conforms to the **Westminster Standards**.

GCP is governed by a twelve-member board of trustees comprised of teaching and ruling elders. Six are elected by the PCA CDM and six by the OPC Committee on Christian Education (CCE). Additionally, the PCA CDM Coordinator and the OPC CCE General Secretary serve as ex-officio, non-voting trustees. The president of the board of trustees for 2023 was OPC teaching elder Dr. Alan Strange, and the president for 2024 is PCA teaching elder David Stewart. (This position alternates annually between the PCA and OPC.)

In December of 2023, PCA teaching elder Mark Lowrey, GCP's Executive Director, was called home to glory. TE Lowrey faithfully served and directed the publishing ministry since 1996. He oversaw either the revision or creation of almost all of the resources described below. Under TE Lowrey's leadership, GCP offered both new materials and music, as well as improved design and teacher-friendly applications. He was also instrumental in guiding GCP through a recovery from the severe financial crisis precipitated by the pandemic.

In October 2023, the GCP Board continued its commitment to the unique partnership between the OPC and PCA by appointing CDM's Business Administrator, RE John Dunahoo, to serve as the Interim Executive Director. John continues to serve on the CDM staff but is "on loan" to GCP for 10-15 hours per week. The GCP trustees hope this unique arrangement will enhance the cooperation between GCP and its parent denominations and allow for the exploration of new opportunities for greater collaboration and stewardship.

Through these transitions, GCP remains committed to Christ’s Great Commission to “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matthew 28:19–20). To that end, GCP offers the following resources:

*Show Me Jesus* (flexible for toddlers through 4th grade) is GCP’s foundational curriculum. This Bible-based curriculum teaches God’s story of redemption, showing how Jesus is the fulfillment of his covenant promises. This is taught in an age-appropriate manner through four departments: Toddler (2- to 3-year-olds), Preschool (4- to 5-year-olds), Younger Elementary (1st and 2nd grades), and Middle Elementary (3rd and 4th grades). Free lesson samples, the scope and sequence, and free training videos for all GCP curriculum are at **[www.gcp.org](http://www.gcp.org)**.

*G2R (Genesis to Revelation) Bible Survey* for preteens is an exciting journey through every book of the Bible, helping students integrate its stories through a historical-redemptive study of Scripture. *G2R God’s Promises* (grades 7–9) examines God’s unfolding covenant promises. Both *G2R* series are modular and flexible to meet the needs of middle schoolers/teens. Free lesson samples are available at **[www.gcp.org](http://www.gcp.org)**.

*So What?* youth curriculum offers a 10-study series focusing on books of the Bible (John, Romans, Philippians) and topics such as a biblical worldview (*Identity & Purpose, The Christian Mind*), the character of God (*Knowing the God Who Is*), the Bible (*Treasuring God’s Word*), the church (*Growing in Christ’s Church*), and worship (*Worshiping God*). Visit **[www.sowhatstudies.org](http://www.sowhatstudies.org)** for free lesson samples, video previews, and more.

*Kids’ Quest Beginning* and *Elementary* curricula teach *First Catechism*—basic Bible truths in a Q/A format. A free Summer Download Kit with planning guides, social media, t-shirt logos, and more is available. *First Catechism* is also available in two parallel language editions: English-Korean and English-Spanish—excellent for our churches in bilingual contexts and outreach.

The newest curriculum, *Digging Deeper*, teaches the Shorter Catechism. The accessible format is designed for youth and adults who are new to the Christian faith and/or Reformed doctrine. This two-volume series presents what Scripture and the Catechisms teach: what man is to believe concerning God

and what duty God requires of man (WSC 3). It provides a lifelong framework for living as citizens of Christ's kingdom. Free sample lessons are available at **[www.gcp.org](http://www.gcp.org)**.

*Pilgrim's Progress* teaches the gospel to children using Bunyan's classic adventure story. The curriculum includes a fully illustrated chapter hardback book, audiobook with character voices and sound effects, music, teacher manual, and student activities for elementary ages. For sample lessons, visit **[www.childrenspilgrimsprogress.org](http://www.childrenspilgrimsprogress.org)**.

GCP also publishes the *Trinity Hymnal*, the treasured hymnal that enriches worship with its collection of over 700 hymns and psalms. It includes the Westminster Confession of Faith and the Shorter Catechism, as well as the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds. Orchestrations are available for all of the hymns. New digital editions are now available in both a read-only PDF format, as well as a printable church edition with individual hymns that can be inserted into bulletins.

Further, GCP is the exclusive distributor of the *Trinity Psalter Hymnal*, a joint publication of the OPC and the United Reformed Churches of North America (URCNA). GCP is also the exclusive distributor of Liturgical Forms and Prayers and Creeds and Confessions for the URCNA. These relationships have been positive for all parties involved.

For samples of any materials or to place an order, visit **[www.gcp.org](http://www.gcp.org)**. You also may call 800-695-3387 to speak to a curriculum specialist.

## APPENDIX D

# REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

### I. Introduction

The Committee on Constitutional Business (CCB) met prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly at the PCA Administrative Offices in Lawrenceville, GA on April 29, 2024.

Attendance at the meeting was as follows:

#### Teaching Elders

Scott Phillips – Present

Jason Piland (Secretary) – Present

Joel St. Clair – Present

Stephen Tipton – Present

Per Almquist (Alternate) – Present

#### Ruling Elders

Matthew Fender – Present

Fredric Marcinak (Chairman) – Present

Chris Shoemaker – Present

Bryce Sullivan – Present

John Ward Weiss (Alternate) – Present

The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, Rev. Dr. Bryan Chapell, was also present.

### II. Advice on Proposed Changes to the Constitution

The Stated Clerk referred the following overtures to the Committee:

#### A. Overture 1 from Piedmont Triad Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 1 is **constitutionally vague** in that it provides the mechanism of objecting to witnesses for incompetency, even though the amended language does not use the word incompetency, without providing courts any apparent rule to guide their ruling on the objection.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**B. Overture 2 from Northern California Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 13-6 for Clarity in Transfers of Ordination”**

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 2 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

CCB also notes that should this Overture and Overture 6, 16, 23, or 24 be adopted, there should be clarity regarding how the proposed amendments interact to amend *BCO* 13-6.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**C. Overture 3 from Pee Dee Presbytery: “Grant Constitutional Status to *BCO* 53 re Preaching”**

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 3 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

CCB also notes that in order for this proposal to gain constitutional status, it must be submitted to the constitutional amendment process as outlined in *BCO* 26-2.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**D. Overture 4 from Central Indiana Presbytery: “Establish Study Committee for Judicial Rules Changes”**

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 4 is **in conflict** with *RAO* 9-3 in that members of ad interim committees may not bear the primary burden of expenses for ad interim committees.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**E. Overture 6 from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley: “Amend *BCO* Sections to Require Background Checks for Church Office”**

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 6, particularly the language “shall obtain and review,” is **in conflict** with (1) WCF 23.3 because, insofar as it adds a requirement for Presbytery to obtain something that the civil magistrate might withhold or abolish, it cedes to the civil magistrate an effective authority he may not assume, namely, the right to deny admittance to the body of Christ and (2) *BCO* Preliminary Principle II in that it deprives members of the church of the right to determine who shall be admitted to its communion.

## APPENDIX D

CCB also notes that should this Overture and Overture 2 be adopted, there should be clarity regarding how the proposed amendments interact to amend *BCO* 13-6.

*Adopted 6-1-1*

**F.** Overture 7 from Ascension Presbytery: “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 7 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 6-1-1*

**G.** Overture 9 from Metro Atlanta Presbytery: “Add Great Commission Requirement to *BCO* 12-5”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 9 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**H.** Overture 10 from Metro Atlanta Presbytery: “Add Presbytery TE Care to *BCO* 13-9”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 10 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**I.** Overture 14 from the Presbytery of Northwest Georgia: “Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data From Higher Ed Institutions”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 14 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**J.** Overture 15 from the Session of West End Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, Virginia: “Amend *BCO* 7-2 to Specify Ordination for Biological Males Only”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 15 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**K.** Overture 16 from Warrior Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, 24-1 to Require Background Checks”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 16 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

CCB also notes that should this Overture and Overture 2 be adopted, there should be clarity regarding how the proposed amendments interact to amend *BCO* 13-6.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**L.** Overture 17 from The Ohio Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 17 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**M.** Overture 18 from The Ohio Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 18 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 5-1-2*

**N.** Overture 19 from the Session of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana: “Amend *BCO* 41 to allow Venue Change in Judicial Cases”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 19 is **in conflict** with other parts of the constitution, including:

- *BCO* 39-1, which describes a reference as one kind of constitutional mechanism where “acts and decisions of a lower court are brought under the supervision of a higher court.” A Presbytery may properly receive a reference from a member session because it exercises supervision of churches under its care (e.g., *BCO* 11-4; 13-1; 13-9), but another Presbytery does not have any authority to receive a reference from other Presbyteries and supervise those Presbyteries;
- *BCO* Preliminary Principle VI in that it seeks to invest a court of a church to which a member does not belong with authority over that member; and
- *BCO* 31-2 which requires a court completing an investigation and finding “a strong presumption of guilt” to institute process.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**O.** Overture 20 from the Session of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana: “Proposed Systematic Changes to *BCO* 31, 32, and 35”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 20 is **in grave conflict** with the Constitution. By way of example, we note only a few conflicts:

- The Overture is **in conflict** with *BCO* 13-1, -2; 43 in that the amended *BCO* 31-4 limits the rights of a member of Presbytery;
- The Overture is **in conflict** with 1 Timothy 5:19 in that the proposed *BCO* 35-4 permits conviction of a charge without two witnesses;
- The Overture is **in conflict** with *BCO* Preliminary Principle 8 in that the proposed *BCO* 31-2 requires mandatory reporting of a mere allegation of an offense to “any associated entity” of the accused person, in violation of the Preliminary Principle’s requirement of justice because the accused person is effectively rendered guilty before any due process and the court or its clerk in the mandatory reporting may be guilty of libel or slander; and
- The Overture is **in conflict** with *BCO* 8-10, 13-1 in that the limitations on representatives in proposed *BCO* 32-7 remove the right of full participation from some members of the Court.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**P.** Overture 21 from Central Indiana Presbytery: “Change the Prohibition Against ‘Interlocutory Appeal’ by Complaint in *BCO* 43-1”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 21 is **internally inconsistent** insofar as it prohibits a complaint after process has commenced while simultaneously describing a procedure for adjudication of a complaint after process has commenced. Further, Overture 21 is **in conflict** with the existing language of *BCO* 43-2 insofar as it creates conflicting requirements regarding the timeliness for consideration of the complaint.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**Q.** Overture 22 from the South Florida Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 13-2 to clarify Teaching Elder Presbytery Membership”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 22 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**R.** Overture 23 from Missouri Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 23 is **in conflict** with (1) WCF 23.3 because, insofar as it adds a requirement for Presbytery to “cause . . . to be performed” something that the civil magistrate might withhold or abolish, it cedes to the civil magistrate an effective authority he may not assume, namely, the right to deny admittance to the body of Christ and (2) *BCO* Preliminary Principle II in that it deprives members of the church of the right to determine who shall be admitted to its communion.

CCB also notes that should this Overture and Overture 2 be adopted, there should be clarity regarding how the proposed amendments interact to amend *BCO* 13-6.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**S.** Overture 24 from the Presbytery of South Texas: “Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 24 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

CCB also notes that should this Overture and Overture 2 be adopted, there should be clarity regarding how the proposed amendments interact to amend *BCO* 13-6.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

**T.** Overture 25 from Tennessee Valley Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 31-2 to Expand Who May Assist in an Investigations [*sic*]”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 25 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 7-1-0*

**U.** Overture 26 from Tennessee Valley Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 32-19 To Expand Representation of Accused Persons Before Church Courts”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 26 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

## APPENDIX D

**V.** Overture 27 from Potomac Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 13-6 to Add Personal Character and Family Management to the Examination of Transferring Ministers”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 27 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.  
*Adopted 8-0-0*

**W.** Overture 28 from New Jersey Presbytery: “Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1. to Eliminate Conflict with *BCO* 40-5”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 28 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.  
*Adopted 8-0-0*

**X.** Overture 29 from the Session of Bryce Avenue Presbyterian Church, White Rock, New Mexico: “Amend *BCO* 53 by Addition To Ensure Only Men Preach”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 29 is **in conflict** with the Constitution because it establishes a rule that applies to jurisdictions beyond the bounds of the PCA.

*Adopted 3-2-3*

**Y.** Overture 30 from Lowcountry Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 23-1 To Require that the Presbytery of Jurisdiction Conduct an Exit Interview Prior to Dissolution of Call”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 30 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.  
*Adopted 8-0-0*

**Z.** Overture 31 from New River Presbytery: “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 31 is **not in conflict** with the Constitution.  
*Adopted 8-0-0*

**AA.** Overture 32 from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania: “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency”

In the opinion of the CCB, Overture 32 is **in conflict** with *BCO* 11-4 because the proposed amendment requires a presbytery to cite a committee or agency of a higher court.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

### **III. Advice to Stated Clerk**

The CCB received no requests for advice from the Stated Clerk.

### **IV. Non-Judicial References**

The CCB received no non-judicial references.

### **V. Advice to the Overtures Committee**

The CCB received no requests for advice from the Overtures Committee.

### **VI. Minutes of the Standing Judicial Commission**

The CCB examined the minutes of the Standing Judicial Commission meetings on June 13, 2023; January 12, 2024; and March 7–8, 2024. The minutes were found to be in order without exception.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

The CCB examined the minutes of the Standing Judicial Commission meeting on October 19–20, 2023. The minutes were found to be in order with one exception: page 2, lines 23–24, case 2023-13, regarding the action of the SJC to strike material from the GA Representative’s brief because there is no record that the strike was performed according to *OMSJC* 8.3 for including material outside of the ROC or for any other permissible reason.

*Adopted 8-0-0*

### **VII. Election of Officers for 2024–2025**

The following were elected as officers of the Committee for 2024–2025:

Chairman – RE Matthew Fender

Secretary – TE Jason Piland

Submitted by:

RE Fredric Marcinak, Chairman

TE Jason Piland, Secretary

# **SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

## **I. Introduction**

The Committee on Constitutional Business (CCB) met prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly at the Greater Richmond Convention Center in Richmond, Virginia on June 11, 2024 at 2:00 p.m.

Attendance at the meeting was as follows:

### Teaching Elders

Scott Phillips – Present  
Jason Piland (Secretary) – Present  
Joel St. Clair – Present  
Stephen Tipton – Present  
Per Almquist (Alternate) – Present

### Ruling Elders

Matthew Fender – Present  
Fredric Marcinak (Chairman) – Present  
Chris Shoemaker – Present  
Bryce Sullivan – Present  
John Ward Weiss (Alternate) – Present

## **II. Advice to the Stated Clerk**

The Stated Clerk requested advice from CCB concerning the effect of proposed amendments to the *Rules of Assembly Operations* proposed by the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records.

In the opinion of the CCB, the proposed changes to *RAO* 16-3.e. are **not in conflict** with other portions of the constitution or *RAO*. *Adopted 8-0-0*

In the opinion of the CCB, the proposed change to *RAO* 16-6.c.1) is **not in conflict** with other portions of the constitution or *RAO*.

CCB notes that this amendment would not be necessary if the first amendment is not adopted by the General Assembly as this amendment is correcting a cross-reference. *Adopted 8-0-0*

Submitted by:

RE Fredric Marcinak, Chairman

TE Jason Piland, Secretary

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **REPORT OF THE COOPERATIVE MINISTRIES COMMITTEE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

The Cooperative Ministries Committee (CMC) is designed to unite the leaders of our various agencies and institutions with the elected leaders of the General Assembly in coordinated ministry to advance the mission of the PCA as a whole. The simple goal is to have all the horses in the harness pulling in the same direction. That goal is achieved by relational camaraderie as well as by ministry strategizing, denominational assessment, and shared insights regarding best practices and resources for advancing Christ's mission in our challenging times.

The Cooperative Ministries Committee met on January 17, 2024.

The committee rejoices to report that many examples of interagency cooperation, communication, and collaboration were shared (*RAO* 7-3).

The committee discussed Overture 7 to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, which has implications for all Committees and Agencies and their Committees of Commissioners when a proposed *RAO* amendment impacting them is considered by the General Assembly.

The Stated Clerk's office is continuing to work on creating a DASA manual to help churches apply the recommendations of the Ad Interim Committee on DASA and deal with abuse cases, including an effort to compile a list of trusted third-party investigators, consultants, and attorneys to accompany the manual. The Clerk's office welcomes more suggestions and contact information for such individuals.

The CMC last year suggested to the RPR Committee through the Stated Clerk that RPR confidentially report to the Stated Clerk's office all final judicial decisions taken by a presbytery against a teaching elder so that the Stated Clerk would have a list of such available when churches/ presbyteries contact him



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

for a reference. Upon receiving the request, RPR responded saying that they didn't know if they had the authority to do what was suggested. Since then, we've learned that the Stated Clerk's office does receive this information from presbytery clerks, though it hasn't ever been compiled. The Stated Clerk will ensure that we compile and communicate information upon request only on the judicial actions without attempting to establish or characterize cause (which will be the responsibility of churches considering such information in their candidating processes). The Stated Clerk will let churches know at General Assembly that we have such a list.

Members of the CMC are the chairmen and chief administrative officers of the General Assembly permanent Committees and Agencies. The current Moderator and the immediate past five moderators of the General Assembly are advisory members, having six-year terms.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ TE Fred Greco, Moderator 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

/s/ TE Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk of PCA, Secretary of CMC

## APPENDIX F

### REPORT OF COVENANT COLLEGE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ,

I offer this annual report on the 2022–2023 academic year on behalf of the Board of Trustees and the Covenant College community. This was a year in which a planned presidential transition was announced. In January 2023, Dr. Derek Halvorson accepted the opportunity to become the founding director of Covenant’s new Brock-Barnes Center for Leadership. In April 2023, Dr. Brad Voyles was named the interim president. Despite the uncertainty associated with a presidential transition, the 2022–2023 academic year was nevertheless one in which we experienced God’s blessings in rich ways.

#### **Trustee Candidate Recommendations**

One of the ways God continues to bless Covenant College is with gifted trustee candidates who meet particular needs on the board, who are committed to Reformed liberal arts education, and who have demonstrated a desire to support the work of the college. This year is no exception in that regard. The following elders have been screened and recruited by the Covenant College Board of Trustees and have been recommended unanimously as candidates for election to the Class of 2027 of the Covenant College Board of Trustees. They have all been nominated by their presbyteries. We are deeply grateful for these men, for their willingness to serve, and for how their gifts and skill sets meet the present needs of the board. Full biographies are available in the Rainbow Book.

#### **Richard Bowser – RE, Eastern Carolina (2nd term)**

Dick is a professor of law at Norman Adrian Wiggins School of Law, Campbell University. He is a graduate of Campbell Law School, Westminster Theological Seminary, and Grove City College. Dick and his wife Marta attend Grace Presbyterian Church in Fuquay Varina, North Carolina. Dick has been involved in the PCA since 1983 and has been a ruling elder since 1998. He and Marta have two children, Michael and Kathryn, who are both graduates

of Covenant. Dick has previously served as the Chair of the Covenant College Board of Trustees, currently serves as the Chair of the Covenant College Foundation, and most recently chaired the Presidential Search Committee.

**Matthew Fray** – TE, North Texas (2nd term)

Matt serves as the Assistant Pastor of Christian Formation at Park Cities Presbyterian Church in Dallas, Texas. He and his wife, Erin, are both graduates of Covenant College. Matt earned his B.A. in philosophy and then went on to earn his M.Div. from Westminster Seminary California. Matt has chaired the College's Committee of Commissioners at General Assembly (2015), has served one term on the Board of Trustees (2019-2024), and has been a vocal advocate for Covenant College in Dallas.

**Gregory Moore** – RE, Susquehanna Valley (1st term)

Dr. Gregory Moore is a recently retired senior technology executive who served as Corporate Vice President at Microsoft and previously as Vice President at Google, leading global healthcare and life sciences business, research and development, AI, product and engineering operations. Prior to his executive leadership roles he was a practicing physician and professor at Penn State University School of Medicine and Wayne State University School of Medicine. Greg earned his B.S. from North Park College, his S.M. and Ph.D. from Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and his M.D. from Wayne State University School of Medicine. Greg and his wife, Lauri, attend Hershey Presbyterian Church in Hershey, Pennsylvania. They have five adult children, including two Covenant College graduates, and three grandchildren.

**Paul Moore** – RE, Calvary (1st term)

Dr. Paul Moore currently serves as an attending physician in the Department of Emergency Medicine, Prisma Health, Greenville, South Carolina and is a Clinical Instructor with the University of South Carolina School of Medicine, Greenville. He also serves as Medical Director of Good Shepherd Free Medical Clinic in Laurens, South Carolina. Paul received a B.S. in biology from Furman University and an M.D. from the Medical University of South Carolina. He and his wife, Sandy, attend Westminster Presbyterian Church in Clinton, South Carolina. He has been involved in the PCA for over twenty years. All five of their children are graduates of Covenant College. Paul and Sandy also served on Covenant's Parents Council from 2019 through 2023, representing the College to prospective students and their families.

**William Ryan** – RE, South Florida (2nd term)

William “Wills” is a general contractor who currently serves as the CEO of several family-run business entities that work in the construction industry. These businesses specialize in quarries (mining), golf course construction, public works projects, and site work for residential, commercial and industrial developments. In the past, Wills served as the Chairman for the Florida Chapter of Young Presidents Organization and chaired the Board of Coral Springs Christian Academy. He earned a B.S. from Boston College and an MBA from the University of Miami. Wills and his wife, Judy, attend First Presbyterian Church of Coral Springs, Florida, and have four adult children, three of which attended Covenant College.

**Stephen Sligh** – RE, Southwest Florida (2nd term)

Steve is a chiropractic physician serving in Lakeland, Florida. He graduated from Covenant College with a B.S. in biology and later graduated from The National College of Chiropractic where he earned a Doctor of Chiropractic degree. Steve has been in private chiropractic practice for over 50 years. He and his wife, Annette, attend Covenant Presbyterian Church in Lakeland Florida. They have two adult children who both attended Covenant. Steve has served on Covenant’s Board of Trustees as either an Alumni Advisor or Trustee since 2012.

**Academic Affairs Report**

*New Faculty Members in the 2022-2023 Academic Year:*

- Dr. Heather Hess, Assistant Professor of English, with an MA in Literary Studies from the University of Tennessee of Chattanooga, and a PhD in Literature, Criticism and Textual Studies from the University of Tennessee
- Dr. Luke Irwin, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies, with an MDiv from Covenant Theological Seminary, an MA in Theology and Religion from Durham University, and a PhD in Theology and Religion from Durham University
- Dr. Lynell Martinez, Assistant Professor of Biology with a PhD in Physiology and Biophysics from the University of Miami
- Dr. H. Collin Messer, Vice President for Academic Affairs, with an MA in English Literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a PhD in English Literature from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

- Dr. H. Clifton Ward, Associate Professor of Biblical Studies, with an MDiv in NT and Christian Origins from Southern Seminary, a ThM in Church History from Southern Seminary, and a PhD in Historical Theology from Durham University
- Dr. Rodney Wilson, Associate Professor of Psychology, with an MA in Clinical Psychology from the Fuller Graduate School of Psychology, an MA in Theology from Fuller Theological Seminary, and a PhD in Clinical Psychology from the Fuller Graduate School of Psychology

*Selected faculty publications from the 2022-2023 academic year:*

Dr. Robert Erle Barham, Associate Professor of English

- Barham, R. E. (2022). Homeplace. *Complete Sentence*.
- Barham, R. E. (2022, August 22). Leave-taking. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/08/22/leave-taking/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, August 1). The house next door. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/08/01/the-house-next-door/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, July 6). We fought. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/07/06/we-fought/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, June 2). Pyrotechnics. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/06/02/pyrotechnics/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, May 2). The pandemic and the mystery novel. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/05/02/the-pandemic-and-the-mystery-novel/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, April 11). The fawn. *River Teeth: A Journal of Nonfiction Narrative*. Retrieved from <https://www.riverteethjournal.com/blog/2022/04/11/the-fawn>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, April 4). Look not to the dead and dying. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/04/04/look-not-to-the-dead-and-dying/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, March 7). Neighborhood watch. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/03/07/neighborhood-watch/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, February 2). Legible bodies. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/02/02/legible-bodies/>
- Barham, R. E. (2022, January 4). Saturated phenomena. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/01/04/saturated-phenomena/>

Dr. Phillip R. Broussard, Professor of Physics

- Luke, B. J., & Broussard, P. R. (2022). A pedagogical extension of the one-dimensional Schrödinger's equation to symmetric proximity effect system film sandwiches. *AIP Advances*, 12(015015). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1063/5.0074837>

Dr. Brian T. Fikkert, Professor of Economics & Community Development and Executive Director of the Chalmers Center

- Broadnax, B., Fikkert, B. T., Carminati E. (2022). Candy machine charity. In F. Inslee & A. Burns, *Re-imagining short-term mission*. Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock Publishers.

Dr. Richard R. Follett, Professor of History

- Follett, R. R. (2022). Thomas Fowell Buxton: Quaker brewer. In Fannon, B. (Ed.), *Invincible determination: The legacy of Thomas Fowell Buxton* (pp. 9-18). Weymouth, Dorset, United Kingdom: The Thomas Fowell Buxton Society.

Dr. Deborah Forteza, Associate Professor of Spanish

- Forteza, D. R. (2022). [Review of the book *Iberian chivalric romance: Translations and cultural transmission in early modern England* by L. Álvarez-Recio]. *Sixteenth Century Society Journal*.
- Forteza, D. R. (2022). *The English reformation in the Spanish imagination: Rewriting Nero, Jezebel, and the Dragon*. Toronto, Canada: University of Toronto Press.

Dr. Luke Irwin, Assistant Professor of Biblical Studies

- Irwin, L. (2022). Divine visibility in the gospel of John. *Harvard Theological Review*.

Dr. Alicia K. Jackson, Associate Professor of History

- Jackson, A. K. (2023). Foreword. In N. Koestler, *We will be free: The life and faith of Sojourner Truth*. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Dr. Scott C. Jones, Professor of Biblical Studies

- Jones, S. C. (2022). Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Who am I? (translation of original poem, *Wer bin ich?*). In K. M. Kapic (Ed.), *You're only human: How your limits reflect God's design and why that's good news*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.
- Jones, S. C. (2022, June 16). A proverb in a collection is dead? *The Washington Institute for Faith, Vocation & Culture*. Retrieved from <https://washingtoninst.org/a-proverb-in-a-collection-is-dead/>

Dr. Kelly M. Kapic, Professor of Theological Studies

- Kapic, K. M. (2023). Suffering. In *St. Andrews Encyclopaedia of*

*Theology.*

- Kopic, K. M., Hall, M.E.L., & McMartin, J. (2023). A theology of human flourishing for positive psychology pedagogy. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*: Special issue.
- Kopic, K. M., et al. (2023). *Lament: A Christian meaning-making strategy*.
- Kopic, K. M. (2023). A Theology of the Christian Life. In M. Allen, & S. Swain (Eds.), *New studies in dogmatics*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- Kopic, K. M. (2022, December). The beautiful paradox. *Christianity Today*, Advent Booklet.
- Kopic, K. M. (2022, December). Jesus is our peace. *Christianity Today*, Advent Booklet.
- Shannonhouse, L., Lopez, J., Hall, M. E. L., Park, C., Aten, J., Kopic, K. M., et al (2023). A mixed methods study of emic Catholic coping practices from individuals with cancer experiences.
- Shannonhouse, L., McMartin, J., Sacco, S. J., Hall, M. E. L., Park C. L., Kim, D., Silverman, E., Kopic, K. M., et al (2023). Spiritual surrender: Measurement of an emic Christian religious coping strategy.
- Hall, M. E. L., Kopic, K. M., Park C. L., Sacco, S. J., et al (2023). Lament and well-being: Measuring a Christian meaning-making practice.
- Park, C. L., Kopic, K. M., Sacco, S. J., et al (2023). A religious tradition-specific perspective on wellbeing: The construct and measurement of Christian flourishing.
- Silverman, E. J., Hall, M. E. L., Park, C., McMartin, J., Kopic, K. M., et al (2023). The value of a meaningful life as a response to the problem of evil. *Faith and Philosophy*.
- Hall, M. & McMartin, Jason & Park, Crystal & Sacco, Shane & Kim, Dahee & Kopic, Kelly & Silverman, Eric & Shannonhouse, Laura & Aten, Jamie & Snow, Lindsay & Lopez, Luis. (2022). Suffering with Christ: Emic Christian coping and relation to well-being.
- Hall, M. E. L., Silverman, E., Sacco, S. J., Park, C., McMartin, J., Kopic, K. M., et al (2022). Intimacy with God: Development of an

emic Christian measure and relationship to well-being. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 41(10), 36-53.

- Hall, M. E. L., McMartin, J., Park, C., Sacco, S. J., Kim, D., Kopic, K. M., et al (2022). Suffering with Christ: Emic Christian coping and relation to well-being. *SSM - Mental Health*. Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmmh.2022.100158>
- Kopic, K. M. (2022, Spring). Love your church within its limits: Why accepting a congregation's shortcomings is key to developing its strengths.: *CT Pastors Special*, 10- 15. Retrieved from <https://www.christianitytoday.com/pastors/2022/spring/love-church-within-limits-bonhoeffer-kelly-kopic.html>
- McMartin, J., Kopic, K. M, Davis, D. E. et al. (2022). Reflections on the prospects and perils of interdisciplinary collaboration in emic research. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 41, 69-83. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362826872\\_Reflections\\_on\\_the\\_Prospects\\_and\\_Perils\\_of\\_Interdisciplinary\\_Collaboration\\_in\\_Emic\\_Research](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/362826872_Reflections_on_the_Prospects_and_Perils_of_Interdisciplinary_Collaboration_in_Emic_Research)
- Kopic, K. M (2022). *You're only human: How your limits reflect God's design and why that's good news*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press.

Dr. Hans L. Madueme, Associate Professor of Theological Studies

- Madueme, H. L. (2023). *The evolution of sin? Sin, theistic evolution, and the biological question—a theological account*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Madueme, H. L., & Wood, T. C. (2023). *Bridging ideological divides: Why Christians still disagree about evolution and what we should do about it*.
- Madueme, H. L., Wingard, J. C. (2022, April 25). Responding to homosexuality: Culture of care versus culture of cure. *The Gospel Coalition*. Retrieved from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/still-time-care/>.
- Madueme, H. (2022, January 6). Literalism, incredulity, and hermeneutical schizophrenia. *Sapientia: A Periodical of the Henry Center*. Retrieved from <https://henrycenter.tiu.edu/2022/01/literalism-incredulity-and-hermeneutical-schizophrenia/>

Dr. H. Collin Messer, Vice President for Academic Affairs

- Messer, H. C. (2022, December). Curing death in life: Suicide, baptism, and Augustinian realism in “The last gentleman.” *South*



*Atlantic Review.*

- Messer, H. C. (2022). Introduction to Frederick Douglass, from “Narrative of the life of Frederick Douglas, an American slave.” In J. H. Wilson, & J. Stratman (Eds.), *Learning the good life: Wisdom from the great hearts and minds that came before*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.

Dr. Scott A. Quatro, Professor of Management

- Quatro, S.A. (2022, April). The common grace agency of capitalistic corporate strategy in God’s world. *Unio Cum Christo*, 8(1). Retrieved from <https://doi.org/10.35285/ucc8.1.2022.art4>

Dr. William C. Tate, Dean of Arts and Letters and Professor of English

- Tate, W. C. (2022). Bell speech in John Donne, Richard Wilbur, and Connie Willis’s “Doomsday book.” In T. S. Carissa, (Eds.), *Connie Willis's science fiction: Doomsday every day*. London, England: Routledge.
- Tate, W. C. (2022). Richard Wilbur's right listening: A review essay. *Pro Rege*, 50(3), 23-32. Retrieved from [https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3193&context=pro\\_rege](https://digitalcollections.dordt.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3193&context=pro_rege)
- Tate, W. C. (2022, Spring). A rite of finitude: Richard Wilbur’s hermeneutic ontology. *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, 64(1), 89-113.
- Tate, W. C. (2022, Winter). Converting the gaze: From gazing to seeing in Richard Wilbur’s ‘The Eye.’ *Christian Scholar’s Review*, 51(2), 153-170.

Dr. Matthew S. Vos, Professor of Sociology

- Vos, M. S. (2022). *Strangers and scapegoats: Extending God’s welcome to those on the margins*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Vos, M. S (2022, April). One square inch we won’t concede: Super Bowl Christians and the God outside the stadium. *Journal of Sociology and Christianity*, 12(1), 85-94. Retrieved from <https://sociologyandchristianity.org/index.php/jsc/article/view/231>

Dr. H. Clifton Ward, III, Associate Professor of Church History and Theological Studies

- Ward, H. C. (2023). The emergence of Christian Scripture. In L. Ayres (Ed.), *Cambridge history of early Christian theology*. Cambridge, England, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Ward, H. C. (2023). Morality, virtue, and the earliest Christian

spiritualities. In M. A. G. Haykin (Ed.), *Early Christian doctrine*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

- Ward, H. C. (2023). Review [*Clement of Alexandria and the shaping of Christian literary practice: Miscellany and the transformation of Greco-Roman writing* by J. M. F. Heath]. *Journal of Theological Studies*.
- Ward, H. C. (2022). A new book according to the syllables: Organizing Scripture in Clement of Alexandria. *Vigiliae Christianae*. Retrieved from doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/15700720-bja10046>.
- Ward, H. C. (2022). *Clement and scriptural exegesis: The making of a commentarial theologian*. Oxford, England, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

Dr. David A. Washburn, Professor of Psychology

- Washburn, D. A. (2023). Improved learning through gamification: Motivation, evocation, or concentration? *STP Teaching Tips Volume 7* [e-book]. Society for the Teaching of Psychology.
- Washburn, D. A. & Walters, S. (2022). A history of primates studying primates. In B. Schwartz, & M. J. Beran (Eds.), *Primate cognitive studies*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Washburn, D. A. (2022). Robert Allen Gardner (1930-2021). *Psychonomic Society Member Obituaries*. Retrieved from <https://www.psychonomic.org/page/obituaries>

Dr. Elissa Y. Weichbrodt, Associate Professor of Art

- Weichbrodt, E. Y. (2023, June). A Loving Regard: Contemporary art and expanding the archive, In R. Smith, and R. Bernier (Eds.), *Religion and contemporary art: A curious regard*. London, England: Routledge.
- Weichbrodt, E. Y. (2023). *Redeeming vision: A Christian guide to looking at and learning from art*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic.
- Weichbrodt, E. Y. (2022, July). Seeing Bathsheba: There's more art history than you realize in your old children's Bible. *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/07/25/seeing-bathsheba/>
- Weichbrodt, E. Y. (2022, June). The massacre of the innocents: Can art of the past help us better grieve the present? *Current*. Retrieved from <https://currentpub.com/2022/06/13/the-massacre-of-the-innocents/>
- Weichbrodt, E. Y. (2022, February). Celebrating the humanity of Edmonia Lewis. *Current*. Retrieved from

<https://currentpub.com/2022/02/21/celebrating-the-humanity-of-edmonia-lewis>

Dr. Rodney Trent Wilson, Associate Professor of Psychology

- Wilson, R. T. (2022) Psychotherapy as ritual process and sacred space. *Journal of Liberal Arts and Humanities*.

Dr. John C. Wingard, Jr., Dean of Humanities and Professor of Philosophy

- Madueme, H. L., Wingard, J. C. (2022, April 25). Responding to homosexuality: Culture of care versus culture of cure. *The Gospel Coalition*. Retrieved from <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/reviews/still-time-care/>

Dr. Carole L. Yue, Associate Professor of Psychology

- Rudiman, G. G. C., & Yue, C. L. (2023). The Indonesian public's and professional clinicians' perceptions of and attitudes toward depression.
- Yue, C. L. (2020). Improving learner metacognition and self-regulation. In T. Ober, E. Che, J. Brodsky, C. Raffaele, & P. Brooks (Eds.), *How we teach now: GSTA guide to transformative teaching*. American Psychological Association, Washington, DC.

## **Admissions**

In the fall of 2022, we welcomed 276 new students to Covenant's campus. Though this enrollment number was lower than we had hoped, the quality and character of the new student class was overwhelming, and retention during the year was higher than in previous years. Over the 2022-23 academic year, we welcomed 1345 prospective student visitors from 39 states and 7 countries; 183 of these visitors were on campus interviewing for competitive scholarships during Scholarship Weekend. Visitors could stay overnight on campus and be fully immersed in the Covenant community. We continually thank the Lord for each student He brings to the college.

## **Campus & Facilities**

In 2022-2023, Facilities Management accomplished numerous renovations and upgrades, spanning rental apartments, Belz residence hall's envelope, septic field lines, Kirk office spaces, Probasco and student apartment roofs, and addressing lingering chapel roof issues. Mechanical and electrical equipment replacements were carried out in the Library, Maclellan, Highlands, Andreas, and Founders. Elevator modernization took place in Sanderson, with equipment updates in Ashe. Student Impact initiatives included converting the

Carter pool into a more permanent deck area with new furniture, fences, and fixtures, alongside updates to the finishes and equipment in the Barnes weight room. Routine maintenance, such as parking lot repairs/resealing and the refresh of Carter Hall's 2nd north resident rooms, were also completed.

Additionally, prompt response and repairs followed the Carter Hall lobby fire. Campus planning projects encompassed the replacement of the campus fire pump, Founders chiller, and Library roof, along with future Chapel roof repairs and tennis court resurfacing needs. A new CapEx planning committee was established to identify, prioritize, and coordinate strategic resource utilization among departments with capital expenditure budgets. Its goal is to foster trust, reach a consensus on expenses for upcoming fiscal years, and align with priorities set by Interim President Brad Voyles.

### **Development & Finances**

Donors gave over \$6.5 million to Covenant during the 2022-2023 fiscal year, including gifts to endowment, student scholarships, and the annual fund. We were blessed to receive gifts from 443 churches, with 166 of those partnering with us in our Church Scholarship Promise program. The total amount given by churches in 22/23 was \$882k.

The fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, saw a similar trajectory from the prior year. Consolidated with the foundation, the college saw global net asset growth driven by endowment gifts and strong market returns. From an operating perspective, the college ended the fiscal year with minimal cash reserves but zero debt.

### **Student Life**

During the 2022-23 academic year, Nesha Evans, Associate Dean of Students for Student Life, hired Todd Bridges as the new Coordinator of Intercultural Engagement and changed the name of the Multicultural Program to the Intercultural Program to better fit the college's mission. Additionally, a student life office was updated, transforming it into the Intercultural Program Center to create a better space for students in a cultural and ethnic minority. Moreover, Robert Rowe of SeeJesus Ministries served as the Planted Student Leadership Program (CCLead) Conference speaker, presenting a model of compassionate observational leadership for our student leaders. Jon Wylie, Associate Dean of Students for Residence Life, had the resident directors and student resident assistants continue to cultivate discipleship, learning, and relationships in their hall communities.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The Covenant College Athletic Department experienced tremendous success in its first year competing in the Collegiate Conference of the South. Our mission is to explore and express the preeminence of Christ in intercollegiate athletics by cultivating disciples and pursuing excellence. Academically, we achieved a fall average GPA of 3.35 and a 3.33 spring average GPA for all student-athletes. Athletically, Volleyball, Men's Soccer, and Men's Tennis won the conference championship. Additionally, three other sports finished in the top four of the conference.

The Chapel Department at Covenant College has the privilege of walking alongside and shepherding our students in their love of Jesus Christ and his gospel. We have chapel three times a week, where we encounter Jesus together in the community, and we oversee numerous group and individual discipleship opportunities at the college. Our Fall and Spring Days of Prayer, the weekly Public Reading of Scripture, small group Bible studies in dormitories, prayer hikes, and weekly prayer and praises on resident halls are just some of the means of spiritual formation we oversee. Please pray for wisdom and faithfulness as we seek to serve our students and glorify our Father in heaven.

### **Conclusion**

We are grateful for the oversight of the PCA as we seek to remain faithful to our mission to explore and express the preeminence of Jesus Christ in all things. Thank you for your continued partnership in God's work through Covenant College.

Yours in Christ,  
Dr. Brad Voyles  
President

### **Recommendations**

1. That the General Assembly thank and praise God for the excellent work and faithfulness of the Board of Trustees, faculty, and staff of Covenant College in serving the Presbyterian Church in America by shaping students for lives of service in the Kingdom of God.
2. That the General Assembly encourage congregations of the PCA to support the ministry of Covenant College through encouraging prospective students to attend, through contributing the Partnership Shares approved by the General Assembly, and through prayer.

## APPENDIX F

3. That the General Assembly approve the budget for 2024-2025, as submitted through the Administrative Committee.
4. That the General Assembly adopt “The Covenant College and Supporting Foundation Consolidated Financial Statements” dated June 30, 2023, as prepared by Capin Crouse LLP.
5. That the General Assembly approves the minutes of the meetings of the Board of Trustees for October 12-13, 2023, and March 14-15, 2024, with notations.
6. That the General Assembly receive as information the foregoing Annual Report, recognizing God’s gracious and abundant blessing and commending the College in its desire to continue pursuing excellence in higher education for the glory of God.
7. That the General Assembly designate Sunday, October 20, 2024, as a Lord’s Day on which churches of the denomination are encouraged to highlight Covenant College’s ministry and pray specifically for the College in its mission and ministry.
8. The **Overture 14** from the Northwest Georgia Presbytery entitled “Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data from Higher Ed Institutions” be answered in the affirmative, noting that the enrollment information requested to be reported in the minutes of the Board of Trustees is, and has been, publicly available.
9. That **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery entitled “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy” and **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery entitled “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency” be referred to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly to allow Covenant College sufficient time to fully consider.
10. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

**APPENDIX G**

**REPORT OF  
COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY  
TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

**JUNE 2024**

**Centered on Christ's Mission to Train the Next Generation**

*We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the LORD, and his might, and the wonders that he has done.*

*– Psalm 78:4*

*You then, my child, be strengthened by the grace that is in Christ Jesus, and what you have heard from me in the presence of many witnesses entrust to faithful men, who will be able to teach others also.*

*– 2 Timothy 2:2*

Now in its seventh decade of ministry, Covenant Theological Seminary remains centered on Christ's mission and joyfully committed to training the next generation of pastors, counselors, and ministry leaders. We are thankful to God for the stewardship vested in us by the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) and exult in God's grace, which has sustained our more than 4,800 graduates who serve in all 50 states and in more than 100 countries.

Last year we presented an overview of some challenges and opportunities facing Covenant Seminary in this current season of our history, as well as some key areas of emphasis for us as we moved ahead with a time of institutional self-assessment and strategic planning. Now we present an update on progress made in those key areas.

We are grateful for God's continued provision for the Seminary over the year. By his grace, he has enabled us to increase enrollments in core degree



programs, further strengthen our faculty and staff through key hires and internal promotions, continue to grow our donor base and strengthen financial health, and build stronger relationships with our sister denominational agencies and committees, and with other important influencers in the PCA and beyond. We are especially thankful for the support of our Board of Trustees and for their adoption in January 2024 of our new Strategic Plan.

The passages quoted above from Psalm 78:4 and 2 Timothy 2:1–2 capture well our commitment to the future. While the psalmist describes the importance of passing on to God’s covenant people the essence of a lived faith, the apostle Paul shows us that the task of raising up the next generation of ministry leaders that first entrusted to Timothy and others like him is now a holy and cooperative stewardship of the whole church. Pastor and teacher R. Kent Hughes describes this as a “living chain of truth.”

As the denominational seminary of the Presbyterian Church in America, this is our work and continues to be the primary purpose for which we were founded. Moreover, even as we recalibrate our institutional priorities, our mission and values continue to serve a guiding role.

**Our mission statement says:** *The purpose of Covenant Theological Seminary is to glorify the Triune God by training his servants to walk in God’s grace, minister God’s Word, and equip God’s people—all for God’s mission.*

**Our institutional values focus on:** *(1) Christ-Centered Ministry, (2) Biblical Authority, (3) Grace Foundation, (4) Relational Emphasis, (5) Pastoral Training, (6) Church Leadership, and (7) Kingdom Perspective.*

### **A New Strategic Plan for Greater Future Effectiveness**

As widely acknowledged, our current cultural moment is characterized by both significant and rapid change affecting theological institutions like Covenant Seminary. The political landscape, the COVID-19 pandemic, technological innovation, the rise of the religiously unaffiliated, so-called “nones,” and social media have made the traditional residential delivery of theological education more difficult. Among the most important impacts arising from these historic headwinds are rising educational costs, declining enrollments and student load, and increased demand for fully online and hybrid degree programs. The landscape of theological education is changing in dramatic

ways. These headwinds have been well-documented, and Covenant has not been immune.

Consequently, if we are to continue building on our strong legacy of training pastors, counselors, and ministry leaders for a bright future of leadership in the PCA and beyond, we must face the challenges before us with fresh and innovative responses. The last few years have seen significant growth in online and hybrid learning options, as well as the development of several other degrees that allow for greater educational opportunities for men and women not headed into pastoral ministry but who desire more training to serve in the church or in other vocations in a more biblically informed way. We have also re-examined our institutional priorities to assess where we have been and where we need to go to be more effective at our mission.

All this culminated in the development of a new Strategic Plan that was adopted by our Board in January 2024. Informed by our institutional identity and the current challenges before us, and in consultation with many of our alumni, ministry partners, and key denominational figures, the planning process identified six strategic priorities essential to institutional health, alignment with our vision, and overall impact on our students and the wider church. These six priorities serve as the guiding pillars of the Strategic Plan:

1. Prioritize Pastor-Minded Students
2. Strengthen Theological Preparedness
3. Renew Focus on Spiritual Formation.
4. Strengthen Local, Intercultural, and Global Mission
5. Steward Relationship with the PCA
6. Foster Financial Sustainability

Over the last year, we have already begun making strides in each of these strategic areas.

### **Prioritizing the Recruitment of Pastor-Minded Students**

#### **Increased Enrollment in Pastor-Focused Degrees**

Senior Director of Enrollment John Chung and his Admissions team have been working hard all year to recruit and enroll pastor-minded students, most especially for the MDiv program. Though a lot of work remains to reach our targeted goal of 11,000 credit hours sold, this was still possibly the most

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

strategic year for CTS admissions in a decade. The Admissions team did a wonderful job reaching out to prospective students, being present at colleges, universities, and various conferences and other events where potential students may be found, and in walking with inquirers and applicants to help them discern a call to ministry and to Covenant in particular. Thanks to this hard work the incoming fall class of 2023 was 150 students, an increase of 43%. The breakdown for our various degree programs is as follows:

- Residential MDiv = up 138%
- Hybrid MDiv = up 62%
- Pastor-minded students = up 28% (includes all MDiv-ordination track and select students in the MDiv-non-ordination track and the MABTS)
- MDiv-non-ordination track = up 750% (almost all of these are women)
- MAC = up 27%
- MABTS = up 67%

Of those incoming 150 students:

- 51% are under 30
- 57% are from the PCA
- 28% are students of color
- 6% are international students

This work is ongoing, however, as the enrollment cycle requires continuous monitoring and engagement by our staff throughout the year, with the results measured in a tight 6-week window each fall. Looking ahead to the fall of 2024, our optimism continues. We are already on target for reaching our total head count goal of 185 new students across our programs for the fall, which includes a target of 65 enrolled in the MDiv program.

Please join us in giving thanks to God for his abundant provision and his blessing upon the hard work of our Enrollment team!

### **Working Toward Better Retention Practices**

As part of this process our staff is also evaluating current retention and persistence practices to identify and address any areas of weakness. And our Alumni and Career Services staff continues to be a major resource for alumni

in the field, offering consistent post-graduation engagement, assistance with career transitions and pastoral searches for churches, and in general helping our graduates to serve as ambassadors and influencers for the Seminary in their various ministry settings. We covet your prayers that the Lord will continue to bless our recruitment and retention efforts.

### **A Lilly Grant for Equipping Future Preachers . . .**

In keeping with our goal of recruiting and preparing pastor-minded students, we were pleased and excited to receive a **\$1.19 million grant from Lilly Endowment** toward equipping future preachers. This grant will further develop an emphasis on preaching as a primary means of pastoral ministry for the Seminary's Master of Divinity students.

Covenant has long held a focus on training preachers as a central means of pastoral ministry, beginning with its founder, Dr. Robert Rayburn, and continuing through many of its faculty, including President Emeritus Dr. Bryan Chapell, whose book *Christ Centered Preaching* remains a standard homiletics textbook at seminaries around the world to this day.

The Lilly grant will equip preachers by enabling three primary activities: (1) preaching cohort groups, (2) preaching conferences and workshops, and (3) developing preaching resources. The goal of these programs will be to encourage and revitalize seasoned preachers, better equip and support young preachers and those aspiring to preach, and give opportunity for preachers of all experience levels, ages, backgrounds, and ethnicities to learn from each other. This will also provide opportunities for bi-vocational pastors who may not have been able to previously access seminary-level education due to lack of accessibility and/or affordability. Covenant Seminary is one of 81 organizations receiving grants from Lilly Endowment through a competitive round of its national Compelling Preaching Initiative.

Of the Lilly grant, Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs, President of Covenant Seminary, noted:

*We are very thankful to God for this grant. It will serve as a blessing to the church by equipping men to faithfully preach the Word of God. As a pastor myself, I know that preaching the Bible is one of the most vital means of Christian ministry. I am so thankful that Covenant*

*Seminary will get to go deeper in preparing future church leaders for this great task.*

**... and to Support a Full-Time Director of Homiletics**

One special blessing resulting from the Lilly grant is that it enabled us to **bring Dr. Thurman Williams, who had been serving in a part-time adjunct capacity as our Director of Homiletics, into a full-time position** in this role starting in spring 2024. Dr. Williams will also serve as the project lead in further developing the preaching program to benefit those aspiring to pastoral ministry. Dr. Williams serves as Pastor of New City Fellowship—West End, a church plant of New City Fellowship, St. Louis, and was previously Associate Pastor at Grace & Peace Fellowship (PCA) in St. Louis and Pastor of New Song Community Church (PCA) in inner-city Baltimore. He was Minister of Outreach and Youth for five years at Faith Christian Fellowship Church (PCA), also in Baltimore, and served four years on staff with the ministry of Young Life. Thurman holds a Master of Divinity (MDiv) from Chesapeake Theological Seminary and a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) from Covenant Theological Seminary. He was Adjunct Professor of Homiletics at Covenant since 2014. Thurman has also served as Chairman of the PCA’s Mission to North America Committee.

Of this new appointment, Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs said:

*I am very thankful that Thurman will serve in this new role. The work of preaching is central to pastoral ministry, and I can think of few better men than Thurman Williams to lead this task at Covenant Seminary. His love for the gospel and for his calling, in addition to his skill as a preacher, make him uniquely suited for this task.*

**Covenant Seminary Preaching Lectures Featured Dr. Thurman Williams**

To further emphasize the importance of preaching and his enhanced role in teaching future preachers, Dr. Thurman Williams was also the featured speaker at the October 2023 edition of the Covenant Seminary Preaching Lectures. Focusing on the topic “Worshipful Preaching: Preaching Before the Lord as Lead-Worshipper,” Dr. Williams noted that preaching is both an act of worship by the preacher and an invitation to the congregation to enter into worship for the purpose of transformation. He led attendees through an exploration of the questions: What can preachers learn from worship leaders about leading the

people not only to learn about God but also to meet with God in worship? What can preachers learn from educators about how people learn in ways that transform their lives outside of the worship service? What can preachers of every race, background and denomination learn from the African American preaching tradition that can more powerfully and deeply impact the lives of all our people?

### **Strengthening Theological Preparedness**

This strategic pillar is meant to strengthen the efficacy of our theological training for students in general and for pastors in particular by focusing and aligning our efforts in theological formation across the institution. Our desire here is to address some of the areas of concern that had surfaced last year in our targeted discussions with alumni and other key denominational figures regarding a perceived decline in the theological preparedness of our graduates. Though some of these concerns seemed to be based more on misperceptions or misinformation than reality, nevertheless we found others of them to be well-founded and have been working to address both the misperceptions and legitimate areas of needed improvement.

As part of this process, in last year's report we noted that we had changed the name of what was then called the Missional Theology Division to the Division of Theological Studies—which encompasses (and always has) Systematic Theology, Historical Theology, Apologetics, Christian Ethics, and World Mission—and the appointment of Dr. Robbie Griggs as Chair of the Systematic Theology Department within that division, as well as the hiring of Dr. Andrew “Drew” Martin as Associate Professor of Systematic Theology. This year we have more good news to report.

We have taken or soon will take further steps to strengthen our students' theological preparedness. These include:

- **Gearing introductory Systematic Theology (ST) courses to mastery of foundational content**, with an orientation to sources, modes, and norms for scriptural and confessional theological reasoning.
- **Gearing upper-level ST, Biblical Studies, Counseling, and Applied Theology courses to intermediate practice of theological reasoning**, prioritizing its integration across courses and application

to ministry situations.

- **Working toward administering a theology exam for pastor-minded students in the MDiv and MABTS programs** which is sequenced with students' progression through the program.
- **Designing assessments for MDiv and MABTS students taking the Preparation for Licensure and Ordination class** and require this class to be taken at least one semester prior to their graduating semester.
- **Creating a cross-departmental team**, chaired by the ST department, to (1) identify, implement, and oversee course content and assessments in support of new strategies, with review and report every three years; (2) survey and evaluate self-assessment of graduating students annually; and (3) identify how we might involve PCA churches and agencies to help mentor our students in theological preparedness.
- **Gathering best-practices regarding ST/Church History (CH) curriculum design** from peer institutions.
- **Promoting partnerships with PCA and other churches and agencies** to provide mentoring in theological preparation for MDiv and MABTS students.
- **Promoting a culture of theological reasoning and revive the annual David C. Jones Systematic Theology Lectures**, which had been dormant for several years (see below for more on the Jones Lectures).
- **Continuing the Systematic Theology Reading Group**, which is open to residential and extension students as a Covenant group in the fall and spring terms and focuses on reading and discussing important historical and contemporary works on theology.
- **Requiring and promote at least one ST faculty member to speak at General Assembly** annually, with the content of the talk discussed internally with students.
- **Hosting an annual alumni and church enrichment conference** on a theme of theological substance and practical need in local PCA churches.
- **Integrating promotion of theological and biblical events and the scholarship of our faculty** across all internal and external marketing

channels of the Seminary.

These steps are designed not simply to help our students do well on Presbytery licensure and ordination exams (though we certainly want them to do well) but also to help them think more theologically in general and to apply that theological thinking directly in their lives and ministries for the sake of God's people.

### **The Return of the David C. Jones Theology Lectures**

We were pleased to host the return of the David C. Jones Theology Lectures in February–March 2024. The lectures are **named in honor of the late Dr. David C. Jones**, long-time Professor of Systematic Theology and Ethics at Covenant, to celebrate his legacy and that of the Seminary's Reformed theological heritage by providing an important service to our students, faculty, and community. The Jones Lectures each year focus on a particular area of theological study featuring presentations by a contemporary academic authority in that area.

The 2024 edition featured **Dr. Steven J. Duby**, Associate Professor of Theology at Phoenix Seminary and author of several books, including the recent *Jesus and the God of Classical Theism* (Baker Academic, 2022). Dr. Duby's two lectures reflected on the relationship between Christ's person and work and some of the recent Christological debates over the hypostatic union. Lecture 1 covered **"Hypostatic Unity and the Saving Work of Christ,"** and considered the connection between Christ's person and work broadly through three key theological points and in light of recent debates about Chalcedonian Christology and its bearing on our understanding of the one hypostasis or person of Christ. Lecture 2 focused on **"Life-Giving Flesh: Deity, Humanity, and the Efficacy of the Atonement,"** and zoomed in more closely to examine the ways in which the life-giving power of Christ's flesh and the efficacy of his atoning death are grounded in his deity and how the empowerment, support, and infinite worth of his redemptive death are articulated in dialogue with patristic, medieval, and early modern theologians.

Reflecting on the necessity for such a series of academic theology lectures, **Dr. Robbie Griggs**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Chair of the Systematic Theology Department, noted:



*Though lecturing itself is an ancient practice, theological lectures have been at the heart of ministerial training since the emergence of medieval universities. Historically, theological lectures aim to propagate and extend systematic reflection on the God of Holy Scripture and all things in relation to him. As ministerial students observe master theologians providing sustained argumentation on a topic of perennial interest, they learn how to “rightly divide the word of truth” (2 Tim. 2:15). And when such lectures are published and made available more broadly, the church itself is invited to ponder further “the depth of the riches and wisdom and knowledge of God” (Rom. 11:33).*

*The David C. Jones Lectures in Systematic Theology provide a venue for world-class Reformed theologians to present cutting-edge theological scholarship for the edification of ministerial leaders and the church—all in a manner that honors the memory and legacy of Dr. Jones. He was a man who brought forth the riches of Reformed theology in conversation with contemporary scholarship and debate. He did this to glorify God and serve the church in her mission of worship, proclamation, and love. Through these lectures, we hope not only to keep the memory of David Jones alive at Covenant Seminary but also to further the sort of theological study and reflection he did so well.*

President Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs remarked:

*Dr. David Jones’s life and work are academic and historic pillars of this institution. David’s legacy continues to inform the areas of systematic theology and Christian ethics, and we are thankful for Sue Jones’s enthusiasm and support for the return of this important annual event that bears her late husband’s name. Please join me in giving thanks to God for this unique opportunity at Covenant Seminary.*

### **A Festschrift Honoring Dr. Michael D. Williams**

The rich theological heritage and lasting influence of our faculty is evident in many ways, not the least of which is how many of them are beloved by alumni who have been shaped and transformed by their teaching, mentoring, and friendship. **Dr. Michael D. Williams, who retired in 2022 after 26 years of teaching systematic theology at Covenant** (first as Associate Professor from

1996 to 2004, then as Professor from 2004 to 2022), is one of those who continues to have an impact on many. To honor his legacy at Covenant and the tenor of his entire academic and pastoral life, the Seminary devoted the bulk of the fall 2023 issue of our academic journal, *Presbyterion: Covenant Seminary Review*, to a *Festschrift* for Dr. Williams, with contributions from a wide array of his students, former students, colleagues, and friends each offering theological essays or personal reflections that get at the heart of Mike's interests, life, and ministry. We are grateful for him and happy to be able to honor him in this way.

**Guest-edited by Dr. Mark Ryan** and with a Foreword by him, the issue's featured articles and writers include:

- “*Ordo/Historia Salutis?* Do We Have to Choose?” by C. John Collins
- “Reading Scripture as a Community of Witnesses to Christ’s Reign,” by Gregory R. Perry
- “A New Course for Theology: Harvie Conn’s Contribution,” by Michael Goheen
- “Addressing the Gaps in the Theology of Christ’s Resurrection,” by David W. Chapman
- “Learning to Participate in God’s Mission: Communities of Practice,” by Jessie Swigart
- “Holy Envy: Religious Appreciation and Critique in Kuyper’s Travels and Ours,” by William E. Boyce
- “Childbearing in Salvation History: Redemptive-Historical Themes in the Child-bearing Narratives of the Ancestresses of Christ in Genesis,” by Mary Schieferstein
- “By the Word of the Lord: A Tale of Two Prophets (1 Kings 13),” by W. Brian Aucker
- “Asaph’s Characterization in the Book of Chronicles: Action and Deixis in Chronicles’ Storyworld,” by Victoria Tatko
- “Questioning Faith: A Missional Reading of Ecclesiastes,” by Christopher J. H. Wright
- “Suffering, Vindication, and Mission: The Use of Psalm 22 in Matthew 27–28,” by Aaron Goldstein

- “With,” by Daniel W. Zink
- “A Michael D. Williams Bibliography,” by Mark Ryan
- A review of Michael Allen’s *The Fear of God* and *The Knowledge of God*, by K. J. Drake
- Commentary recommendations for Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians, by James C. Pakala

*Presbyterion* is available by subscription (2 issues per year) at various cost levels through the Seminary’s online store at [www.covenantseminary.edu/store/publications](http://www.covenantseminary.edu/store/publications). Individual issues are also available for purchase in hard copy or as PDF downloads.

### **The 13th Annual Theological Fellowship Conference**

This year’s edition of our annual student-led theology conference took place in January 2024 and featured plenary speaker **Dr. Scott Manetsch**, Professor of Church History, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL. Hosted by **The Theological Fellowship at Covenant Seminary**, a student group devoted to theological discussion, the conferences also featured presentations of papers from Covenant students on a variety of theological topics, with an award given for the best paper as judged by the group. Theological Fellowship also brings in other speakers during the year for the benefit of the student body. **Dr. Mark Noll**, Research Professor in Church History at Regent College, spoke in September 2023. Faculty mentors for Theological Fellowship include **Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough, Dr. Robbie Griggs, and Dr. Brian Aucker.**

### **Renewing Our Focus on Spiritual Formation**

Last year we reported on our efforts to renew a focus on spiritual formation for our students. Covenant has long recognized that “spirituality” encompasses all matters within the scope of concern and activity of the Holy Spirit through whom we are conformed more and more to the image of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Within that broad area, the Seminary prioritizes the elements of spiritual formation essential to all believers as they grow in their love for Jesus and especially those fundamental for individuals called to lead others in ministry. Thus, our goal is for students not only to know the Bible better but to be transformed through a deeper relationship with Jesus Christ—and **the deepest transformation occurs within gospel-centered community.** Many of our alumni point to their time in community at Covenant as one of the

greatest and most formative times of their lives. Our Student Life team seeks to cultivate this transformative personal and spiritual formation in a variety of important ways.

### **Renewed Emphasis on Weekly Chapel Services**

One of the primary ways the Lord shapes our students (and the rest of us!) for ministry is through worship. Here at Covenant that comes through our weekly Wednesday Chapel services (moved from Fridays last fall to enable more of the campus community to attend). This year we have enjoyed a renewed emphasis on this weekly time of gathering as a community to hear the Word of God preached by a faculty member or guest preacher. Under the **leadership of Drs. Robert Kim and Robbie Griggs**, our chapel services are more focused and have been better attended by students, staff, and faculty. Growing out of Covenant's statement of purpose, our chapel speakers the last two years have been **reflecting on and unpacking the meaning of some of the themes and phrases that are at the core of the Seminary's ethos**. The fall 2023 theme, for example, was "Equipping God's People," and for spring 2024 it has been "All for God's Mission." Please join us in giving thanks for this renewed interest in the worship of our triune God and in praying that Chapel services may flourish even more.

### **Whole-Person Formation**

In addition to worship, relationships are at the heart of the Christian life and the basis of effective gospel ministry. **The Student Life team continues to pursue each student individually**—whether male, female, residential student or online student—through personal contacts and ongoing check-ins and follow-ups throughout their time at Covenant. Faculty also set aside specific hours each week to meet with and mentor students in ways that go beyond classroom teaching. The Seminary also provides access to a limited number of free counseling sessions for those who may be dealing with issues that require deeper biblical insight.

### **Cohort and Covenant Groups**

First-year students in several degree programs are required to participate in **Cohort Groups**. These groups of eight to ten students facilitated by a faculty or staff member meet regularly throughout the semester and are **designed to promote sustainability for a lifetime of ministry by helping students grow in emotional and spiritual health, relational skills, and wise conflict**

**resolution.** By reflection on each person's own story within the group context, students learn how they fit into the community of faith and into the larger biblical story that God invites them to be part of. The groups are aimed at helping students become more like Christ—a crucial element for leading Christ's church well.

The Seminary also offers a variety of non-required **Covenant Groups** that students are encouraged to participate in as they are able. These groups are usually focused on a particular theme or interest and **aim at deepening relationships and skills that help to foster personal growth in grace.**

### **The Return of the *Lifetime of Ministry* Conference Addresses Timely Pastoral Issues**

Last year we announced the return of our **annual *Lifetime of Ministry Conference***, which is designed to help pastors and church leaders understand and address some of the challenging issues of our day from a biblical perspective. The first installment of the revived conference took place on campus in November 2023. Titled **The Changing Self and the Challenge of Ministry**, the two-day event featured renowned historian **Dr. Carl Trueman**, author of *The Rise and Triumph of the Modern Self* and *Strange New World*, and our own **Dr. Robbie Griggs**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology. Drs. Trueman and Griggs addressed the current cultural turbulence surrounding the issue of sexuality and offered some historical and pastoral insight to help church leaders seeking to shepherd others through this challenging topic in our cultural moment.

The 2024 edition of the *Lifetime of Ministry* Conference will take place in October and will be focused on the theme **Deepening Ministry Resilience**. Speakers and more details will be announced soon.

### **Austin Harrington Counseling Lectures—*Practicing for Heaven: Counseling, Neuroscience, and the Wisdom of the Kingdom of God.***

To assist counselor, pastors, and ministry leaders in growing in their work, and to help them help others grow in their lives and faith, our Counseling Department annually offers the Austin Harrington Counseling Lectures. The May 2024 edition of the lectures was titled *Practicing for Heaven: Counseling, Neuroscience, and the Wisdom of the Kingdom of God* and featured renowned

counselors, authors, and speakers **Curt Thompson, MD**, and **Richard Winter, MD**. The lectures explored:

- The opportunities and challenges facing Christian counselors in the twenty-first century.
- Biblical perspectives on advances in neuroscience and emerging treatments.
- How they have personally and practically integrated faith and evidence-based resources in their private practices.

Dr. Thompson is a board-certified psychiatrist and the founder of Being Known, an organization that develops resources for hope and healing at the intersection of neuroscience and Christian spiritual formation. He is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and his main focus of clinical and research interest has been the integration of psychiatry, its associated disciplines, and Christian spiritual formation. He is also the author of *The Soul of Shame*, *The Soul of Desire*, *Anatomy of the Soul*, and his newest book, *The Deepest Place*.

Dr. Richard Winter trained in medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, London, and then in psychiatry in Bristol. He is a past-member for The Royal College of Psychiatrists in the UK and was a counselor, teacher, and leader at the English L'Abri before moving to St. Louis in 1992 to lead the counseling program at Covenant Seminary. Now Professor Emeritus in Counseling, Dr. Winter lives near family in England where he continues counseling and teaching. He is the author of *When Life Goes Dark: Finding Hope in the Midst of Depression* and *Perfecting Ourselves to Death: The Pursuit of Excellence and the Perils of Perfectionism*.

### **Other Aspects of Our Gospel-Centered Community**

Campus life is geared toward nurturing growth in gospel-centered community through many avenues that bring students, faculty, staff, and families together in creative, challenging, and life-changing ways.

- **Ministry Lunches** – Multiple times throughout each semester representatives from many different church, ministry organizations, and PCA agencies and committees host lunch-time gatherings to inform students about internship and ministry opportunities, provide

helpful insights on ministry life, share experiences, and offer encouragement.

- **Seminary Picnics** – Each fall and spring Student Life organizes seminary-wide picnics as times when the entire Covenant community can gather to share good food, enjoy fun games, and just hang out together and get to know one another better.
- **Parents' Morning/Night Out** – Our Family Nurture program offers childcare during select Seminary events and also provides specific times during each semester when parents may drop their kids off for fun and games at the Log Cabin on our campus while Mom and Dad enjoy some much-needed time off.
- **Day of Prayer** – Each semester we host a Day of Prayer during which all classes are cancelled so everyone can participate in a morning of intensive gathered prayer and worship, followed by a lunch prepared by our International Student Fellowship.

### **A Servant-Leader Mindset**

At new student orientation, our incoming students are told, **“You are not the end of your own education.”** The fact is a deepening relationship with Christ is not for oneself alone but for the benefit of those whom we will be called upon to lead and serve in every area of life and ministry. Every aspect of community life at Covenant is geared toward fostering this mindset of servant-leadership and nurturing a heart of grace in men and women who will one day be the leaders and influencers in Christ's church and kingdom.

### **Cultivating Spiritual Formation for the Future**

To help keep our formational practices sharp and effective, we plan to survey CTS alumni and faculty for their assessment of our spiritual formation practices and consult peer seminaries to identify their best spiritual formation practices. Additional efforts in this regard include:

- **Creating a focus group of students in their final year** to assess our spiritual formation practices.
- Recognizing the importance of worship, Bible instruction, and prayer, we are **cultivating strategies that further reinvigorate Chapel attendance**, a love for gathered worship, participation in the local church, and the regular engagement of the means of grace.

- Recognizing how self-understanding and gospel dynamics contribute to Christian maturity we are **working to ensure that Cohort Group leaders are well resourced** and student experiences in Cohort Groups align with CTS mission and values.
- **Identifying and reinforcing existing Covenant Groups** that are effective in promoting the spiritual formation of students.
- Consulting current literature and best practices from peer seminaries, and seeking input from faculty, staff, alumni, and students, so that we can **identify new practices and structures that improve our spiritual formation efforts**, thereby helping our students mature in their likeness to Jesus as they navigate our increasingly secular and post-Christian society.
- **Recruiting, resourcing, and deploying faculty, staff, and local Christian leaders to serve as models of Christian maturity** in strategic ways, like leading Cohort Groups, Covenant Groups, Chapel speakers, lunch fellowships, and co-curricular groups, etc.

### **Strengthening Our Emphasis on Christ's Mission: Locally, Interculturally, and Globally**

An emphasis on missions has been part of Covenant Seminary's DNA from the beginning. We have **trained many hundreds of missionaries** who now serve in many countries around the world, **as well as hundreds of church planters** who are busy working to build new local churches in cities all across the U.S. Covenant faculty, such as Professor Emeritus of Applied Theology and Church Planting **Dr. Phil Douglass** and others, have been key players in identifying and mentoring promising missionaries and church planters, assisting in the development of missionary and church planting strategies for the denomination, and creating the Mission to North America's Church Planting Assessment Center in Atlanta. More recently, under the guidance of **Dr. Robert Kim**, Associate Professor of Applied Theology and Church Planting (and the Philip and Rebecca Douglass Chair of Church Planting and Christian Formation), we continue to make missions and church planting a high priority.

Last year we noted strides made in this area, such as the establishment of The Paul D. Kooistra Chair of World Missions, the expansion of our Church Planting Track to the Master of Arts in Biblical and Theological Studies (MABTS) degree and Graduate Certificate program in addition to the MDiv,



a Church Planting Summit held in conjunction with our sister agency Mission to North America, and our **hosting again in the summer of the full MNA Church Planter Assessment Center on our campus**—which will occur again in the summer of 2024 as well. We also continue a close partnership with RUF, holding potential-student recruitment events for RUF interns and staff each year and **hosting RUF ministry assessment opportunities for students interested in campus ministry**.

Another way in which we seek to foster a mission-oriented mindset in our students is by exposing them to the stories and experiences of missionaries who serve all over the world, many of them in “closed countries” or other places where their ministries face severe opposition or even persecution. These missionaries often speak in our Chapel services or at Ministry Lunches hosted on campus where students can interact with them directly. And Seminary President Dr. Tom Gibb often travels nationally and internationally to teach and preach in conjunction with some of our missionary partners. This year, for example, he has visited with churches and ministries in Brazil; in Bogota, Colombia; and the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in India.

Additionally, in this key area of emphasis we are seeking to:

- **Partner with the PCA’s Mission to North America (MNA) and Missouri Presbytery MNA Committees to identify and place students in strategic internships** in local church plants and other local missions endeavors.
- **Strengthen partnerships with local churches** that align with CTS’s mission and values for Field Education internships.
- **Strengthen the Field Education program and Applied Theology courses** with clear program and course objectives relating to local mission, such as local cultural understanding, ethnography, and engaging a pluralistic, post-Church society.
- **Encourage campus engagement in local missions** through co-curricular activities and organic involvement by faculty and students in local ministries.
- **Prioritize dialogue and partnerships with Black, Asian-American, Latino, and other churches that model intercultural community in the broader St. Louis area**, in support of our denomination’s recommendation to increase partnerships and dialogue with local

intercultural ministries (Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Racial Reconciliation to the 46th General Assembly of the PCA), and considering the unique history, opportunities, and needs in the city of St. Louis.

- **Continue to make a seminary education available anywhere in the world** through flexible residential, hybrid, online, and other learning platforms and increasingly accessible, especially for those coming from non-majority and global contexts.
- **Provide distinct attention to recruiting and training ministry leaders arising out of non-majority and global contexts** by providing more scholarships and intentional support structures while at CTS that address the unique challenges that these students face.
- **Seek to identify and financially support potential candidates for staff and faculty positions from culturally diverse groups** within the student population and the broader PCA community.
- Add language to faculty and staff job postings that **encourages applicants from non-majority and global contexts** fitting our mission and values.
- **Incorporate a regular program of intercultural training** to better equip Seminary leadership, faculty, staff, and students to grow in our intentional welcoming and mutual learning from one another.
- **Recruit and call a gifted and qualified candidate to serve in the Paul D. Kooistra Chair of World Missions.**
- **Continue to engage with global missions partners (e.g., MTW, PMI, Serge, etc.)** to (1) host ministry lunches and related events, (2) increase awareness about global missions, and (3) facilitate opportunities for faculty and students to serve in a global context.
- **Partner with global theological educators** to design learning experiences that are responsive to the contexts and cultures of students around the world.
- **Require at least one reading from a global Christian context** in each course whenever possible as determined by each academic department.
- **Strive to make CTS the PCA's primary sender** of church planters, missionaries, campus ministers, pastors, counselors, and ministry leaders serving in a global context.

- **Engage and seek to partner with CTS alumni and other mission partners** serving in the global mission fields.
- Continue to **highlight and support faculty and student involvement** in global missions.

### **Changing Relationship with Missional Training Center–Phoenix**

Related to this area of missions is our relationship with the Missional Training Center–Phoenix. For some time now, we have been in conversation with MTC about the nature of our partnership and its viability going forward. Ongoing conversations at Covenant regarding its vision, mission, and denominational interests have intersected with similar conversations at MTC. Those conversations have led MTC to determine that it would be strategic for them to align with a new institutional partner that would allow them to pursue their vision more effectively. A formal and amicable separation from Covenant took place earlier this year. We continue to have a deep appreciation for the wonderful work occurring at MTC and through its leaders. We rejoice in our many years of rich partnership and shared commitment to living out the missional priorities of the gospel in the world.

### **Stewarding Our Relationship with the PCA**

We are continually grateful to be the denominational seminary for the PCA and **value the partnerships we have in ministry with our sister PCA agencies and churches**. It is a blessing to serve our denomination with them. We look forward to further exploring these partnership opportunities and planning together for the future as we seek to foster greater denominational unity for the good of the church and the expansion of the gospel.

As we noted in last year's report, the Seminary has sought feedback from various alumni and others with strong connections to Covenant as we went through our strategic planning process. These conversations have been immensely helpful to us. We are grateful for the honest and sometimes challenging input as we seek with humility to continue improving in how we carry out our pastoral training mission.

### **Building Bridges Across Denominational Divides**

President Dr. Tom Gibbs has made it **a priority to build bridges of brotherly connection** not only with our sister agencies and supporting churches and

donors, but also with some of those who have been our critics. He considers it a sincere privilege to hear the voices of all who serve with the PCA. He continues to travel widely to promote the Seminary and to strengthen relationships across the denomination. These efforts have met with much positive response.

### **A Newly Rebranded Ad Campaign and Redesigned *Covenant* Magazine**

Related to our recruitment efforts and our desire to raise awareness of the Seminary and position ourselves as the school students think of first when considering pastoral training, we partnered with the firm Metaleap Creative to initiate a new campaign of print and electronic media ads, as well as a redesign of our flagship publication, *Covenant* magazine. The first issue of the new magazine arrived last fall and was enthusiastically received by our constituents. Our goal is to produce two issues of the magazine per year, instead of the one we had been doing for the last several years. We desire the new look and content of the magazine to be both a resource beneficial to the church and a vital connecting link with our alumni and supporters. Subscriptions to *Covenant* are free and available through the Resources section of our website.

### **Preparations for ATS Site Visit in Fall 2024**

An important aspect of the Seminary's stewardship to the PCA is the maintenance of its accreditation credentials. Even as we have been going through our own assessment and re-evaluation of priorities for strategic planning purposes, we are deeply involved in preparing for a visit later this fall from representatives from the Association of Theological Schools (ATS), one of our accrediting agencies. This is part of the ongoing process of reviewing and renewing our official accreditation as an institution of higher learning based on specific standards as outlined by the accreditors. We will be reporting on the various aspects of our academic and communal life and meeting with peer reviewers who will help assess and identify areas of strength and any areas that may need improvement. Please be in prayer for this process.

### **Other ways we are working to better steward our PCA relationships include:**

- Coordinating with PCA agencies and committees, but especially RUF, MTW, CDM, MNA, and Covenant College, **to cultivate their**

**readiness to send us students and our willingness to send them graduates to serve.**

- Strategically leveraging our time at General Assembly to **connect with alumni, tell our story, teach seminars, communicate directly through the President’s report, and recruit future students.**
- Strategically deploying the Lifetime of Ministry Conference, FSI conferences, and other events to **highlight CTS as a thought leader on topics relevant to PCA constituencies.**
- Continuing to **host the President-led Theology Summit**, inviting key alumni back to campus to discuss theological themes of relevance for PCA constituents.
- Offering to **host PCA events and leaders in St. Louis** to serve the PCA as a key hub for ministry collaboration.
- Initiating an **annual training opportunity for new staff and faculty**, to be called “Onboard Covenant,” to instill a healthy understanding of Covenant’s history, vision, mission, values, and organizational structures, and how these intersect with our denominational context.
- Securing an outside firm to **audit our overall marketing efforts and rebrand Covenant’s marketing strategy.** (See above in regard to *Covenant* magazine and ad campaign.)
- **Evaluating the effectiveness of all current communication strategies**, marketing channels, and frequency of engagement.
- Optimizing deployment of personnel, marketing channels, and communication strategies to **clearly convey Covenant’s story and mission to constituents.**
- **Ensuring that the voices of the President and our professors are heard** across the PCA through Seminary platforms, denominational conferences, agencies, and committees, Church and Presbytery conferences, General Assembly, *byFaith* Magazine, and in PCA-adjacent organizations.

Our sincere desire is to glorify the Lord together as we all seek to bless Christ’s people, grow Christ’s church, and expand Christ’s kingdom—all for Christ’s glory.

### Fostering Financial and Organizational Sustainability

As noted above, Covenant's increased enrollment over the last year is encouraging and has helped put us on a better path financially. Revenue streams continue to be strong, and the combined impact of excellent performance in Annual Fund giving with funds from our **Bridge the Gap (BTG) capital campaign** continue to provide us the necessary bandwidth to maintain our turn-around efforts. Through the generosity of our committed donors, the BTG campaign is stabilizing our financial position.

Additionally, due to careful budget management by the Seminary's staff and faculty over the past year, we were able to reduce our projected level of operating expenses and simultaneously generate an extraordinary level of undesignated gifts and donations. **We experienced record unrestricted giving for 2022–2023 and look to be on target to surpass this for 2024.** And our Endowment, which had been bolstered considerably through our Hope for the Future capital campaign a few years ago, remains quite strong. We give thanks to God for his provision and for how he is using the excellent work of our Advancement and the Business Office teams.

For our FY25 budget, we are projecting 8,500 credit hours sold, or 10% growth from FY24. Given our recent recruitment success, we believe these expectations are reasonable and will advance us toward our long-term goal of 11,000 credit hours sold. As in FY24, strong reserves will help us offset our deficit spending in FY25. Nevertheless, as the Bridge the Gap funds are exhausted, continued enrollment growth will be essential to responsible fiscal management in FY26 and succeeding years.

Stewarding our resources wisely even as we make progress on enrollment challenges is a top priority. Calibrating our finances with clear financial goals will promote prudent fiscal discipline. To that end we are working to:

- Create an **11,000 credit hours sold (CHS) budget model**.
- Include a \$250,000 surplus to **build reserves for capital purchases**.
- **Align expenses** around implementation of new missional priorities and strategies.
- Ensure staffing levels and compensation rates across the institution **promote employee retention** and reflect marketplace realities.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- **Establish systems for tracking income and expenses by academic program** or by strategic groupings of programs to boost each program's efficiencies.
- **Identify targets for average class size** and for the proportion of credits taught by full-time to part-time instructors.
- **Set goals for the number of full-time, residential students needed** in an 11,000 CHS model.
- **Determine what financial incentives are necessary** to recruit residential students, and optimize scholarship rates and deploy strategic incentives accordingly.
- **Determine a sustainable model of funding development** and maintenance of physical plant and campus housing, including deferred maintenance priorities.
- **Sell the Seminary's non-main campus properties**, including and west of 12311 N. Forty Drive, and use the sale proceeds to provide additional unrestricted funds for operations.
- **Collect data to estimate an average minimum necessary rate per program** and control the overall scholarship rate accordingly.
- **Reduce the rate of unfunded scholarships** to below 5%.
- **Raise additional scholarship funds** necessary to fund more of our anticipated scholarship needs while aligning award criteria and enrollment strategies.
- With the guidance of the institutional leadership and the board, **assess what institutional priorities and needs are best solved through a capital campaign strategy**.
- **Execute a feasibility study** prior to proceeding to ensure that donor interest and Seminary goals are aligned.
- **Establish the leadership, timeline, and communication plan** for any future campaign.

Please be in prayer with us that God would bless these efforts to bring greater financial and organizational stability to Covenant Seminary.

## **A New Vice President of Advancement**

A key factor in our ongoing fundraising efforts was the hiring in January 2024 of **our new Vice President of Advancement, Rev. James Dickson**. In this role, Rev. Dickson oversees and provides strategic leadership for all aspects of the Seminary's development, donor relations, and fundraising efforts, and will also focus on exploring new avenues for communicating and advancing the mission of the institution. He brings to this position a wealth of experience as a pastor and church planter. He is also a highly skilled business leader with expertise in finance, sales, banking, and real estate development.

Rev. Dickson comes to Covenant after serving as Senior Pastor at Christ Church (PCA) in Trussville, Alabama, since 2014, prior to which he was a church planter and organizer for that congregation starting in 2011. His business experience includes several years as a process engineer and supervisor at Shaw Industries in Dalton, Georgia; as a capital markets associate and investment banking relationship manager with Wachovia Securities in Atlanta, Georgia; and as a partner and Vice President with Pierce Fenes of Carolina in Greensboro. He is a graduate of Auburn University (BS in Textile Management), Emory University (MBA), and Reformed Theological Seminary–Charlotte (MDiv), and is currently pursuing a Doctor of Ministry (DMin) degree at Covenant Seminary. James and his wife, Anna, have three children. When he is not serving the church or spending time with his family, he loves to exercise, talk football, and fish. He is the author of the recently published book *A Thousand Little Moments: Grace-Shaped Parenting* (Brookstone, 2023).

### **Rejoicing in the Blessings of Our People: Faculty, Staff, and Board Updates**

The Lord's greatest gift to Covenant Seminary is the people who serve here as faculty, staff, or trustees. We have been particularly blessed in this regard. Notable staffing updates or changes for the past year are listed below.

#### **Faculty/Staff Updates**

- **Rev. James Dickson** joined our staff in January 2024 as **Vice President of Advancement** to provide strategic leadership for the Seminary's development, donor relations, and fundraising efforts. He will also explore new avenues for communicating and advancing the



mission of the institution. *See more on Rev. Dickson elsewhere in this report.*

- **Dr. Dan Doriani**, Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology, was selected in December 2023 to serve as **Interim Senior Pastor for Briarwood Presbyterian Church** in Birmingham, Alabama. The choice was the result of a months-long search by a team appointed by the church's session following the unexpected passing of Briarwood's long-time Senior Pastor, Dr. Harry Reeder, in May 2023. Dr. Doriani will serve part time in the Interim Senior Pastor role during the spring of 2024 while continuing with a full slate of teaching commitments at Covenant Seminary for that semester. Following that, he will assume a full year of interim pastoral responsibilities at Briarwood with a reduced teaching load at the Seminary. His interim duties will continue through May 2025 or until a new Senior Pastor for Briarwood is named. He plans to return to full-time teaching duties at Covenant when the interim role concludes. Rev. Dr. Tom Gibbs, President of Covenant Seminary, commented, "We are excited about and grateful for this opportunity for Dan Doriani to help lead and shepherd the people of Briarwood as they continue to mourn the passing of Dr. Reeder and seek a new Senior Pastor. Dr Reeder is sorely missed and left some big shoes to fill, but we are confident that Dan's experience and expertise will serve this flagship congregation of the PCA well for the time he is there. We pray for a successful pastoral search and for God's blessing on the church and our denomination."
- **Mr. Stephen Griffin** joined our staff in May 2024 as **Director of Communications**. He steps into the role previously filled by Mr. Kent Needler, who took another position last fall (see below). Mr. Griffin comes to us from Reformed Theological Seminary in Jackson, Mississippi, where he has served as Communications Manager since 2022, having previously been Social Media Manager (2020–2022) and Communications Assistant (2017–2020) for RTS. Mr. Griffin holds a BS in mathematics, with minors in communications and history, from Mississippi College, and is experienced with print and electronic publications, social media, and digital marketing. In his new role he will oversee all aspects of the Seminary's internal and external communications and marketing efforts and work with all departments of the institution to ensure that their communications needs are met and that branding and messaging are consistent throughout the

organization. Mr. Griffin, a lifelong resident of Jackson, is recently married to Avery, and they are looking forward to exploring and getting to know St. Louis and the Covenant Seminary family.

- **Mrs. Megan Jung** joined our Student Life staff in April 2023 as **Associate Dean of Women**. In this position, she focuses on working with and nurturing female students and student wives, both on campus and online. She has a love for people and desire to see Christ formed in them more deeply. A 2011 graduate of Covenant's MAC program, Mrs. Jung has been practicing therapy for the past 13 years. Before coming to Covenant as a student, she served as an intern with Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. With her previous knowledge of the Seminary and her extensive professional experience, she brings a wealth of relational expertise to her role in caring for Covenant's students. Of her appointment, she said, "Covenant Seminary has solidly taken up real estate in my heart, mind, and story over the past 15 years. At Covenant, I began to taste freedom in the gospel—living through brokenness and restoration while learning about my own sin and experiencing gracious care. It was there that I learned the value of being curious for the sake of God's kingdom. Time at Covenant primed me to do work that I deeply love: working with people to help them heal and grow." Megan is married to Jason, who serves as a ruling elder at South City Church (PCA) in St. Louis. They have three children.
- **Dr. Paul Loosemore**, Associate Professor of Counseling, stepped into the additional role of **Director of the Counseling Department and the Counseling Center** in January 2024. He succeeds **Dr. Mark Pfuetze** and **Dr. Jeremy Ruckstaetter**, who have co-led the department very well since 2020. Dr. Pfuetze indicated his desire to rotate out of the co-Director role to focus more on teaching, while Dr. Ruckstaetter will continue his excellent oversight of CACREP Accreditation by transitioning from co-Director of the department to become Director of CACREP Accreditation within the department. Dr. Loosemore previously taught counseling courses as an adjunct professor of counseling at various institutions. He is active in the broader academic discussion surrounding counseling and has published articles in the *Journal of Psychology & Theology*, the *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, and the *EMCAPP Journal*. His PhD research focused on

the impact of a relationship with God and how it relates to character growth and well-being. As a counselor, he has experience working with individuals, couples, and groups, with special focus on marriage concerns, trauma and abuse, relational distress, and grief and loss. He completed a PhD in counselor education and supervision from Regent University, is a graduate of Covenant Seminary's Master of Arts in Counseling program (MAC '15), and holds a Bachelor of Advertising from Gloucestershire University and an MA in Interior Design from Portsmouth University—both in England. Dr. Loosemore has worked as a professional counselor since graduating from Covenant's program, including co-founding the St. Louis Counseling Center.

- **Mr. Kent Needler**, who had served as **Senior Director of Communications and Media for Covenant**, **stepped down from this role in the fall of 2023** to pursue a new professional opportunity. Prior to this, Mr. Needler served the Seminary in a variety of roles. As Associate Director of Admissions from 2006 to 2013, he oversaw the campus visit process for prospective students and helped those potential students discern their call to ministry. As Communications Director (2013–2019) and then Senior Director of Communications and Media (2019–2023), he oversaw all aspects of the Seminary's communications and marketing processes, including print and electronic media publications, social media, advertising, and website development (including the most recent upgrade to the Seminary's main site, resources site, and online store), and assisting all departments of the institution with information and communication needs. His knowledge and expertise helped the institution make wise and appropriate use of new developments in the media and communications fields to more effectively serve the mission of the Seminary and tell the stories of its students, alumni, faculty, and staff for the glory of God and the advancement of his church. Mr. Needler, a 2006 MATS graduate of Covenant, serves as a ruling elder at Kirk of the Hills Presbyterian Church (PCA) in St. Louis, MO.
- **Dr. Thurman Williams**, who had been serving in a part-time role as Adjunct Professor of Homiletics since 2014 and as Director of Homiletics since 2021, **joined our faculty full-time** in spring 2024. His appointment is the result of the Seminary's receipt of a **\$1.19 million grant from Lilly Endowment** toward equipping future

preachers. *See more on Dr. Williams and the Lilly Grant elsewhere in this report.*

## Board/Advisory Board Updates

- **Board of Trustees Additions for 2023–2024**
  - **Rev. Dr. Jimmy Agan**, Senior Pastor, Intown Community Church, Atlanta, GA. Elected to first term for class of 2027 after serving a term on Advisory Board.
  - **Mr. Mark Ensio**, President of Ballast Technologies, Inc., Tucson, AZ. Elected to first term for class of 2027 after serving a term on Advisory Board
  - **Rev. Dr. Bob Flayhart**, Senior Pastor, Oak Mountain Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, AL. Elected to first term for class of 2027 after serving a term on Advisory Board.
  - **Mr. Dwight Jones**, President, Ocmulgee Fields, Inc., Macon GA. Elected to first term for class of 2027 after serving a term on Advisory Board.
- **Advisory Board Additions for 2023–2024**
  - **Rev. Brian Habig**, Senior Pastor, Downtown Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC. Serving first term on Advisory Board after completing term on Board of Trustees.
  - **Mr. Brewster Harrington**, Principal, Consulting Nonprofits, LLC, Colorado Springs, CO (retired). Serving first term on Advisory Board after completing term on Board of Trustees.
  - **Mr. Robert Hayward Jr.**, President and CEO of the Quarryville Presbyterian Retirement Community, Quarryville, PA. Serving first term on Advisory Board after completing term on Board of Trustees.
  - **Dr. John Plating**, Director of the Center for Calling & Career, Covenant College, Lookout Mountain, GA. Serving first term on Advisory Board after completing term on Board of Trustees.
- **Retiring Advisory Board Members**
  - **Mr. Jack Kramer Sr.**, Retired CEO of Cenergy Services,

Chesterfield, MO.

- **Rev. Wy Plummer**, Mission to North America
  - **Rev. Christopher Harper**, Senior Pastor, Trinity Presbyterian Church, Rochester, MN.
- **Future Trustees (Class of 2028) – Endorsed by the Board of Trustees and recommended to the Nominating Committee of the General Assembly**

The Board of Trustees of Covenant Theological Seminary is pleased once again to present to the Nominating Committee of the PCA our recommendations for the next class of Seminary Board members. We remain thankful for the General Assembly's ruling nearly two decades ago which allows the Seminary to communicate directly with the Nominating Committee to endorse specific candidates for our Board, as long as their names have first been submitted by their respective presbyteries. These men provide key strengths and experience we believe the Seminary needs for the years ahead.

*Covenant Seminary hereby endorses the following ruling elders as candidates for its Board of Trustees for the Class of 2028:*

- **Mr. David Duren**, Chairman, CEO & Founder, Circon Energy, LLC. A native of Houston, TX, David holds degrees in both Mechanical Engineering and Computer Science from Texas A&M University. David founded Circon as a pioneer in energy transition; he is also Founder and CEO of Kinected Energy Solutions, LLC, and Chairman of ReCO2, LLC. As an innovator in carbon neutrality for sustainable business applications, David co-founded the carbon and environmental trading entity Net Zero, LLC and serves as the Chairman of the eAI institute, a not-for-profit research institute optimizing ESG with machine learning systems for environmental stewardship outcomes. David previously served as Chief Executive Officer of Relevant Solutions, LLC. David also regularly serves as a guest lecturer in the College of Engineering for Texas A&M University on topics of leadership, sustainability, and character development. David and his wife, Gretchen, have five children and two sons-in-

law. They both serve on national boards and in leadership roles at the community level, including Past-Chair and Independent Director of Reformed Youth Ministries (RYM), the Leadership Council of Texas A&M's Association of Former Students and the National Charity League. David and Gretchen attend Christ the King Presbyterian Church in Houston where he serves as a ruling elder. He joined the Advisory Board in 2023.

- **Mr. Bruce Harrington**, Principal, Consulting Nonprofits, LLC, Colorado Springs, CO [retired]. Bruce holds a BA in economics from Vanderbilt University, an MDiv from Covenant Theological Seminary, and an MBA from Washington University in St. Louis. He was Vice President for Advancement at Covenant from 1984 to 1990. In recent years, Bruce trained nonprofit CEOs in board financial communication. He has also served as CFO at WaterStone, a \$250 million Christian community foundation based in Colorado Springs. Bruce has served as a ruling and teaching elder for the past 35 years. He is currently a ruling elder at Forestgate Presbyterian Church, a borrowed elder for a daughter church, and is former Chair of Rocky Mountain Presbytery's Shepherd's Committee. He and Connie have three married children and twelve grandchildren. Bruce has been active with Covenant Seminary's Advisory Board since 2010 and joined the Board of Trustees in 2014.
- **Mr. Paul Stoll**, President of Armin Tool and Manufacturing Company, Elgin, IL. Paul graduated from LeTourneau College in 1981 with a BS in Welding Engineering. He has been employed by Armin Tool and Manufacturing Company since 1973 and became president of the company in 1987. Paul has led the company into a variety of manufacturing applications used in the injection molding industry. Many everyday products that we now take for granted are manufactured by Armin. Paul and his wife, Katy, have two adult sons and are members of Westminster Presbyterian Church of Elgin, Illinois, where he is a ruling elder. Paul was first elected to Covenant's Board in 2006.
- **Mr. Gif Thornton**, Managing Partner, Adams and Reese,

Nashville, TN. Gif is a graduate of Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt Law School. He has served as Managing Partner of his firm since 2015. Prior to that time, he served as legislative counsel to a number of businesses, trade associations, and governmental entities with interests before Tennessee state and local government. Additionally, Gif has served his community as a member of the Board of Trust of Vanderbilt University as well as Brentwood Academy. He is a ruling elder at Christ Presbyterian Church in Nashville and has served on its Administrative Commission for many years. He was the first Chair of the Committee on Judicial Business for Nashville Presbytery. Gif's wife, Anna, served on the Advisory Board of the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Covenant Theological Seminary. The Thorntons have four children. Gif was first elected to the Seminary Board in June 2010.

***Covenant Seminary hereby endorses the following teaching elders*** as candidates for its Board of Trustees for the Class of 2028:

- **Rev. Brian Habig**, Senior Pastor, Downtown Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC. Brian grew up in Mississippi and graduated from Mississippi State University. He then continued his education at Covenant Seminary, earning an MDiv in 1995. After seminary, he served as a campus minister with Reformed University Fellowship at Mississippi State University and then at Vanderbilt University before moving with his family to Greenville, South Carolina in 2005. Brian has served Downtown Presbyterian Church since 2005. Brian has also served on the Permanent Committee of RUF and has provided multiple book reviews for Presbyterion. Brian and his wife, Dana, have three children. He joined the Covenant Seminary Board in 2014.
- **Rev. Murray Lee**, Executive Coordinator, Mission to North America. Murray is a graduate of Samford University and completed his seminary training at Covenant Theological Seminary in 2005. He received his PhD in organizational communication from the University of Alabama in 2017. Following seminary, Murray planted Cahaba Park Church where he served as Senior Pastor from 2007-2022. He

currently serves as the Executive Coordinator with Mission to North America. He and his wife, Kim, have three children. He joined the Advisory Board in 2010.

*The Board of Trustees of Covenant Theological Seminary humbly submits the above endorsements with gratitude that the General Assembly encourages us to voice our particular needs and concerns in this way.*

## **Faculty Publications and Kingdom Service**

Our faculty's influence reaches far beyond the classroom: professors mentor and disciple students, participate in the life of local congregations, share their teaching and preaching abilities with the larger church in the U.S. and around the world, and engage with our culture and the pressing issues of our day from a biblically sound and gospel-centered perspective. Here is a sampling of their publications and other kingdom service since our last report.

- **Dr. Brian Aucker**, Professor of Old Testament
  - Review of *The Oxford Handbook of the Historical Books of the Hebrew Bible*, ed. B. E. Kelly and B. A. Strawn (Oxford, 2020), in *Bulletin of Biblical Research* 32, no. 4 (2022): 443–46.
  - Faculty Advisor for the student-led Theological Fellowship at Covenant Seminary (along with Dr. Bob Yarbrough and Dr. Robbie Griggs).
- **Prof. Suzanne Bates**, Assistant Professor of Counseling
  - Served on the Seminary's Title IX Committee and Diversity Committee.
  - Served as member of the board of Restore St. Louis.
  - Facilitated Beautiful Community Covenant Group primarily for CTS students of color, and Women of Wisdom group for student women over the age of 40.
- **Dr. David W. Chapman**, Professor of New Testament and Archaeology
  - Published the entries “Anaphora Pilati,” “Paradosis Pilati,” “Pilate Cycle,” and “Vindicta Salvatoris” in *Brill Encyclopedia of Early Christianity*, ed. P. van Geest, B. J. L. Peerbolte, and D. Hunter (Leiden: Brill, forthcoming).



- Continued to serve as Curator/Director of the W. Harold Mare Institute for Biblical and Archaeological Studies on CTS's campus.
- Taught "World of the New Testament" class at Elias Riggs Academy in Sofia, Bulgaria (a denominational Bible school associated with the MTW team in Sofia) in June–July 2023.
- Taught "Hermeneutics" for Covenant Bible School in Singapore (overseen by CTS graduate Joseph Tee) via Zoom during July–September 2023.
- Served on the board and as President of Presbyterian Mission International, which sends trained international students back to their home countries as missionaries.
- **Dr. Tasha Chapman**, Professor of Educational Ministries
  - Contracted through IVP for a Hungarian edition of *Resilient Ministry* (orig. pub. 2013; coauthored with B. Burns and D. Guthrie) to be published by Reformatus Kalvin Kiado.
  - Published chapter titled "Pastors Empowering Women to Flourish," in *Not So with You: Pastors and Pulpits, Power and Authority*, ed. M. Stirling and M. Meynell (Wipf & Stock, 2023).
  - Published articles in Hungarian in collaboration with CTS graduate Bori Mikola, including "Resilient Ministry: What We Learned from Pastors in 7 Years of Research," in *Sárospataki Füzetek* (journal of the Hungarian Reformed Church seminaries), and "Pastors Are God's Sheep First, Shepherds Second," in Reformed Church of Hungary's denominational newsletter.
  - Worked with Committee on Discipleship Ministries to facilitate training cohorts of non-seminary trained church ministry staff, and consulted with CDM for Lilly Grant application for updates to children's curriculum "Teach Me to Worship."
  - Consulted with Geneva Benefits regarding research on wellness of women ministry leaders.
  - Led conferences, workshops, and ministry leader retreats over five weeks in Hungary and Bulgaria, hosted by CTS graduates; and spoke by Zoom for on resilient ministry and other topics for Thirdmill and Redeemer University (Ontario).
  - Provided curriculum design and edit suggestions to authors and endorsements for publishers for several students and alumni in helping them get their work published.
- **Dr. C. John "Jack" Collins**, Professor of Old Testament

- Published “*Ordo/Historia Salutis*: Do We Have to Choose?” in *Presbyterion* (Fall 2003), as part of a *Festschrift* for Dr. Michael D. Williams.
- Published “2 Kings 19:35–37 (et par.): Can We Say What ‘Really Happened?’” for a *Festschrift* in honor of V. Phillips Long and Ian Provan on their retirements from Regent University.
- Presented paper “Biblical Authority and Human Origins: Reading the Hebrew Bible,” at ETS conference in 2023; also submitted to *Presbyterion* for publication.
- Spoke and taught in various church, retreat, or conference settings.
- **Dr. Dan Doriani**, Professor of Biblical and Systematic Theology
  - Served as Interim Pastor at Greentree Community Church (EPC) in St. Louis, MO, for part of the year.
  - Was named Interim Senior Pastor of Briarwood Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Birmingham, AL; to serve full-time with the church while continuing to teach part-time at CTS until a new Senior Pastor is found, then to return to full-time teaching.
  - Spoke at The Gospel Coalition conference and various other conferences, and at churches locally and nationally, especially on the topic of work.
  - Working on two books in progress, one on the topic of virtue and the other on 1 Corinthians.
  - Published article “Above Reproach: Moral Failure and Godly Character in Pastoral Leadership,” in *Westminster Theological Journal* (spring 2023).
  - Was on sabbatical for fall 2023 so not as involved in campus life as usual.
- **Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs**, President and Associate Professor of Applied Theology
  - Published “Why I Am Thankful for Tim Keller,” “2023 President’s Report to the General Assembly of the PCA,” “Our Returning King,” on CTS blog *Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy*.
  - Published or republished “Your Own Personal Jesus,” “Three Things to Help Your Church Plant Survive,” and “Bridge Building, the PCA, and the Next 50 Years” on *byFaith online*.
  - Published articles “Preparing Pastors and Ministry Leaders to

- Reach the Next Generation” (*Covenant* magazine, 2023) and “Grace for Leaders” (*Covenant*, Spring 2024).
- Published “On the Relevance of Creeds and Confessions” in *Presbyterion* (Spring 2023) and “The Crushing Burden of Choice” in *Presbyterion* (Fall 2023; special issue Festschrift for Dr. Michael D. Williams).
  - Traveled extensively to meet with donors, supporters, alumni, and key PCA leaders on behalf of the Seminary.
  - Taught Doctor of Ministry courses on Ministry Leadership.
  - Preached, taught, and visited with churches and ministry partners around the country and internationally, including Brazil; Bogota, Colombia; and the Presbyterian Theological Seminary in India.
- **Dr. Aaron Goldstein**, Assistant Professor of Old Testament and Director of Online Learning
    - Served as guest preacher and teacher for various local churches.
    - Taught “Reflections on the Psalms” course for Covenant Bible School in Singapore.
  - **Dr. Robbie Griggs**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology
    - Transferred credentials from EPC to PCA in 2023 as part of desire to be more effective mentor and role model for students in our denomination.
    - Serving as Chair of the Department of Theological Studies and Director of the Master of Theology (ThM) program.
    - Faculty Advisor for the student-led Theological Fellowship at Covenant Seminary (along with Dr. Bob Yarbrough and Dr. Brian Aucker).
  - **Dr. Robert Kim**, Associate Professor of Applied Theology and Church Planting, Philip and Rebecca Douglass Chair of Church Planting and Christian Formation
    - Serving on boards of Serge and The Gospel Coalition, on Missouri Presbytery’s Mission to North America Committee, and is in regular dialogue with MNA at the national level as well as with MNA Assessment Center activities at Covenant.
    - Served as Pulpit Supply for various churches and consulted with various church planting networks and churches.
    - Spoke at a variety of mission-related and church planting-related

conferences.

- **Dr. Paul Loosemore**, Director of Counseling Department and the Counseling Center, Associate Professor of Counseling
  - Submitted book proposal to IVP for *Curiosity and Flourishing in Research: A Christian Integrative Approach*, to be co-authored with a colleague; another article is in the midst of the peer-review process.
  - Published “The Mediating Role of Character Virtues Humility, Gratitude and Compassion between Relationship with God and Well-Being” in *Christian Psychology Around the World*.
  - Published several posts on CTS blog *Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy*, including “Grace and Conviction for the Next Few,” “Pastors and Counselors in Tandem,” “Is It Really Depression?”
  - Participated in Lifetime of Learning discussion panel.
- **Dr. Drew Martin**, Associate Professor of Systematic Theology
  - Served as Director of Field Education for Covenant Seminary.
  - Published *The Covenant with Moses and the Kingdom of God: Thomas Hobbes and the Theology of the Old Covenant in Early Modern England* (Brill, 2023).
  - Awaiting publication of *Grimke on the Christian Life: Christian Vitality for the Church and the World* (Crossway, forthcoming).
  - Published review of K. J. Drake, *The Flesh of the Word* (Oxford U. Press) in *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (2023).
  - Preaching and teaching at home church on occasion.
  - Serving on GA Theological Examining Committee.
- **Dr. Brad Matthews**, Associate Professor of New Testament and Dean of Faculty
  - Served as Interim Pastor at South City Church in St. Louis City.
- **Dr. Mark Pfuetze**, Associate Professor of Counseling
  - Served as board member for FirstLight St. Louis.
  - Served as counseling consultant/director for Global Counseling Network and as a counseling consultant to pastors, churches, and ministries.
- **Dr. Jeremy Ruckstaetter**, Associate Professor of Counseling and Director of CACREP Accreditation

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- Oversaw process of the MAC program becoming fully accredited by CACREP in 2023.
- Served on the board of Presbyterian Mission International (PMI).
- Served as Support Group Coordinator for Chesterfield Presbyterian Church.
- **Dr. Jay Sklar**, Vice President of Academics and Professor of Old Testament
  - Published *Numbers* in the Story of God Bible Commentary series (Zondervan, 2023) and *Additional Notes on Numbers* (Gleanings Press, 2023).
  - Published *Leviticus: A Discourse Analysis of the Hebrew Bible* in Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the OT (Zondervan, 2023) and *Additional Notes on Leviticus* (Gleanings Press, 2023).
  - Published *Exodus* and *Jonah* in the online Gospel Coalition Commentary (2023).
- **Prof. Jessie Swigart**, Assistant Professor of Educational Ministries and Dean of Academic Administration
  - Published “Learning to Participate in God’s Mission: Communities of Practice,” in *Presbyterion* (Fall 2023), part of *Festschrift* for Dr. Michael D. Williams.
  - Served on discussion panels in 2023 during campus Preview Day activities for prospective students.
- **Dr. Robert W. Yarbrough**, Professor of New Testament
  - Published “Machen on the Bible: An Explanation and Application of Christianity and Liberalism,” in *Southern Baptist Journal of Theology* (2023).
  - Presented paper titled “The Pros and Cons of Presentism” at the inaugural conference of the Institute for Reformation in South Africa, a coalition of South African Reformed scholars and church leaders seeking to challenge the prevailing postmodern liberalism of the Dutch Reformed Churches (DRC) in South Africa; the article will appear in an upcoming book containing all the papers given at the conference.
  - Published chapter “The Centrality of the Gospel in Romans: The Importance of Getting It . . . and Getting It Right,” in *Paul’s Letter to the Romans: Theological Essays* (Hendrickson Academic

2023).

- Served as Editor for *Presbyterion*, the Seminary’s academic journal; on the editorial board for *Themelios*, published by The Gospel Coalition.
  - Faculty Advisor for the student-led Theological Fellowship at Covenant Seminary (along with Dr. Robbie Griggs and Dr. Brian Aucker).
  - Gave the Sizemore Lectures at Midwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Kansas City, MO, in February 2023.
  - Guest taught adult Sunday school and/or preached at Greentree Community Church (EPC) multiple times throughout the year and led a session on “Liberalism and Conservatism: A Tale of Two Religions” for a community conference.
  - Preached and/or taught several times at other churches, including St. Mark Lutheran Church in Lindhurst, IL; Peace Tabernacle Fellowship in inner city St. Louis; and Redemption Phoenix.
  - Taught at multiple pastors’ conferences, family conferences, and Timothy Training International conferences both in the US and in South Africa.
- **Dr. Dan Zink**, Professor of Counseling
    - Published “With,” in *Presbyterion* (Fall 2023) as part of Festschrift for Dr. Michael D. Williams.
    - Published “Jackson Browne, Suffering, and Awareness,” and “Listening Is” on CTS blog *Orthodoxy and Orthopraxy*.

### **Continuing in Faithful Service—by God’s Grace and for His Glory**

We conclude this report as we do each year with humble gratitude to our denomination for continuing to support and encourage us, and to the Lord for allowing us to be part of his gracious work in bringing the good news of Jesus Christ to people everywhere as we train pastors, counselors, and other ministry leaders for the PCA and beyond. May God’s hand of blessing be on us, and on our sister PCA organizations, as we work together to bring honor and glory to Jesus’s name. May he guide us and keep us all steadfast in our devotion to him, so that we may stay the course that he has set for us and hear at last, when we reach our final destination, those beautiful and blessed words, “Well done, good and faithful servants.”

Respectfully submitted,  
***Rev. Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs***  
President

### **Recommendations**

1. That the General Assembly give thanks to God for the ministry of Covenant Theological Seminary; for its faithfulness to the Scriptures, the Reformed faith, and the Great Commission; for its students, graduates, faculty, staff, and trustees; and for those who support the Seminary through their prayers and gifts.
2. That the General Assembly encourage the congregations of the Presbyterian Church in America to support the ministry of Covenant Theological Seminary by contributing the Partnership Shares approved by the Assembly, and by recommending Covenant Seminary to prospective students.
3. That the General Assembly ask the Lord's blessing on Covenant Seminary's President, Rev. Dr. Thomas C. Gibbs, and grant him and the Seminary's leadership team, faculty, and Board of Trustees great wisdom, biblical faithfulness, and clear vision as they lead the institution forward in training fruitful pastors and other ministry leaders.
4. That the General Assembly ask God to guide Covenant Seminary's ongoing efforts at recruiting new students, evaluating and strengthening our programs, and seeking to make the Seminary a greater resource for the church both locally and globally.
5. That the General Assembly ask God's blessing on the Seminary's planning and fundraising efforts, and on its attempts to recruit a new generation of dedicated pastor-scholars to train new generations of leaders for Christ's church and kingdom.
6. That the General Assembly praise God for his provision of faithful donors and supporters who continue to give generously toward our mission, and for the many ways that he has enabled Covenant Seminary's students, faculty, and staff to continue building effectively on the solid foundation laid by our forebears in the faith. Praise him for the gift of resilient and creative people who enable the institution to function so well during challenging times.
7. That the General Assembly pray for unity among the brethren of the PCA and ask the Lord to work in all our hearts to foster a deeper desire

to engage with one another and the world in compassionate and gospel-centered ways, and that we might bear strong witness to the truth and power of God’s redeeming grace.

8. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the stated and called meetings of the Seminary’s Board of Trustees and Executive Committee of the Board of Trustees for 2023–2024 as follows:
  - *Stated Board Meetings*: April 28, 2023; September 22, 2023; January 26, 2024
  - *Called Board Meetings*: None
  - *Stated Executive Committee Meetings*: April 27, 2023; September 21, 2023; January 25, 2024
  - *Called Executive Committee Meetings*: April 18, 2023; September 13, 2023; December 5, 2023, January 19, 2024
9. That the financial audit for Covenant Theological Seminary for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2023, by Capin Crouse LLC, be received.
10. That the proposed budget for 2024–25 for Covenant Theological Seminary be approved.
11. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” in the affirmative.
12. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 14** from the Presbytery of Northwest Georgia “Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data from Higher Ed Institutions” in the affirmative.
13. That the General Assembly refer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy” to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in 2025.

**Rationale:** This overture was not received by the Administrative Committee in time for any Permanent Committees or Agencies, except for Covenant Seminary, to consider prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2024. Given its late date (April 3<sup>rd</sup>), neither Covenant Seminary nor the Administrative Committee could prepare an informed recommendation to their respective committees and boards.
14. That the General Assembly refer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency” to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in 2025.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Rationale:** This overture was not received by the Administrative Committee in time for any Permanent Committee or Agency Board (or their legal counselors) to consider prior to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly in 2024.

## **APPENDIX H**

### **REPORT OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF GENEVA BENEFITS GROUP TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

We are pleased to present our Report to the General Assembly on behalf of the Board of Directors and staff of Geneva Benefits Group.

#### **President's Report**

In the Old Testament, the book of Nehemiah stands as a testimony to how God works to accomplish his redemptive purposes through his covenant people. While teaching through this book recently, I was reminded of why I love Nehemiah and the book given his name. Nehemiah's mission to return to Jerusalem and rebuild the wall was more than a physical rebuilding. The destroyed wall was a picture of the nature of God's covenant people while in exile. Spiritual renewal began with the physical rebuilding of the wall, but the deeper message of the book is God's faithfulness to rebuild his church. The wall is just a picture of that truth.

Here at Geneva, we are engaging in a multi-layered building project as well. This year, our offices have undergone a building program to meet the space needs of our growing staff. We are also committed to helping build and rebuild healthy churches and elders through our products and services. We do the quiet, behind-the-scenes work so that church leaders can rebuild and renew the people of God. These include mundane things like life and disability insurance, as well as long-range things like retirement saving and financial planning. We also offer services aimed at improving the wellbeing of ministry workers, such as counseling for pastors' wives, sabbatical coaching and matching funds, call package guidelines, and, in 2024, peer cohorts for pastors.

#### **New Staff**

In 2023 Geneva continued to expand our team. We added Michael Yoon to our Philanthropic Giving team. We hired Reilly Cummings to our Benefit Services team. We hired Dana Walker and Ioli Airy to our Operations team.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

As part of the Lilly Endowment's Economic Challenges Facing Pastoral Leaders grant, we hired TE Paul Joiner to serve as our new Director of Ministerial Wellbeing. After over two decades of pastoral ministry, Paul joins our staff with a wealth of knowledge and understands the challenges that pastors and sessions in our denomination face. We expect this to be a growing area for Geneva as we seek to come alongside churches and pastors by providing resources to help them build and rebuild healthy churches rooted in the gospel. After searching for nearly 18 months, we finished the year by hiring TE Will Chang as our first full-time Investment Specialist. We are thrilled that Will joined our staff on January 2, 2024. Prior to his pastoral ministry, Will worked in the financial industry for nearly 10 years. His unique combination of pastoral experience and financial expertise make him an ideal person to serve in this new role.

### New and Improved Tools

While we spent a lot of time this year adding to our team of workers, we also sharpened several of our tools. 2023 saw the most comprehensive update to our call package guidelines since they were introduced in 2012. We now offer three versions: one for pastors, another for churches, and a third for presbyteries. This resource has not only served the PCA for over a decade but has been utilized by other denominations within the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council of Churches (NAPARC). In addition, several larger denominations have used the guidelines to help them construct their own version. We spent much of 2023 upgrading processes and procedures in an effort to make them easier and more secure for our churches and ministry workers. We also continued to improve our financial planning assistance for ministry workers by adding the use of MoneyGuide Pro to help plan for things beyond just retirement. We are committed to seeing pastors and ministry workers grow spiritually and financially healthy. Financial health is so much more than having enough to live on in the final season of one's earthly ministry. To that end, we continue to pursue ways to help ministry workers grow financially healthy.

In addition to sharpening old tools, we have also added several new ones. I mentioned that 2023 saw the launch of our sabbatical matching program. In 2023, we awarded \$40,000 to help 4 churches provide their pastors with a sabbatical. We also began a new partnership with Mission to North America

(MNA) geared towards promoting overall church health throughout the denomination.

### Challenges

As many of you know, we had to discontinue our counseling benefit at the end of 2023. We had hoped our partnership with Full Strength Network (FSN) would benefit everyone in our denomination. We were disappointed we had to shut the program down. While we are not prepared to roll out a new counseling benefit at this time, we are working on a new and improved benefit. Another challenge has been finding a health insurance solution that is financially sustainable. We know that the single biggest benefit needed by our pastors and ministry workers is health insurance, so we are working hard to find a solution that would serve all our churches, whether they have a staff of 1 or 30.

You will read later in this report about the record-breaking year of giving to the Relief Fund as well as the record-breaking Relief awards given in 2023. We finished the year with over \$8.5 million in the Relief Trust. There is still much work to do for us to raise the \$25 million necessary by 2035. We remain confident and hopeful that when the whole church works together, we can accomplish this task. It is our privilege to serve our church in this way.

### Market Update

As dismal as 2022 was for investors, 2023 was much more positive. The year began with conversations about runaway inflation, rising interest rates, recession, and soft landing. By mid-year, it appeared that inflation was beginning to moderate, and the Federal Reserve (FED) was slowing, or at least pausing, its rate increases. In addition, the highly anticipated China reopening didn't seem to provide the economic boost many were expecting. In March, the collapse of Silicon Valley Bank, First Republic (absorbed by JP Morgan), and Signature Bank of New York seemed to be evidence that FED's monetary policy broke something in the economy. Despite the failing of those banks and the collapse of Credit Suisse (acquired by UBS) no major market catastrophe happened. Increasing optimism led to a mid-year peak ahead of a third quarter drawdown. After four 0.25% rate increases earlier in 2023, the FED paused rates in September. As markets pulled back from August to October many were surprised at how little impact the October Hamas attack on Israel had on stocks and specifically on oil prices.

A market rally began in the fourth quarter and ran through the end of the year. Even fixed income bond funds rallied in the fourth quarter, posting a strong return for the year. The S&P 500 finished the year up 24.23%, while the Dow gained 13.8%, and the Nasdaq finished up 43.42% amid interest in Artificial Intelligence (AI). The year's gains were largely on the backs of the "Magnificent 7." These seven stocks, Alphabet, Amazon, Apple, Meta Platforms, Microsoft, Nvidia, and Tesla, made up 65% of the S&P 500's return for all of 2023.

In November, Warren Buffet's long time business partner and friend, Charlie Munger died at 99. He once said, "It is remarkable how much long-term advantage people like us have gotten by trying to be consistently not stupid, instead of trying to be very intelligent." At the end of 2023 there was a lot written about how poorly the economic forecasters and prognosticators did. Virtually no one projected the S&P would finish the year above 4700. This reinforces Geneva's commitment to think long-term. While Warren Buffet may be the most iconic investor in the past 40 years, his genius has more to do with his longevity (he will turn 94 this year) than trying to time the market. So, whether you are 35 or 65, our target date funds are designed with your age-appropriate risk tolerance in mind. The greatest thing you can do to improve your retirement picture is to contribute between 10 to 15% of your annual income to your retirement account. We exist to help you do that. We want to help you with the complexities of retirement planning so the Spirit's work of making you more generous in every season of ministry can become a reality. This is the ministry God has called us to. Don't hesitate to reach out. We are here to serve you.

### **Summary of 2023 Operations**

In 2023, our total 403(b) retirement plan assets under management increased by 16% from \$803,533,486 to \$931,047,593. This increase can be attributed to comparative market performance over the prior year, as well as plan contributions surpassing plan distributions. The retirement plan continues to be Geneva's most popular employee benefit plan, with almost 10,000 retirement accounts at year-end 2023.

Participation also increased for the combined group insurance benefit plans, approaching 4900 insured employee lives.

With over 4000 participants, life insurance plans experienced no plan design changes in 2023. Offered through MetLife, the life insurance plans include such features as will preparation, portability, estate services, and accelerated benefit offerings, all with limited (or no) medical underwriting for new employees.

Disability insurance, including long-term and short-term disability, has almost 4000 participants. Offered through Unum, the long-term disability plan provides elements of top-tier group disability benefits, such as retirement income protection, cost of living adjustments, and claims payment until Social Security full retirement age. Geneva's short-term plan covers the loss in income for the period between the loss and when long-term coverage begins.

There were no changes to the dental plan or the vision plan. Both plans promote tax-efficient employee benefit offerings and boast large national networks.

While Geneva's counseling and wellbeing benefit was a very popular and well-utilized product that grew to 500 participants, the funding model for the partner firm was unable to sustain the program. Geneva ended the relationship with Full Strength Network in December of 2023. Counseling and wellbeing are critical services that need to be addressed. A replacement solution is under investigation.

Geneva has recommended a property, casualty, and liability insurance carrier for organizations since 2000. Since 2017, we have recommended Brotherhood Mutual to churches, schools, and ministries. Brotherhood Mutual specializes in providing insurance to Christian organizations and seeks to provide PCA organizations with special group-affiliated pricing. Brotherhood Mutual and related companies also provide commercial auto, worker's compensation, mission travel insurance, legal assistance, and payroll processing.

Since 1973, the Geneva Relief Fund has provided pastors and their widows with critical financial assistance and support. We give thanks to God for his provision that met the increased needs of our pastors, widows, and ministry workers. In 2023, we provided almost \$650,000 of financial assistance to PCA church servants through 423 financial assistance awards. Through our Cherish program, wives of PCA teaching elders were able to meet with a qualified

Christian counselor. We invested \$46,550 in this much-needed program to provide pastors' wives with access to 583 counseling sessions.

We are grateful to report that as needs increased, so did generosity. In 2023, generous individuals, churches, and private foundations gave almost \$1.6 million to the Relief Fund. We thank every church that supports this ministry, whether through gifts or participating in our special Look After offering. We invite all churches to prayerfully consider sharing about the Relief Fund with your congregations and inviting them to participate in a special offering in support of our retired pastors, widows, and ministry workers in need. We will provide you with everything you need.

## **Relevant Legislative and Regulatory Updates**

### **Proposed Legislation**

The following items were proposed, and several have been passed by House or Senate committees, but approval is still under consideration. Geneva watches and participates with several church organizations to inform or encourage legislators on your behalf.

- A proposal to expand the ability of individuals to contribute to Health Savings Accounts and the services that can be paid for by them
- Several provisions to make hospital pricing more transparent and understandable for patients
- A bill to expand the availability of telehealth services
- Several bills to lower prescription drug costs
- A proposal (the Clergy Act) to allow clergy who previously opted out of Social Security to opt back in

### **Relevant Regulatory Limits for 2024**

Relevant cost-of-living and required statutory limit adjustments applicable to benefit plans for 2024 are as follows:

## APPENDIX H

Contribution limit for retirement plan	\$69,000 (\$3000 increase)
Elective deferral limit	\$23,000 (\$500 increase)
Retirement plan catch-up contribution limit (over 50)	\$7,500 (\$0 increase)
Annual HSA contribution limit	\$4,150 – individual (\$300 increase) \$8,300 – family (\$550 increase)
HSA Catch-up contribution limit (over 55)	\$1,000 (no change)
Annual contribution limit for FSA	\$3,200 (\$150 increase)
Maximum cafeteria plan carryover	\$640 (\$30 increase)
Annual contribution limit for dependent care FSA	\$5,000 (no change)

### Staff

The Geneva staff is thankful to the Lord for His faithfulness and everlasting love to his Church this past year and eagerly awaits the opportunities and challenges in store for our future. We believe that God will continue to bless our ministry to others as we remain faithful to Him. We welcome the prayers and partnership of participants and churches this year and into the future. It is our privilege to serve those who minister in the Presbyterian Church in America.

Ms. Ioli Airy, Assistant to the President

Rev. Donald S. Aldin, CRPC, Director of Retirement Readiness and Data/Technology

Rev. David L. Anderegg Jr., CFP, Senior Financial Planning Advisor

Mr. Andrew E. Beiriger, CPA, Staff Accountant

Mrs. Heather S. Chambliss, Director of Business Operations

Rev. Will Chang, Investment Specialist

Rev. Paul S. Chi, CRPC, Financial Planning Advisor

Miss Reilly Cummings, Benefits Advisor

Rev. Edward W. Dunnington, CFP, President

Mrs. Peggy N. Henry, Retirement Planning Administrator

Rev. Paul Joiner, Director of Ministerial Wellbeing

Mrs. Grace L. Kang, Benefits Advisor



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Ms. Ingrid Krein, CRPC, Retirement Planning Specialist  
Mr. Chester R. Lilly III, CIA, Vice President of Operations  
Rev. Stephen M. Maginas, CRPC, Financial Planning Advisor  
Rev. Jonathan B. Medlock, JD, Vice President of People and Culture  
Mr. Mark S. Melendez, CRPC, Director of Benefit Services  
Mrs. Bonita K. Nowak, Benefits Project Manager  
Ms. Anna Poland, Operations Administrator  
Ms. Teresa Reese, CPA, Director of Finance  
Mrs. Sophia M. Rivera, Marketing Coordinator  
Mrs. Sandra N. Robertson, Benefits Advisor  
Mrs. Katelyn Rogers, Operations Administrator  
Miss Stephanie S. Simpson, CPA, Staff Accountant  
Mrs. Dana Walker, Receptionist / Administrative Assistant  
Miss Emily E. White, Benefits Advisor  
Mr. Michael J. Yoon, Donor Relations Manager  
Miss Christine M. Zurbach, CFRE, MBA, Director of Philanthropy and Marketing

## RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the Board of Directors meetings dated September 22, 2023, November 17, 2023, and March 8, 2024.
2. That the General Assembly receive the 2023 Audited Financials as reviewed by Capin Crouse LLP.
3. That the General Assembly approve the 2025 Operating Budget with the understanding that it is a spending plan and will be adjusted as necessary by the Board of Directors to accommodate changing conditions during that fiscal year.
4. That the General Assembly approve the 2025 Trustee Fee Agreements for the Retirement Plan Trust, the Health and Welfare Benefit Trust, and the Charitable Relief Trust.
5. That the General Assembly approve the Amended and Restated Trust Agreement for the Presbyterian Church in America 403(b)(9) Retirement Plan and Other Retirement Plans Trust.
6. That the General Assembly approve the Amended and Restated Trust Agreement for the Presbyterian Church in America Health and Welfare Benefit Trust.

7. That the General Assembly approve the Declaration of Trust Amending the Geneva Benefits Group Charitable Relief Trust.
8. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO 11-5* to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.
9. That the General Assembly exhort PCA Presbyteries, churches, and related ministries to review and utilize the PCA Call Package Guidelines in creating compensation packages for Teaching Elders.
10. That the General Assembly urge member churches to participate in an annual offering to Geneva Relief or to budget regular benevolence giving to support relief activities through the Geneva Relief Fund.
11. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery “Amend *BCO 14-1* Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.
12. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery “Amend *BCO 23* to Address Dissolution of Call for Those Employed by a Committee or Agency” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

It is our privilege to serve those who minister in the Presbyterian Church in America.

Respectfully Submitted,

---

Andrew Field  
Chairman, Board of Directors

---

Rev. Ed Dunnington, CFP®  
President

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

# **APPENDIX I**

## **REPORT OF THE INTERCHURCH RELATIONS COMMITTEE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

### **Membership**

- RE Billy Ball (Class of 2025)
- TE Bryan Chapell – PCA Stated Clerk (*ex officio* member, *RAO* 3-2 j.)
- TE David Gilleran (Class of 2026)
- RE Brad Isbell (Class of 2024)
- TE Roy Taylor (Chairman – Class of 2024)
- TE Wallace Tinsley (Class of 2025)
- RE Dennis Watts (Class of 2026)
- TE Nathan Chambers (Alternate)
- RE Aaron Reeves (Alternate)

### **Other**

- TE Cartee Bales, Missouri (MTW advisory member)
- TE Billy Park, Korean Southeastern (Korean liaison advisory member)
- Ms. Heidi Harrison (Recording Secretary)

### **Meetings**

The committee met twice via Zoom calls.

- September 13, 2023
- March 26, 2024

### **Items Discussed**

- Invitations to send fraternal delegates to the OPC, NAPARC, EPC, CAN; and other Assemblies or Synods with volunteers approved by Chairman and Stated Clerk if additional invitations received.
- MNA/Brazilian Network received information regarding IPB delegates to General Assembly connecting with MNA representatives to help Brazilian pastors transition into PCA churches
- Fraternal Delegate presentations for both GA luncheon and plenary presentation be considered by the Administrative Committee

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- The committee elected officers for the Assembly year of 2024-2025
  - Chairman – RE Dennis Watts
  - Vice-chairman – RE Billy Ball
  - Secretary – TE David Gilleran
- Response to **Overture 2** (2023) from Covenant Presbytery that the PCA apply for admission to the International Conference of Reformed Churches

### Recommendations

1. That all Fraternal Delegates be granted access to the General Assembly Commissioner Handbook.
2. That **Overture 2** (2023) from Covenant Presbytery about the PCA joining the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) which was subsequently referred back to this year's IRC be answered as follows: The IRC recommends that the 51st General Assembly follow the recommendation the IRC made to the 50th General Assembly, namely that the IRC follow the specific guidelines of the ICRC's membership procedures by having members of the PCA's IRC attend the next meeting of the ICRC (which is ordinarily required before membership application can be made) in 2026 to investigate and determine first-hand if formal membership is appropriate for the PCA, and return with a recommendation for the General Assembly to join or not.
3. That the minutes of September 13, 2023 be approved without exception.
4. That the minutes of March 26, 2024 be approved without exception.
5. That visiting ministers be introduced to the General Assembly, *BCO* 13-13.

## APPENDIX J

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

*The glory that you have given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that you sent me and loved them even as you loved me. John 17:22-23*

#### **MNA Purpose**

Cultivating Kingdom Advancement through the PCA in North America

#### **MNA Mission**

MNA provides expertise with excellence to all PCA churches, presbyteries, and networks in North America by offering a suite of practical ministry resources—training, equipping and assisting in missional purpose, serving communities to advance God’s kingdom.

#### **MNA Vision**

The glory of the knowledge of the Lord will fill the earth as the waters cover the sea. Jesus is on mission in our secular age to advance his kingdom. Mission to North America serves the PCA for the expansion of churches that are faithful to the Scriptures, true to the Reformed faith and obedient to the Great Commission. By resourcing our churches for kingdom impact MNA will facilitate the multiplication of PCA churches in the US and Canada from 1,932 to 3,000 congregations by 2033. By the grace of God our church will prayerfully accomplish this by planting new churches, reducing church closures, expanding the diversity of the PCA, partnering with denominational committees and agencies, and enfolding existing congregations into the PCA.

#### **The Church in North America in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

At the turn of the century, church membership in North America began to plummet. It is south of 50 percent of the population and continuing to decline. In the United States approximately two dozen churches are shutting their doors every day. We praise the Lord that the PCA is growing in church numbers.

Even so, we are not keeping pace with population growth and demographic changes.

While some respond to our massive religious shift with alarm, at MNA we believe that we are in the middle of a great opportunity for gospel impact in North America! Coincident with the religious shift is a demographic shift resulting in North American communities becoming much more culturally and ethnically diverse. Our church has the opportunity to proclaim the gospel to the nations and impact the world from right here on this continent.

Our vision for the PCA to meet the moment with even more obedience to the Great Commission is being pursued through the following five commitments:

1. Church Planting. To increase church planting across the denomination, MNA is focused on recruiting church planters, assessing church planters, and equipping church planters.
  - a. In January 2024 MNA held our second Church Planting Summit in collaboration with Reformed Theological Seminary – Charlotte. 150 church planting leaders, MNA Presbytery Committee Chairmen, and MNA staff gathered for the collective work of growing church planting in the PCA. 49 presbyteries were represented at the Summit. MNA will continue to galvanize our leaders by bringing them together for envisioning faithful ways for the PCA to meet the gospel opportunity before us.
  - b. In March 2024 MNA held our inaugural Church Planter Preparation Training at Trinity Presbyterian Church in Lakeland, FL for church planters and aspiring church planters. Participants were able to select one of six tracks for training, (1) discerning the call to church planting, (2) preparing to plant a church, (3) establishing a presence to gathering a launch team, (4) gathering a team to launching a plant, (5) launching a plant to particularization, and (6) growing from particularization to reproduction. As with the Summit, MNA will continue to raise church planters and catalyze church planting through these trainings.
  - c. MNA's Church Planter Assessment Center held five church planter assessments throughout the US in 2023. Our church planting team is exploring the steps and resources required to develop assessment centers in different languages (Korean

language assessments already exist). It is important to be able to assess people in their heart language, especially if they are going to be planting among people for whom that is their primary language. It is also important for us to assess people to plant in different demographic contexts and the skills required for those contexts.

2. Church Vitality. To equip the church to thrive, MNA is seeking to expand the presence of our ministries within every presbytery to ensure that churches have access to ministry resources that will support and build each congregation. This effort to serve our churches for their health is intended to help to reduce the number of church closures the PCA experiences each year and to enable existing churches to grow in missional health as they proclaim the Gospel to their neighbors.
  - a. Similarly to the Church Planting Summit as a means of collaborative and collective work, MNA is developing a Church Vitality Summit to engage our ministries and leaders for increase missional health in the PCA.
3. Growing the Diversity of the PCA. As North America grows in diversity, we are focused on equipping our churches for neighbor love in Jesus' name across lines of deep difference.
  - a. MNA's ethnic minority ministries are continuing to enable our churches to reach ethnic minorities who share the love of the Reformed faith and the PCA such that these brothers and sisters thrive in the faith even as they maintain and celebrate their ethnic identities.
  - b. MNA is preparing to develop a Chinese ministry focused on church planting among Mandarin and Cantonese speakers.
  - c. MNA is also preparing to develop a Rural Church Planting ministry focused on catalyzing increased church planting in rural communities throughout the U.S. and Canada.
  - d. The PCA Unity Fund continues to provide scholarships for theological training for ethnic minorities committed to ministry in the PCA and scholarships for ethnic minority Teaching and Ruling Elders to attend General Assembly.
4. Increased collaboration in the PCA. The vision to facilitate the growth of the PCA by 50% cannot be accomplished by MNA alone. It requires intentional and increased collaboration among our committees and agencies.



- a. CDM partnered with MNA's ESL Ministry for the development and publication of training materials for churches who want to develop an ESL program to serve their non-English speaking neighbors.
- b. MTW invited MNA to partner with them for the November 2024 Missions Conference. This will include church planter training for domestic and international church planters.
5. Enfolding Churches Into the PCA. MNA is committed to developing a strategy for our presbyteries and churches to actively pursue churches in their communities who align with our doctrine and Standards and are in need of a denominational home.

### **MNA Executive Staff and Senior Leadership Growth:**

In 2023 MNA's executive leadership team continued to develop with the appointment of Ruling Elder Mark Casson as the new MNA Ministry Engagement Director on September 1, 2023. Mark, renowned for his transformative leadership, served as the MNA Metanoia Prison Ministries Director from 2010 to 2023. In his new role Mark will lead our efforts to amplify the vision of increasing the number of PCA churches, furthering our missional efforts to help our churches reach their communities with the gospel.

On January 1, 2024, Teaching Elder Lowell Ivey began serving as MNA's Metanoia Prison Ministries Director. Lowell Ivey served over 15 years in prison, where he was set free by the Gospel of Jesus Christ. After his release in 2009, he was warmly welcomed into the fellowship of a small Presbyterian church in Longview, Texas. There he met his wife, Mae, whom he married in 2011. He attended Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary with the dream of serving in full-time prison ministry as an ordained minister. After graduating from seminary in 2015, he served a yearlong internship and felt the Lord was calling him into pastoral ministry. He served as pastor of Reformation Presbyterian Church in Virginia Beach, Virginia prior to joining MNA. Lowell and Mae have been blessed with five children.

### **MNA Resources for Church Planting & Vitality:**

MNA continues to be committed to pursuing a heart for gospel impact through the PCA in every region, community, and people group of North America. We long for the Spirit to continue the good work of MNA and are excited to press forward in that direction. For the detail of MNA Ministries, services and resources available for church planting and vitality visit: [www.pcamna.org](http://www.pcamna.org).

For the list of PCA church planters placed on the field in 2023, see attachment 1.

### **How Can You Be a Part of This Vision?**

1. **Pray.** We invite every church, presbytery, committee, and agency to join us in concerted prayer that the Lord grant us the unity, collaboration, love, sacrifice, and perseverance that's required to pursue this vision.
2. **Give.** The programs, staff, and projects required to grow to 3,000 churches will take the generosity of God's people, united in pursuit of this vision. To hear more of the vision in detail reach out to me at [iince@pcanet.org](mailto:iince@pcanet.org), or Executive Coordinator Murray Lee at [mwlee@pcanet.org](mailto:mwlee@pcanet.org). We would love to talk to you! Our budget for this vision is \$4.6M. We are inviting you to give to this good work. Please consider giving to the MNA General Fund, our ministries, and the PCA Unity Fund. To give online, go to [www.pcamna.org](http://www.pcamna.org) and select the "Give" button. You may also mail donations to: MNA, PO Box 890233, Charlotte, NC 28289-0233.
3. **Engage.** Reach out to us. Let us serve you for church vitality and planting by making use of the resources we have available for that purpose. MNA's various ministries are wonderful resources for established PCA churches and church plants. We help equip and train churches and congregants for faithful kingdom mission. We invite you to engage with MNA ministries, enabling us to come alongside you as you seek to faithfully love neighbors in Jesus' name. Visit our website home page [www.pcamna.org](http://www.pcamna.org) and select the Ministries.

**We are One Church. We have One Mission. And it will take all of us.** May Christ be glorified through our efforts! And may he bless us to be unified as we bear witness to his might and love in this world!

TE Irwyn L. Ince, Jr.  
MNA Coordinator

#### **A. MNA Stewardship and Finances: 2023 Progress Ministry Ask/Askings Giving:**

MNA was supported in 2023 by 940 churches giving \$4,561,405 and 1,809 individual donors giving \$2,593,430. MNA was supported in

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2022 by 961 churches giving \$4,381,390 and 1,823 individual donors giving \$2,219,440. MNA requests that churches give the Ministry Ask of \$28 per member, if giving on a per capita basis. If all churches gave \$28 per member, all projects would be funded without individual fundraising by project leaders.

MNA requests that churches give to all PCA Committees and Agencies at the Ministry Ask level. Because many churches do not contribute at the Ministry Ask level, MNA senior staff members seek designated support for their personal support and programs. Churches have responded generously to these additional requests for support, providing significantly greater resources for ministry. Contact MNA Executive Coordinator TE Murray Lee <mwlee@pcanet.org or 678-825-1250> or MNA Church Relations Director RE Stephen Lutz <slutz@pcanet.org or 828-242-1440> for further information on financial support for MNA.

### **B. Funding for Church Planting and Other Projects:**

- All church planters are supported by gifts designated for their particular church planting projects.
- Church planters who do not have a strong personal PCA network require a special priority for project support as we trust God for much greater ministry among the many people groups of North America. MNA strongly encourages churches to give a high priority to church planters who do not have a background in the PCA.
- Five Million Fund for Church Buildings: providing interest-free loans of up to \$100,000, this fund continues to be a helpful source for churches as they put together funding packages for their initial building programs. This is a revolving fund, supported by loan repayments, as well as by donations.

### **C. Thanksgiving Offering:** MNA is grateful to the Lord for more than \$18,245.00 given to the 2024 Thanksgiving Offering, and commends to PCA churches the opportunity to support, through the annual MNA Thanksgiving Offering, the training of men and women for leadership in ministry among the ethnic groups of our communities.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. That having reviewed the work of the MNA Coordinator during 2023 according to the General Assembly guidelines, **the MNA Committee**

- commends TE Irwyn Ince for his excellent leadership, with thanks to the Lord for the good results in MNA Ministry during 2023 and recommends his re-election as MNA Coordinator for another year.** Attachment 2 provides a complete list of MNA staff; see Attachment 3 for the list of MNA Permanent Committee members.
2. That the **Permanent Committee on Mission to North America 2024 budget, as presented through the Administrative Committee**, be approved by the General Assembly and commended to the churches for their support. (See p. 434)
  3. That the General Assembly adopts the 2023 MNA Audit.
  4. That **TE CH (COL) Keith N. Goode, USA** and **TE CH (LTC) James R. McCay, USA, Ret.**, and **RE Captain Rick Owens, USN, (Ret.)** be appointed to serve as a PCA members of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC) for the Class of 2028. **Major General Brook J. Leonard, USAF**, and **TE Capt. Paul Riley Wrigley, CHC, Ret.** be appointed to serve as PCA members of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel (PRCC) for the Class of 2027.
  5. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 5 from the Piedmont Triad Presbytery, “Adjust Piedmont Triad and Catawba Valley Presbytery Boundaries**, to restructure the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery (PTP) and Catawba Valley Presbytery (CVP) such that will extend north to Hwy 64 in Davidson County and PTP will extend south to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 4.
  6. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 12 from Catawba Presbytery, Concur with Piedmont Triad Presbytery, to “Adjust Catawba Valley and Piedmont Triad Presbytery Boundaries”**, and to likewise transfer all existing PCA churches and church plants of the aforementioned territory will come into Catawba Valley Presbytery, and that all teaching elders and churches be received after a successful theological views examination effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 5.
  7. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 8 from Covenant Presbytery, “Change Boundaries of Covenant and Mississippi Valley Presbytery**, to restructure the

boundary between The Presbytery of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbytery, transfer Choctaw 29 County, Mississippi, from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the 30 geographic bounds of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley, effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 6.

8. That the MNA Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 11 from Mississippi Valley Presbytery, “Change Boundaries of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbytery**, to restructure the boundary between The Presbytery of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbytery, transfer Choctaw County, Mississippi, from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley, effective July 1, 2024, be answered in the affirmative. See attachment 7.
9. That the MNA Committee **Recommends the General Assembly answer Overture 7 from Ascension Presbytery “Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments”** with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee. Attachment 8.

**ATTACHMENT 1****2023 CHURCH PLANTERS PLACED ON THE FIELD**

This church planter list is compiled by MNA staff through contact with the presbyteries and attempts to identify every church planter placed on the field to begin a new work during 2023. In listing these mission churches, MNA does not intend to imply that MNA had direct involvement with each and every mission church. The majority of the listed mission churches utilized MNA services; others were established solely by presbyteries or sponsoring churches. Teaching Elders assigned to a new site of a multi-congregation church are included in this list as church planters placed on the field. Some church planters listed here may have been placed in previous years but not reported at the time.

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
Central Florida	Matulia	Matt	Mt Dora FL
Hill and Plains	Ray	Dustin	Springfield MO
Mississippi Valley	Ruth	Danny	Florence MS
Ohio Valley	Shrimpton	Eric	Cincinnati OH
Pacific Northwest	Proctor	Paul	Spokane Valley WA
Providence	White	Nathan	Madison AL
Southwest Florida	St. Germain	Dony	Haines City FL
Wisconsin	Lima	James	Stephens Point WI
Wisconsin	Leatherberry	Ben	Eau Claire WI
Wisconsin	Cline	Matt	Eau Claire WI

**2023 Church Planting Apprentices**

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Last Name</b>	<b>First Name</b>	<b>Location</b>
Central Florida	Garriott	Aaron	Orange Port FL
Central Florida	Gilman	Josh	Ocala FL

**2023 MNA/Covenant/RTS Church Planter Interns**

<b>Interns</b>	<b>Mentor</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Location</b>
Jason Huang	Daniel Song	Restoration Community	St Louis MO
Lucas Mooibroek	Steve Stanton	Waypoint Church	Colorado Springs CO

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### ATTACHMENT 2 MNA STAFF MEMBERS

#### **MNA Executive Leadership**

TE Irwyn Ince	MNA Coordinator
RE Mark Casson	MNA Ministry Engagement Director
Michelle Foster	Finance and Human Resources Director
Tracy Lane-Hall	Strategic Operations Director
TE Murray Lee	MNA Executive Coordinator
TE Chris Vogel	MNA Church Planting and Vitality Coordinator

#### **MNA AAM Ministries**

TE Charles McKnight	African American Ministries Coordinator
TE Howard Brown	African American Ministries Associate Coordinator
Kellie Brown	African American Ministries Operations Director

#### **MNA Bent Tree Fellowship**

TE David Wilson	Bent Tree Fellowship Director
TE Clif Wilcox	Bent Tree Fellowship Associate Director

#### **MNA Chaplain Ministries**

TE Jim Carter	Chaplain Ministries Director
TE Charlie Dey	Chaplain Ministries Administrative Manager
TE Mack Griffith	Chaplain Ministries Associate Director/ PRCC Chief of Staff
Bekah Lawing	Chaplain Ministries Administrative Assistant
TE Don Sampson	Chaplain Ministries Associate Director, Military Chaplaincy
TE Michael Stewart	Chaplain Ministries Associate Director, Civilian Chaplaincy

#### **MNA Church Planter Assessment Center**

Jenny Dorsey	Church Planter Assessment Center Administrator
--------------	--

#### **Church Planting and Vitality**

TE Drew Bennett	Regional Church Planter Development
Stefanie Dunnington	Church Planting Administrative Assistant
TE Alan Foster	Church Planter Recruiting Director
TE Jim Hatch	Church Planter Development Director
TE Wy Plummer	Cross-Cultural Director

TE Vincent Tauriello

Coaching Specialist

### **MNA Development**

RE Stephen Lutz

Church Relations Director

Charlotte McKnight

Development Assistant

### **MNA English as a Second Language (ESL) Ministries**

Nancy Booher

English as a Second Language (ESL) Ministries Director

Don Baret

English as a Second Language (ESL) Assistant Director

Kathy Barnett

ESL Teacher Trainer

### **MNA Haitian American Ministries**

TE Dony St. Germain

Haitian American Ministries Coordinator

### **MNA Hispanic Ministries**

TE Hernando Sáenz

Hispanic Ministries Coordinator

### **MNA Cultural Intelligence**

TE Wy Plummer

Cultural Intelligence Director

Ann Powers

Cultural Intelligence Administrator

### **MNA Korean American Leadership Initiative (KALI)**

TE Owen Lee

Korean American Leadership Initiative (KALI) Coordinator

RE Alex Jun

Korean American Leadership Initiative (KALI)

Operations Director

TE Moses Lee

Korean American Leadership Initiative (KALI)

Communications Director

### **MNA Leadership and Ministry Preparation (LAMP) Ministry**

TE Brian Kelso

Leadership and Ministry Preparation (LAMP) Director

### **Metanoia Prison Ministries**

TE Lowell Ivey

Metanoia Prison Ministries Director

RE Mark Andrews

Metanoia Prison Ministries Regional Director, NC

Steven Howell

Metanoia Prison Ministries Mentor Ministry Facilitator

TE Tim McCracken

Metanoia Prison Ministries Regional Director,

Central CA

TE Paul Mille

Metanoia Prison Ministries Regional Director, North TX

Shelly Marshall

MNA Metanoia Prison Ministries



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Correspondence Course Facilitator

TE Anthony Rogers	Metanoia Prison Ministries Regional Director, SC
RE Barry Smith	Metanoia Prison Ministries Regional Director, TN
	MINTS Seminary in Prison, National Coordinator

### **MNA Ministry to State**

TE Chuck Garriott	Ministry to State Director
TE Stephen Bostrom	Ministry to State, State Capitol Minister, Montana
TE Jonathan Craig	Ministry to State, State Capitol Minister, Florida
Carlos Dimas	Ministry to State Ministry Associate for Latin American Embassies
Cory Dimas	Ministry to State Women's Ministry Associate for Latin American Embassies
TE David Durant	Ministry to State Operations Director
TE Del Farris	Ministry to State State Capitol Minister, Colorado
TE John Hanna	Ministry to State State Capitol Minister, New Jersey
TE Nathan Newman	Ministry to State Ministry to Members of Congress
Adam Smith	Ministry to State Intern
William Stockdale	Ministry to State Ministry Associate
TE Darin Stone	Ministry to State, State Capitol Minister, North Carolina
TE Ron Zeigler	Ministry to State, State Capitol Minister, Pennsylvania

### **MNA Disaster Response**

RE Arklie Hooten	Disaster Response Director
Lauren Ammons	Disaster Response Administrative Assistant, Volunteer Scheduling
RE Mark Becker	Disaster Response Specialist, South Central Region
DE Andy Eisenbraun	Disaster Response Specialist, Midwest
Lisa Hellier	Disaster Response Administrative Assistant
DE Marty Huddleston,	Disaster Response Specialist, Logistics
TE Steve Jessen	Disaster Response Specialist, The Carolinas
RE Mike Kenamer	Disaster Response Specialist, TAG and Warehouse Manager
Sherry Lanier	Disaster Response Facilitator
DE Rick Lenz,	Disaster Response Associate Specialist, South Central
DE Keith Perry	Disaster Response Specialist, Florida
RE Evan Scroggs	Disaster Response Specialist, Gulf Coast Region
DE Mark Willett	Disaster Response Specialist, Mid-Atlantic Region

**MNA Korean Ministries**

TE Bill Sim

Korean Ministries Coordinator

**MNA Media**

Don Baret

Media Producer

**MNA Mercy Ministries**

Robert Blevins

Mercy Ministries Ministry Director

**MNA Midwest Alliance**

TE Ted Powers, Coordinator

**MNA SecondCareer**

RE Arklie Hooten

SecondCareer Acting Director

Sherry Lanier

SecondCareer Acting Facilitator

RE Patrick Maddox

SecondCareer Regional Specialist, Mid-Atlantic

RE Gregg Noll

SecondCareer RV Specialist

**MNA ShortTerm Missions**

RE Arklie Hooten

ShortTerm Missions Director

Sherry Lanier

ShortTerm Missions Facilitator

TE Curt Moore

ShortTerm Missions Specialist

**MNA Support Staff**

Piper Carmichael

Donor Services Specialist

Heather Dussack

Database Facilitator

Stephanie Glander

Accounting Services Manager

Dee Ann Hickman

Accounting Operations Senior Manager

Martina Kendall

Donor Services Specialist

Summer Rojas

Event Planner

Themerace Tyson

Donor Services Manager

**MNA Network of Portuguese Speaking Churches**

TE Renato Bernardes Network of Portuguese Speaking Churches Coordinator

TE Darcy Caires

Network of Portuguese Speaking Churches

Associate Coordinator

**MNA Native American and First Nations Ministry**

RE Jeb Bland

Native American/First Nations Ministries Coordinator

TE Josh Charette

Rocky Mountain Native American Ministries Director

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE Chris Granberry Northwest Native American Ministries Advisor

**MNA Refugee and Immigrant Ministry**

Pat Hatch Refugee and Immigrant Ministry Director

Osman Jama Refugee and Immigrant Ministry,  
Church Engagement Specialist

Leslie Johnson Refugee and Immigrant Ministry, Cross-Cultural Specialist

Sarah Kalichman Refugee and Immigrant Ministry, Refugee Children's  
Ministry Specialist

**The PCA Unity Fund Committee**

TE Scott Bridges The PCA Unity Fund Committee  
Development Coordinator

Zakiya Ince The PCA Unity Fund Assistant

**ATTACHMENT 3**  
**MNA COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

TE Hansoo Jin, Chairman  
RE Tim Threadgill Vice-Chairman  
RE Jason Kang, Secretary

RE Brent Andersen  
TE Roland Barnes  
TE Hunter Brewer  
RE Julian Battle  
TE Jeremy Byrd  
TE Lyle Caswell  
RE Brett Doster  
TE Dean Faulkner  
RE Keith Goben  
RE Lance Kinzer  
TE Bob Penny  
RE Ernie Shipman  
RE Jim Suttles  
TE Bob Willetts

ATTACHMENT 4

**OVERTURE 5** from Piedmont Triad Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Adjust Piedmont Triad and Catawba Valley Presbytery Boundaries”

Whereas, a presbytery composed of Churches with similar geographic and ministry contexts can lead to more efficient oversight, cooperation, and connection between particular congregations in the presbytery; and

Whereas, fostering a sense of connectionalism and cooperation of churches, teaching elders, and ruling elders beyond the local congregation is a hallmark of historic Presbyterianism; and

Whereas, *the Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries*, as adopted by the 26th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, include “regional cohesiveness,” “member churches hav[ing] a potential for shared ministries,” and “member churches hav[ing] a common commitment to the region,” and

Whereas, the ministry context of Meadowview is in a rural small-town setting which is made up of multi-generational families since the founding of the Church.

Whereas, Piedmont Triad Presbytery is primarily made up of Churches along the I-40 Corridor between the cities of Winston-Salem and Greensboro and their surrounding suburbs, making MRPC the only Church in PTP that is in a rural and small town setting.

Whereas, Meadowview in Lexington, NC has demographic, historic, cultural, and economic affinity with many of the Churches in Catawba Valley Presbytery.

Whereas, MRPC sits on the southwest corner and edge of Piedmont Triad Presbytery and the next town over is in Catawba Valley Presbytery.



## APPENDIX J

Whereas, MRPC has interest in planting churches south of them including in Salisbury, NC, which is in Catawba Valley Presbytery

Whereas, the current Membership in each Presbytery is as follows:

### Piedmont Triad Presbytery Churches & Ministries - CURRENT

1. Christ Church Greensboro, 414 N. Church St, Greensboro, NC 27401
2. Covenant Grace Church, 4747 Lake Brandt Rd, Greensboro, NC 27455
3. Friendly Hills Church, 1450 Guilford College Road, Jamestown, NC 27282
4. Grace Presbyterian Church Kernersville, 360 Hopkins Rd, Kernersville, NC 27284
5. Great Commission Church, 1450 Guilford College Road, Jamestown, NC 27282
6. Hope Presbyterian Church, 2050 N Peace Haven Rd, Winston-Salem, NC 27106
7. Immanuel (mission church), 155 W. Westwood Ave, High Point, NC 27262
8. New Hope Presbyterian Church, 3540 Clemmons Rd, Clemmons, NC 27012
9. Northside Presbyterian Church, 1805 Vaughn Rd, Burlington, NC 27217
10. Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 1046 Miller St, Winston-Salem, NC 27103
11. Salem Presbyterian Church, 600 Holly Ave, Winston-Salem, NC 27101
12. Soma Valley, 819 Williams Rd, Lewisville, NC 27023
13. Summer Oaks Church, 2315 Scalesville Rd., Summerfield, NC 27358
14. Trinity Church, 4555 Shattalon Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27106
15. RUF Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, NC
16. RUF Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC
17. \*Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church, 1 Graceway Dr., Lexington, NC 27295

\*Meadowview PCA would be the only church to move to Catawba Valley Presbytery with this boundary change.

### Catawba Valley Presbytery Churches & Ministries - CURRENT

1. Back Creek Presbyterian Church, 2145 Back Creek Church Road, Mount Ulla, NC 28125
2. Christ Church at Rivers Edge, 901 East Catawba Avenue, Belmont, NC 28012-0821
3. First Presbyterian Church, 512 Old Mt. Holly Road, Stanley, NC 28164
4. Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, 3710 North Center Street, Hickory, NC 28601
5. Goshen Presbyterian Church, 380 Woodlawn Avenue, Belmont, NC 28012-2138
6. Grace Church, 2007 Stallings Road, Harrisburg, NC 28075
7. Lakeshore Church PCA, 8083 Hope Drive, Denver, NC 28037
8. Harbor Church PCA, P.O. Box 4025, Mooresville, NC 28117
9. Harvest Church, 710 Lithia Inn Road, Lincolnton, NC 28092-8786
10. Prosperity Presbyterian Church, 5533 Prosperity Church Road, Charlotte, NC 28269
11. New Hope Presbyterian Church, 602 Stevens Street, China Grove, NC 28023
12. NorthCross Church, 11020 – H Bailey Road, PO Box 2275, Cornelius, NC 28031



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 1 13. Providence Presbyterian Church, 246 Branchview Drive NC,
- 2 Concord, NC 28025
- 3 14. Shearer Presbyterian Church, 684 Presbyterian Road, Mooresville, NC 28115
- 4 15. SouthLake Church PCA, 13820 Hagers Ferry Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
- 5 16. StoneBridge Church Community, 3700 Prosperity Church Road,
- 6 Charlotte, NC 28269
- 7 17. RUF – Davidson College, Davidson, NC

8  
9 **Whereas**, PTP will still meet the numeric “Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries” in that  
10 upon MRPC joining with CVP there will be in PTP:  
11 -over 10 Churches and Mission Churches (14 Total = 13 churches and 1 mission  
12 church)  
13 -a total communicate membership of over 1000 (1810)  
14 -at least 3 churches with membership over 125 (4 Churches > 125, 2 Churches 100-  
15 125)

16  
17 **Whereas**, Catawba Valley Presbytery expressed support for Meadowview to pursue this  
18 boundary move at their September 23<sup>rd</sup> Stated meeting as reflected in their minutes  
19 as follows:

20 *“It was moved and seconded that by unanimous voice vote, CVP encouraged the*  
21 *Session of Meadowview to pursue this overture.”*

22 (Minutes of the Catawba Valley Presbytery Stated Meeting, 9/23/23)

23  
24 **Whereas**, if the southern boundary in Davidson County were moved to Hwy 64, only  
25 Meadowview Presbyterian Church would be affected.  
26  
27



## APPENDIX J

Whereas, the current and future maps of the Presbyteries in North Carolina will be:

### Current NC Presbytery Boundaries



### New NC Presbytery Boundaries



Now therefore be it resolved, that the Presbytery of Piedmont Triad Presbytery Overture the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to restructure the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery (PTP) and Catawba Valley Presbytery (CVP) such that CVP will extend North to Hwy 64 in Davidson County and PTP will extend South to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, effective July 1, 2024.

*Adopted by Piedmont Triad Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 11, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Ethan Smith, stated clerk*



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

ATTACHMENT 5

**OVERTURE 12** from Catawba Valley Presbytery (to MNA)

“Adjust Catawba Valley and Piedmont Triad Presbytery Boundaries”

**Whereas**, a presbytery composed of Churches with similar geographic and ministry contexts can lead to more efficient oversight, cooperation, and connection between particular congregations in the presbytery; and

**Whereas**, fostering a sense of connectionalism and cooperation of churches, teaching elders, and ruling elders beyond the local congregation is a hallmark of historic Presbyterianism; and

**Whereas**, *the Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries*, as adopted by the 26th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, include “regional cohesiveness,” “member churches hav[ing] a potential for shared ministries,” and “member churches hav[ing] a common commitment to the region;” and

**Whereas**, Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church in Lexington, NC, has demographic, historic, cultural, and economic affinity with many of the Churches in Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church sits on the southwest corner and edge of Piedmont Triad Presbytery and the next town over is in Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church has interest in planting churches south of them including in Salisbury, NC, which is in Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Piedmont Triad Presbytery passed an Overture at their November 11, 2023 Stated Meeting to move the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery and Catawba Valley Presbytery, thereby moving Meadowview into the bounds of Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Piedmont Triad Presbytery’s Overture to the 2024 General Assembly outlines the Churches in both presbyteries, the maps reflecting this change; and

**Whereas**, Piedmont Triad Presbytery’s Overture to the 2024 General Assembly highlights that Piedmont Triad Presbytery will still meet the numeric “Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries” adopted by the 26<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

**Now therefore be it resolved**, that Catawba Valley Presbytery Overtures the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to restructure the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery and Catawba Valley Presbytery such that Catawba Valley Presbytery will extend North to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, NC, and Piedmont Triad Presbytery will extend South to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, NC, effective July 1, 2024; and that all existing PCA churches and church plants of the aforementioned territory will come into the Catawba

## APPENDIX J

1           Valley Presbytery, and that all teaching elders and churches be received following a  
2           successful theological views examination, effective July 1, 2024.

3

4   *Adopted by Catawba Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting January 27, 2024*

5   *Attested by /s/ TE Scott Deneen, stated clerk*

**ATTACHMENT 6**

**OVERTURE 8** from Covenant Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Change Boundaries of Covenant and Mississippi Valley Presbyteries”

**Whereas**, the geographic center of Covenant Presbytery has shifted significantly north and west in recent years as evidenced by the frequency of stated meetings in the Memphis area and parts of Arkansas; and

**Whereas**, Choctaw, the county in Mississippi where Old Lebanon (the only PCA church in the county) is located, is on the southernmost border of Covenant Presbytery and borders The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley on its southern and its western border; and

**Whereas**, the Session of Old Lebanon wants to have a more regular participation in the stated meetings of Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, the Session of Old Lebanon finds this participation difficult due to the locations where many of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery are held; and

**Whereas**, the locations of the stated meetings of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley are usually closer to Ackerman, MS, and often significantly so, than the locations of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Covenant Presbytery has in the past acted in similar situations to allow the transfer of churches in Winona, MS; Columbia, TN; Fayetteville, AR; Charleston, AR; and Stamps, AR, to presbyteries adjacent to Covenant Presbytery, and to receive a PCA mission in Joplin, MO, into Covenant Presbytery from an adjacent presbytery;

**Therefore be it resolved**, that Covenant Presbytery, with the agreement of the Session of Old Lebanon Presbyterian Church, Ackerman, MS, overtures the 2024 General Assembly to transfer Choctaw County in Mississippi from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the geographic bounds of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.

*Adopted by Covenant Presbytery at its 159<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting, October 3, 2023.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Robert Browning, Stated Clerk of Covenant Presbytery*

ATTACHMENT 7

**OVERTURE 11** from Mississippi Valley Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Change Boundaries of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbyteries”

**Whereas** the geographic center of Covenant Presbytery has shifted significantly north and west in recent years as evidenced by the frequency of stated meetings in the Memphis area and parts of Arkansas; and

**Whereas** Choctaw, the county in Mississippi where Old Lebanon (the only PCA church in the county) is located, is on the southernmost border of Covenant Presbytery and borders The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley on its southern and its western border; and

**Whereas** the Session of Old Lebanon wants to have a more regular participation in the stated meetings of Presbytery; and

**Whereas** the Session of Old Lebanon finds this participation difficult due to the locations where many of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery are held; and

**Whereas** the locations of the stated meetings of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley are usually closer to Ackerman, MS, and often significantly so, than the locations of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery; and

**Whereas** The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley has in the past acted in similar situations to receive churches in Winona, MS; Delhi, LA; and Ruston, LA, from adjacent presbyteries;

**Therefore, be it resolved,** The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley joins with Covenant Presbytery (and with the agreement of the Session of Old Lebanon Presbyterian Church, Ackerman, MS) to overture the 2024 General Assembly to transfer Choctaw County, Mississippi, from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.

*Adopted by Mississippi Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, Nov 7, 2023*

*Attested by TE Chris Wright, stated clerk*



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### ATTACHMENT 8

Overture 7, from Ascension Presbytery

**OVERTURE 7** from Ascension Presbytery (to CCB, OC, AC, CC, CDM,  
"Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process CTS, GEN, MNA, MTW,  
for RAO Amendments" PCAF, RH, RUF)

Whereas, as *RAO* 11-5 is difficult to follow; and

Whereas, it appears to some that *RAO* 11-5 is internally inconsistent. The first sentence requires all overtures proposing amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the Overtures Committee. This indicates that all overtures proposing changes to the *RAO* fall within the jurisdiction of the Overtures Committee. The third sentence of 11-5, however, says that any overture "having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency" shall be referred to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency, unless the overture proposes an amendment to the Constitution (which does not include the *RAO*); and

Whereas, *RAO* 12-1 and 15-1 state that the Overtures Committee is to consider and make recommendations on all overtures proposing amendment to the Constitution and all other overtures referred by the Stated Clerk; and

Whereas, at the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, there was debate regarding whether an overture proposing an *RAO* change that would impact permanent Committees and Agencies should be referred by the Stated Clerk to the Overtures Committee or to the relevant permanent Committees and Agencies; and,

Whereas, the permanent Committees and Agencies, and from them, the relevant Committees of Commissioners, have the expertise necessary to speak to the impact of a proposed change to the *RAO* that touches on the nature or responsibilities of the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies); and

Whereas, the Overtures Committee has the authority to perfect proposed amendments in ways that are not available to Committees of Commissioners; and

Whereas, any minority of the Overtures Committee (*RAO* 15-6.s) has the right to bring a minority report, encompassing a different answer to the overture, to the Assembly, which minority report can allow for floor debate on the substance of a proposal in a way that is not available for a recommendation coming from a Committee of Commissioners; and

Whereas, the members of the Overtures Committee should hear from affected committees or agencies before finalizing recommendations on *RAO* changes that impact those committees or agencies; and

Whereas, the members of the permanent Committees and Agencies, the Committees of Commissioners, and the staff of the permanent Committees and Agencies may speak

## APPENDIX J

### Overture 7, from Ascension Presbytery

on the floor of General Assembly, and thus can express agreement or disagreement with any recommendation from the Overtures Committee, including presenting argumentation that the recommendation of the Overtures Committee not be adopted (RAO 15-8.e); and

Whereas, having recommendations from multiple committees may lead to incompatible recommendations, as well as debate as to which Committee's recommendation is to take precedence, as was seen at the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Presbytery of the Ascension hereby overtures the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to amend RAO 11-5 by deleting the entirety of the current RAO 11-5 and replacing it with the following:

- 11-5. All overtures shall be published in the *Commissioner Handbook* with reference for consideration indicated. The Stated Clerk shall refer overtures as follows. The Stated Clerk's referral shall be final unless redirected by a vote of the General Assembly.
- a. All overtures requesting amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* shall be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the relevant Committee(s) as listed below.
  - b. All overtures proposing amendment to the Constitution shall be referred to the Overtures Committee. The Stated Clerk may also refer such overtures to other Committees of Commissioners, other permanent Committees or Agencies, or other ad interim or special committees for advice only to the Overtures Committee.
  - c. All overtures proposing amendment to the *Rules of Assembly Operations* having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred to the Overtures Committee and to the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) that would be impacted by the proposed change. In such cases the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) and the relevant Committee(s) of Commissioners shall be given the opportunity to meet with the Overtures Committee to share their proposed response(s). Such opportunity shall occur at a mutually convenient time or at the beginning of the Overtures Committee's Tuesday afternoon session. The General Assembly shall act on the overture on the basis of the recommendation of the Overtures Committee, recognizing that the members of the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) and the relevant Committee(s) of Commissioners will be able to enter into floor debate on that recommendation.
  - d. Any other overture having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency, ad interim committee, or special committee.
  - e. All overtures concerning presbytery boundaries or the formation of a new presbytery shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the permanent Committee on Mission to North America.

## **SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

The Committee on Mission to North America submits the following Recommendations 10-13 as a Supplemental Report to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly:

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

10. That the Permanent MNA Committee recommend to the Overtures Committee that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer **Overture 31** from New River Presbytery, "Amend BCO 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy," to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it. (**Attachment 1**)
11. That the Permanent MNA Committee recommend to the Overtures Committee that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly refer **Overture 32** from Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery, "Amend BCO 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency," to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly in order to give all the Committees and Agencies time to consider it. (**Attachment 2**)
12. That the MNA Permanent Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 34** from Columbus Metro Presbytery, "Merge Columbus Metro Presbytery and Ohio Valley Presbytery, be answered in the affirmative with concurrence of Ohio Valley Presbytery, with an effective date of July 1, 2024. (**Attachment 3**)
13. That the MNA Permanent Committee recommends to the General Assembly that **Overture 35** from Ohio Valley Presbytery, "Merge Ohio Valley and Columbus Metro Presbyteries" Concur with Overture 34, be answered in the affirmative, with an effective date of July 1, 2024. (**Attachment 4**)

## APPENDIX K

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO THE WORLD TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

- Vision:** *The gospel of the kingdom advancing throughout the world*  
We want the gospel to spread throughout the world, the Church to grow, Satan's kingdom destroyed, and Christ's reign extended to the ends of the earth.
- Mission:** *Making disciples among all nations*  
We are called to be obedient to the Great Commission by teaching people to follow Jesus as Lord and Savior, to be baptized, and to obey all that Jesus commands.
- Values:**
- *Church*  
The establishment, growth, and maturity of the Church in all our ministry efforts.
  - *Grace-based*  
Community life and ministry shaped by God's grace for us in His Son, Jesus Christ.
  - *Reformed and Covenantal*  
A ministry that is guided, inspired, and shaped by our theology.
  - *Mercy, Justice, and the Love of God*  
A love for God that is demonstrated through acts of mercy and justice.

This past year can be described as a year of rebuilding. While things are not quite like they were before COVID-19, we have been able to establish new norms and rhythms. We are grateful for the Lord's kindness and faithfulness to us as we seek to be faithful to His Great Commission.

One crucial aspect to rebuilding is ensuring we have faithful leaders. To that end in November 2023, we held the Praxis Leadership Conference in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, with all our field leaders across the globe. Bryan Brown, our guest speaker, introduced us to the Lead, Develop, Care model of



leadership. This was well received. For 11 months, our leaders (missionary and staff) will be mentored and trained in the Lead, Develop, Care model. We believe investing in our leaders' growth and development is the most effective way to ensure healthy reproducing teams. Please pray for these training meetings and for the growth and development of our leaders.

Preceding our Praxis Leadership Conference in November, we held our first MTW Missiology Consultation in Kuala Lumpur. We asked our missionaries to submit papers on various missiological topics. The papers and seminars were well done and stimulated healthy, helpful discussions over many topics. We are grateful for all who participated. Please pray that we will continue to sharpen one another in our Great Commission calling.

As we continue to look toward our 2030 goals of 63 new countries engaged, 192 new cities engaged, 486 church plants, 29 new campus ministries, 38 new unreached people groups, and 212 new church planting support ministries, we realize that we need more leaders, particularly elders. Please pray for God to raise up more laborers for His harvest fields, specifically elders to help lead our church planting teams.

This past year, I was able to take a three-month sabbatical. I am so grateful for all who put in the extra work to allow me time to reflect, be refreshed, and renewed. I would like to thank the Committee on Mission to the World for valuing longevity in ministry and granting this sabbatical.

One of the key things I learned from this sabbatical was that I am a different person when I am well rested. When I am nearing burnout, I tend to withdraw from people, am more sensitive to criticism, and often feel depressed. When I am well rested, I change from being introverted to being extroverted. I seek out opportunities to connect with people, seek to share the gospel with others, and I find myself laughing and smiling a lot more. Coming back to work, I realize that I need to build in times of rest and pay attention to the tell-tale signs of burnout.

Did this sabbatical accomplish what was intended? I believe it did. I am now more committed and excited about what God can do through MTW for His kingdom. Please pray that all of our MTW staff and missionaries find rest, refreshment, and renewal in the Lord.

Lloyd Kim, Coordinator

## 2023 GLOBAL MINISTRY HIGHLIGHTS

### ASIA-PACIFIC

**Interns** — “‘Ma-kun? Is that you?’ International Director and former intern, Jonathan I.\*, said to a newcomer after church on Sunday. ‘Long time no see, Jonathan!’” When Jonathan graduated from high school in 1997, he came back to Japan on a gap year to work with MTW’s college ministry on the campus of Chiba University. Ma-kun was one of the regulars at Impact House, the intern house located close to campus where the team would host events and outreaches. Jonathan had not seen him in nearly 30 years, but was thrilled to learn that he had been visiting the church off and on for all those years, still seeking answers to his questions. Internships remain a vital part of church planting ministry in many places throughout Asia-Pacific as they are not only the top of the funnel for training future missionaries and Christian workers, but they help cast a net wide for evangelism and outreach.

2023 has been a year of recovering from the previous two, almost three years of very little short-term activity in Asia-Pacific. With many Asian countries restricting access, limiting visas, and locking down their borders in recent years, 2023 opened a floodgate of visitors to the region. MTW Asia-Pacific started receiving vision trips, summer interns, and 11-month interns once again. We had 19 summer interns serving on six different teams around the region. We have partnered with Reformed University Fellowship in a few locations to offer new opportunities for American college students to be mentored by MTW missionaries as they do outreach with national college students. Most of our teams are eager to build their internship opportunities in 2024 and consider these to be vital for the ministry. Please pray for our PCA churches to send many more interns in 2024. Also, pray that the Lord uses their service to advance the cause of Christ in the nations, encourage our long-term missionaries, and commit to a lifetime of missionary service.

**Leaders** — “In 30 years of serving with MTW, this was the best training I’ve ever received,” said one veteran MTW missionary after November’s Leadership Praxis Conference. That was a very common assessment of the new leader training model which MTW has begun to use to help our missionaries grow as leaders. In Asia-Pacific we recognize that if we want a

flourishing missionary force, we really need a thriving leadership community and so we are investing more and more into training, assessing, and coaching our leaders and equipping them to be more effective and healthy leaders. In 2023 we approved two new team leaders for Asia-Pacific and we are hoping to assess two more in 2024. For MTW Asia-Pacific, our teams are the key strategic component to advance our ministries, and the team leader is a critical role for helping teams accomplish their mission. Please pray for the Lord to use our continued investment in our leaders to grow us all as humble, dependent, and grace-filled leaders who can be used by God in this great endeavor. Please pray that the Lord would raise up more leaders in Asia-Pacific who will help us plant more churches, train more national leaders, and reach more of the unreached with the good news of the gospel of Jesus.

## EUROPE

**Europe-Specific Church Planting Training Program** — For several years our field personnel have asked for additional training in church planting methodology, informed by our Reformed theological perspective and applicable to our European context. In October we were able to launch the first church planting training cohort. Participants met for three days in Athens, Greece, for times of instruction in the morning and interviews with Greek national church planters in the afternoons. Each month the group now meets via Zoom to discuss topics such as “Tackling Social Justice Issues,” “Evangelistic Worship,” “Theology of Faith and Work,” “Difficult Conversations,” “Cultural Apologetics and Evangelism,” and “Developing Leaders.” A second three-day intensive will be held in March in Edinburgh, Scotland, for more in-person training and experiencing church planting principles in practice in the Scottish context.

This initiative, spearheaded by International Director David Stoddard and national partner Sashko Nezamutdinov, has generated much excitement, with over 20 people committed to this round of training. The hope is to repeat this training annually, allowing opportunity for all our Europe personnel to participate at some point in their career with MTW. Please pray that this initiative will become a useful tool that will result in the gospel of the kingdom advancing throughout Europe.

**New Church Plants** — This year we rejoiced at the launching of three new church plants in Europe:

- MTW personnel launched Hope International Church in Brussels, Belgium, at the beginning of March. Attendees have included core group members, new arrivals to the city, non-believers who responded to invitations, and some who are excited to hear of a Presbyterian church in Brussels.
- Andrew and Laura Kate Lupton along with Jonas and Pattie Stava launched Grace International Church in Oslo, Norway, at the end of March. By the end of August the church had grown to 50 regular attenders, and the fledgling congregation was able to move from meeting in a home to meeting in a large space owned by the former state Lutheran church. The congregation represents over 17 nationalities, and 20% of the group are unchurched seekers.
- John and Ellen Buerger deployed to Lisbon, Portugal, in January 2023. By October they had a group meeting in their home for worship, and by December they reported an average attendance of 25 people, with services alternating between meeting for worship in their apartment and a church space they rent twice per month.

We rejoice with our fellow co-laborers and pray that the LORD will grow their fledgling congregations!

**Update on the War in Ukraine** — The Russian invasion of Ukraine is in its third year—much longer than anyone anticipated. MTW Europe is greatly encouraged by the partnership and support received from churches and individuals, which have allowed us to come alongside the Ukrainian Church and supply aid, security, and most of all encouragement in the gospel. Because of the generous gifts and prayers, the Church in Ukraine does not feel alone in the war. The following statistics provide a glimpse of how aid has been used:

Ukraine by the numbers (as of December 20, 2023):

- Zero requests denied because of lack of funding.
- Five nights of uninterrupted missile-free sleep in Kyiv over the past month.
- 45 pastors gathered at a meeting in Kyiv in the fall of 2023 despite the war.
- 664 days since the full-scale invasion of Ukraine.
- Approximately 3,275 crates of humanitarian aid packed and sent by the American church since summer 2022.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- \$4,000,000 dollar value of aid sent and distributed by the Ukrainian Church since summer 2022.
- *All* the churches in Ukraine are still open and worshipping despite the war.

While the war rages on, the needs of our brothers and sisters in Christ continue to grow. Your support allows us the ability to help.

### SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA

**International Director** — The year brought many travel opportunities for International Director Victor Nakah, including trips to the U.S. for the spring CMTW meeting, General Assembly, speaking at the East Coast Missions Conference, and meeting with churches to share about the ongoing work in sub-Saharan Africa. He helped plan and lead the Missiology Consultation in November. Several leaders from the region were able to attend it as well as the Leadership Praxis Conference. They will continue learning how to implement the Lead, Develop, Care model as they participate in cohorts that were formed after the conference.

The goal remains to be a region that plants healthy churches who then establish healthy presbyteries across sub-Saharan Africa. Strategic support ministries that help fuel church planting, including campus and mercy ministries, have been successful in the three regions. It has been encouraging to see more missionaries join the region in 2023, with more anticipated in 2024.

**Member Care** — Dan and Janet McBride, member care coordinators for sub-Saharan Africa, along with their team assisted with member care concerns across the three regions of West Africa, East Africa, and Southern Africa. They also attend monthly member care meetings with the global Member Care team around the world and traveled to meet with individual missionaries. In July, at the Refresh Conference, they met in their member care role with workers from Africa and Asia. When Dan was at the Praxis Leadership Conference in Malaysia, he conducted member care check-in meetings with workers from West Africa and Ethiopia. Dan completed the Peace Pursuit Coaching/Mediator training in 2023 qualifying him to help MTW workers with conflict resolution.

**West Africa** — Jim W.\*, continued his second year as regional director for West Africa, spending nine months in the U.S. on HMA visiting PCA

churches, recruiting missionaries for the region, and raising funds for the Timothy House training programs and the Teranga Village Girl's Home project. Timothy House pastoral training programs continued to develop in Senegal, Gambia, Guinea Bissau, and a fourth sensitive location. The program in the sensitive location moved into a new facility and became residential in 2023. Along with this, an offshoot training program for fleeing refugee pastors was started in another local language, and agricultural training through Equipping Farmers International provided food relief and improved church witness.

Donnie and Kara W.\*, together with their partnering church planter, celebrated the one-year anniversary of their church plant in an unreached Wolof community. Donnie passed leadership assessment for team leader in Senegal and will transition into that role in 2024. Collin and Zury J.\* continue their work with RUF Global on Senegal's largest university campus and have begun working with the church in the Gambia toward a 2024 start-up of a second RUF Global ministry in the region.

The first two new ruling elders in 20 years were ordained in the Presbyterian Church of Sierra Leone (since civil war and Ebola), and the presbytery became fully functioning, and pastoral training efforts have continued.

Keith and Debbie K.\* have returned to the U.S. (for medical reasons) where they continue to provide curriculum translation and MINTS program support for the region.

**East Africa** — Frank Sindler, East Africa regional director, made several trips to the region this year to continue to establish relationships with teams on the ground. The region formed PREACH (Presbyterian Reformed East Africa Council with the Horn) to help resource ministry in these areas. The board was formed and has selected officers. Their first meeting was held in Addis Ababa in August. The second meeting will be in Colorado Springs at Village Seven Presbyterian Church in May. Five projects were adopted by PREACH to assist in their funding, with one completed by end of the year through the assistance of PREACH.

New missionaries have begun to look at joining work in the region. John and Rachel Clifford are hoping to move to Kigali, Rwanda, in 2024 to oversee the sub-Saharan Africa internship program and facilitate church planting. Clement

Tendo completed Readiness Evaluation and Orientation. The region is working on his placement. Two other couples have also decided to join work in the region. The first RUF Global ministry in East Africa was launched at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda. Its first meeting had over 120 students registering for the event. Other campus startups are being considered. Edgewood Ministries has been engaged to help mentor campus ministers and assist in their startups.

The agricultural program launched under MTW grew to work in over 36 countries during the year with expansion into many African countries as well as South America and Asia. A decision was made that due to the size of the program a new organization needed to be formed to adequately manage it. Equipping Farmers International (EFI) was set up as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, formed its board of directors, and hired an international staff of 18 people. The work continues to grow with a projected scope of working in 48 countries by the end of 2024. EFI now has an applied technical water program and agribusiness team in addition to the conservation agriculture programs. U.S. staff who move to overseas fields with EFI will continue to be mobilized and employed through MTW. We expect to also field many more people in collaboration with other organizations. The program is having a significant impact in creating local income for churches and ministries in the global south to allow them local financial sustainability.

Frank Sindler will become full time director for EFI in 2024. We hope to have a new regional director for East Africa soon.

**Southern Africa** — MTW's support for church planting and presbytery development grew in 2023. The region sponsored the Southern Africa Reformed Presbyterian Leadership Conference in April. The goal is to help young presbyteries to gain a deeper understanding of and commitment to presbyterian ecclesiology and polity that will ultimately lead to stronger and healthier churches. Attendees included about 50 teaching elders, ruling elders, interns, and a few key women leaders from our network of Reformed Presbyterian churches in South Africa, Zimbabwe, and Malawi. In Malawi, under the leadership of Confex Makhallira, his church planting internship program received four new interns. Three existing interns continued their development, and one returned from seminary studies in the U.S. and is studying for ordination and preparing to plant a church in Blantyre. Two other interns will return from the U.S. in 2024 and will pursue a similar path.

In Zimbabwe we helped facilitate a three-day preaching workshop for church leaders and Coby McGinty was instrumental in spearheading efforts to establish an RUF ministry in Bulawayo under the leadership of a national partner, commencing in 2025. With fundraising assistance from Southern Africa Reformed Mission, the South Africa presbytery was enabled to train two church planting interns who will each plant churches in 2024. The equipping of the church in Southern Africa to care for its members was enhanced through the expansion of Biblical Counseling Africa with strong leadership assistance from Pamela McGinty. A growing number of students enrolled, preparing to be lay counselors through their local churches. Hunter and Laura Quinn joined the South Africa team in August to assist the South Africa presbytery with university ministry. After about 18 fruitful years with MTW, Bryan McReynolds accepted a pastoral staff position at Trinity Presbyterian Church (PCA) in Charlottesville, Virginia. His wife, Rebe, is serving as an elementary teacher at a classical Christian school. We are very grateful for their faithful service over these many years.

## AMERICAS

**Central America, El Salvador/Costa Rica** — Rodney and Jana Davila are excited to see the culmination of much prayer and financial support as they launch a new ministry in El Salvador. Beginning a new ministry from the ground up is both challenging and intimidating, but they are encouraged as God has already brought several men into their circle who seem interested in the distinctions of the Reformed faith.

The Davilas also remain involved in ministry on their former field of Costa Rica, where they are encouraged to see national partners Edgar and Miguel advance to the point of planning for their installation as pastors. Two other young men, Alan and David, are beginning theological studies with a seminary in Costa Rica that has a new Reformed track. This has, in turn, opened the opportunity for MTW to provide professors in the seminary's Reformed program.

**Panama** — The past few months have seen wonderful spiritual growth in the church family of Comunidad de Cristo Presbyterian Church in Panama City. Although members are few, the church has had a vision to reach the native people in the Darien jungle and has hired a native pastor, Luciano, to invest



directly in a community as a missionary extension of the church. Additionally, missionaries Ross and Angela Floyd have begun inviting intermediate-level English speakers to their apartment as part of an English Conversation group that will, Lord willing, develop into an ESL outreach that invites beginners to participate. The church is also looking to start a small group for young adults in the community as it is located between various university campuses.

Comunidad de Cristo, alongside a Brazilian-planted Presbyterian church, is working to ensure the city has a firm church foundation in the Reformed tradition. Along that line, they have begun meeting as church leaders to develop a vision to establish a General Assembly for the first Presbyterian denomination in Panama.

## **GLOBAL MUSLIM MINISTRY**

This year has seen an almost unprecedented focus on the Middle East with the war between Israel and Hamas and the escalating conflict in Yemen, not to mention the exchange of attacks in Iran, Pakistan, and Iraq. Though many of these conflicts have been smoldering for years and have decades of history behind them, there are other ongoing conflicts in Syria and northern Iraq. Unfortunately, not all press is good press. There continues to be a fear of this demographic because of the news coverage and the impression it gives to those in the pews. Despite this, our field workers are persevering through these challenges and seeing wonderful opportunities for sharing the hope they have. The love of Jesus and the hope offered in the gospel is very good news to those who are suffering amid these hard circumstances. There is a great need for laborers who can share this hope and love to those trapped in the false promises of Islam.

GMM began praying in 2020 that the Lord of the Harvest would raise up 16 new workers per year through 2030. In 2023 the Lord added 10 new workers to GMM fields, and there are another seven in process in the first quarter of 2024. We are grateful for the Lord's provision, but the need is greater still. Continue to join us in praying specifically for 16 new workers per year!

As reported last year, we continue to particularly need new workers to pioneer works in North Africa, the Middle East, Central Asia, and throughout the Asian Crescent. We do not currently have teams in several of the countries in those locations, but there is growing interest from national partners and PCA

churches to mobilize efforts to see the gospel of the kingdom advance in these Muslim majority areas.

One approach that we are pursuing for launching these new works is to build upon current PCA church partnerships and to create new ones. Many churches are not able to contribute long-term on their own and have found it beneficial to link arms with other PCA fellowships with a shared vision to engage in a particular part of the Muslim world. Currently, there are PCA partnerships growing and forming to help support ministries in the Middle East, Asia Minor, the Holy Land, Central Asia, North Africa, and the Asian Crescent. If your church is interested in such a partnership, reach out to us and we can help get you connected.

*\*Last names withheld for security reasons.*

## MTW MISSIONARY STATISTICS

As of December 31, 2023, the MTW missionary family consisted of the following:

<b>1. CHURCH PLANTING</b>	<b>391</b>
MTW-Direct	384
Campus Ministries	5
Cooperative Ministries	2
<b>2. THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION</b>	<b>49</b>
MTW-Direct	48
Cooperative Ministries	1
<b>3. OTHER</b>	<b>97</b>
MTW-Direct	56
Administration	5
Education	6
Medical	18
Nurture/Counseling	1
Mercy Ministry	13
Next Generation Ministry	13
Cooperative Ministries	19
Administration	8
Education	2
Medical	2
Nurture/Counseling	0
Translation/Support	7
Project Missionaries	22
<b>4. LEAVE OF ABSENCE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>TOTAL LONG-TERM MISSIONARIES</b>	<b>543</b>
<b>COUNTRIES</b>	<b>100</b>
<b>SHORT-TERM MISSIONARIES</b>	
Two-Year & Initial Term	<b>86</b>

Intern: 2–11 Months  
Two-Week

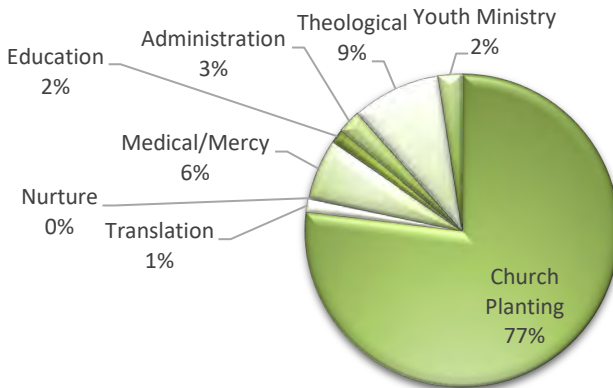
92  
818

## NATIONAL PARTNERS

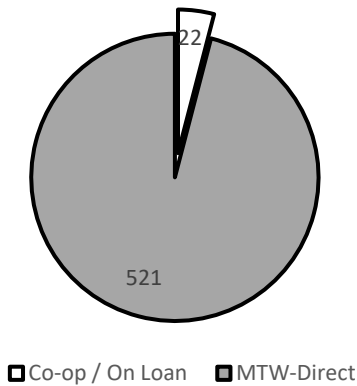
1337

Indigenous church planting partners

### Long-Term Missionaries - Ministry Type

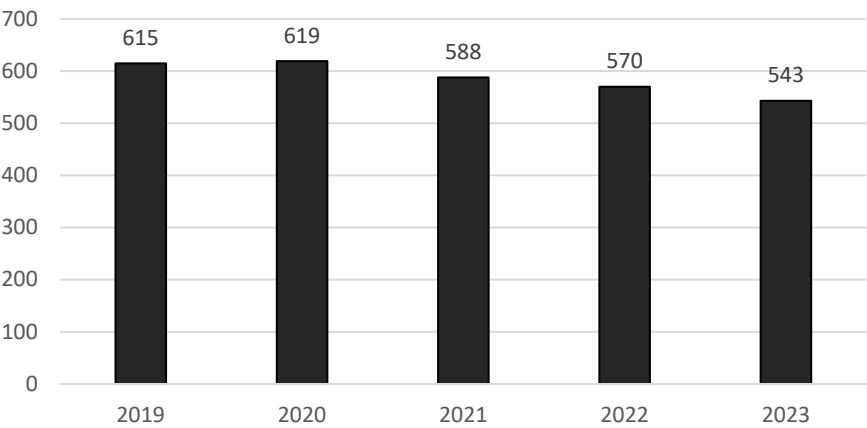


### MTW-Direct vs. Co-op/On-Loan Missionaries

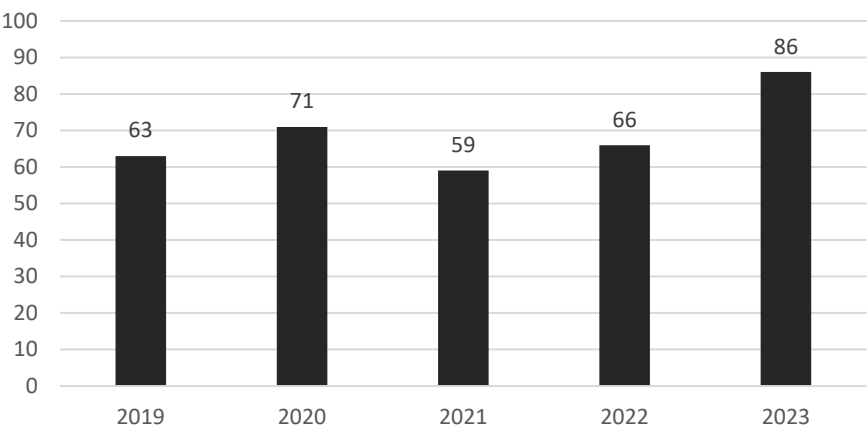


MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Long-Term Missionaries

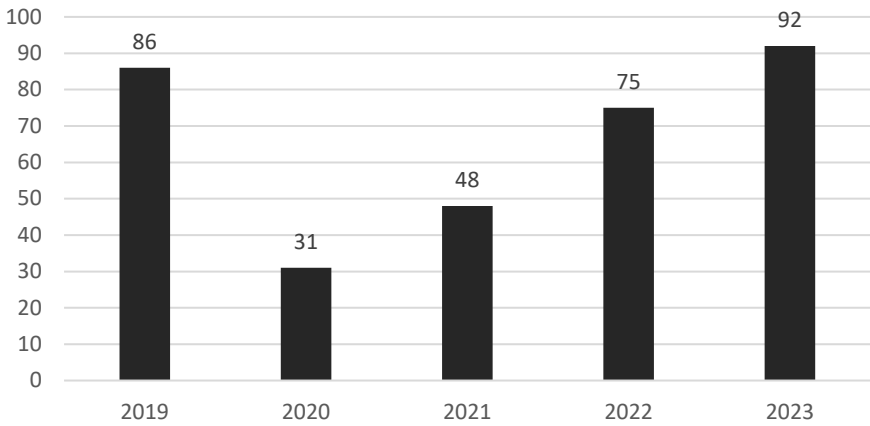


Two-Year & Initial Term Missionaries

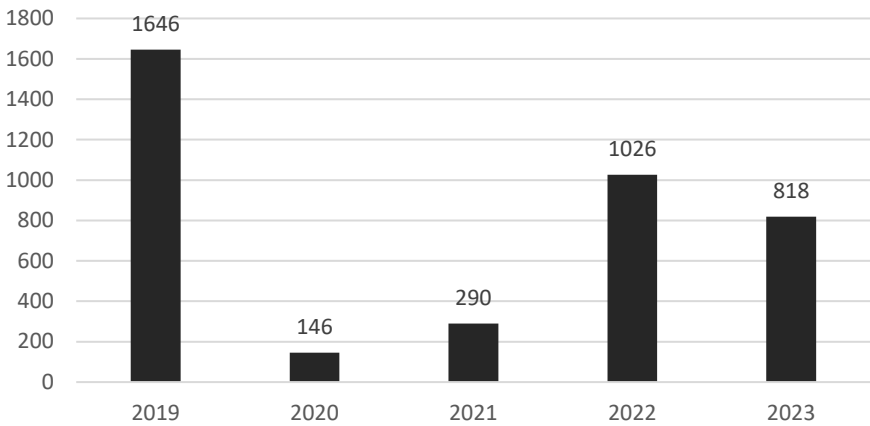


## APPENDIX K

### Interns (2-11 months)

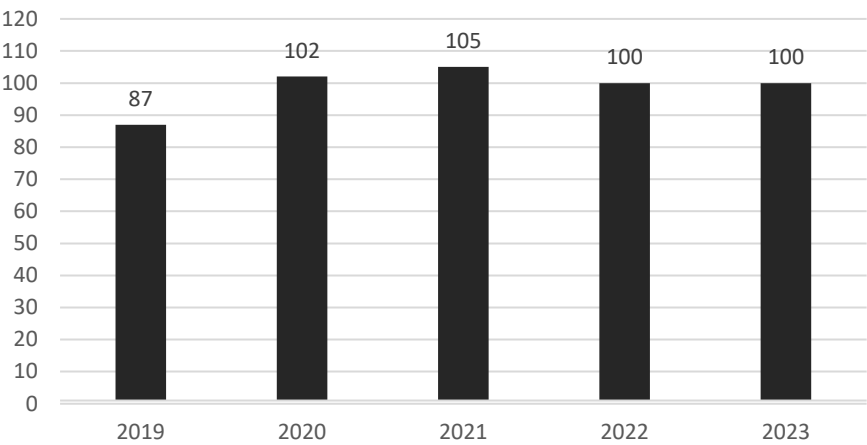


### 1-3 Week Trip Participants

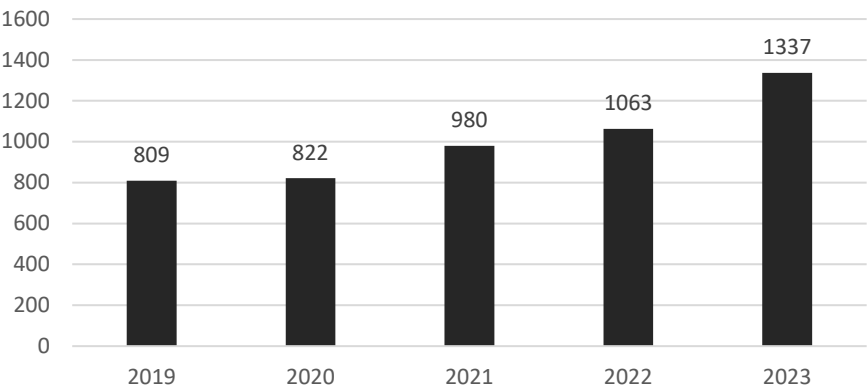


MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Countries



National Partners



## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee on Mission to the World (CMTW) makes the following recommendations to the Fifty-First General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America:

1. That the General Assembly urge churches to set aside the month of November 2024, as a month of prayer for global missions, asking God to send many more laborers into His harvest field. (MTW will offer a 30 Days of Prayer Calendar, which your church can download from [mtw.org/30dop](http://mtw.org/30dop) in the fall as well as other prayer resources).
2. That the General Assembly urge churches to set aside a portion of their giving for the suffering peoples of the world; to that end, be it recommended that a special offering for relief and mercy (MTW Compassion offering) be taken during 2024 and distributed by MTW (MTW offers bulletin inserts by mail, as well as a digital version that can be downloaded at [mtw.org/compassion](http://mtw.org/compassion)).
3. That the General Assembly urge churches to set aside Sunday, November 3, 2024, as a day of prayer for the persecuted church worldwide.
4. Having performed his annual evaluation and with gratitude to God, CMTW commends Dr. Lloyd Kim for the excellent leadership he has provided to MTW and recommends that Dr. Kim be re-elected as Coordinator of MTW.
5. That the proposed budget for MTW, as presented through the Administrative Committee, be approved.
6. That the minutes of the meeting of CMTW of March 8–9, 2023, be accepted; and
7. That the minutes of the meeting of CMTW of September 27–28, 2023, be accepted.
8. Regarding MTW's 2022 Financial Audit: the Committee of Commissioners reviewed the financial audit for calendar year ending December 31, 2022. They also noted per CMTW's minutes that CMTW had accepted the audit.



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

9. That **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” be answered with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

Respectfully submitted,  
TE Owen Lee, Chairman  
Committee on Mission to the World

## Attachment 1

### LONG-TERM MISSIONARIES

(as of December 31, 2023)

Adams, Rev./Mrs. Trey (Kiki)	Chapin, Mr./Mrs. Craig (Yumiko)
Aeschliman, Rev./Mrs. Richard (Betsy)	Chase, Mr./Mrs. Matt (Carly)
Alms, Ms. Bethany	Chia, Rev./Mrs. Dean (Eileen)
Ambrose, Dr./Mrs. Mark (Laura)	Choi, Mr./Mrs. David (Julie)
Andino, Mr. Chris	Chung, Ms. Grace
Aschmann, Rev./Mrs. Rick (Betty)	Church, Rev./Mrs. Ben (Kim)
Bailey, Rev./Mrs. Richard (Teresa)	Clow, Mr./Mrs. John (Kathy)
Bakelaar, Mr./Mrs. Peter (Diane)	Cobb, Rev./Mrs. Donald (Claire-Lise)
Bales, Rev./Mrs. Cartee (Colleen)	Coluccia, Rev./Mrs. Vincenzo (Judit)
Barnett, Ms. Ellen	Congdon, Rev./Mrs. Joe (Felicity)
Bauserman, Ms. Rachel	Conroy, Mr./Mrs. Dennis (Rhonda)
Baxley, Rev./Mrs. Andrew (Kelly)	Cordell, Mr./Mrs. Bradley (Sara)
Beaver, Mr./Mrs. Franklin (Beth)	Coulbourne, Rev./Mrs. Craig (Ree)
Bersach, Rev./Mrs. Manny (Terri)	Craig, Mr./Mrs. Scott (Kathy)
Bocanegra, Mr./Mrs. Mark (Megumi)	Crane, Rev./Mrs. Richard (Robyn)
Boling, Mr./Mrs. Peter (Jenny)	Crocker, Ms. Cheryl
Bonham, Rev./Mrs. Nathaniel (Nikki)	Crusey, Rev./Mrs. Todd (Liz)
Bolton, Ms. Rosemary	Culmer, Dr. Dave
Brink, Mr./Mrs. Daniel (Katy)	Davidson, Dr./Mrs. Charles (Bonita)
Brinkerhoff, Ms. Jane	Davila, Mr./Mrs. Rodney (Jana)
Brock, Rev./Mrs. Chris (Donnette)	Davis, Mr. David
Brook, Rev./Mrs. Elijah (Jessie)	Davison, Mr./Mrs. Jonas (Christina)
Brooks, Mr./Mrs. David (Gwen)	DeWitt, Mr. Jim
Brown, Ms. Roberta	Diaso, Dr./Mrs. David (Dawn)
Buerger, Rev./Mrs. John (Ellen)	Dillon, Mr./Mrs. Scott (Meghan)
Burkemper, Mr./Mrs. Jamie (Jennifer)	Dishman, Rev./Mrs. Peter (Lauren)
Burnham, Mr./Mrs. Bob (Andrea)	Dix, Mr./Mrs. Taylor (Katherine)
Burrack, Ms. Pamyla	Dortzbach, Rev./Mrs. Karl (Debbie)
Cain, Mr./Mrs. Adam (Michelle)	Dougherty, Mr./Mrs. Derek (Laura)
Cain, Rev./Mrs. Brooks (Riva)	Ebbers, Mr./Mrs. Derek (Shannon)
Call, Rev./Mrs. Ray (Michele)	Eide, Rev./Mrs. Jonathan (Tracy)
Canales, Rev./Mrs. John (Mary Jo)	Etienne, Rev./Mrs. Esaie (Natacha)
Carr, Rev./Mrs. Bill (Susan)	Fitzpatrick, Rev./Mrs. Joe (Bev)
Carter, Ms. Brenda	Fleeman, Rev./Mrs. Lenden (Gemma)
Carter, Rev./Mrs. Michael (Cathalain)	Floyd, Mr./Mrs. Ross (Angela)
Cary, Ms. Elisabeth	Gahagen, Mr./Mrs. Craig (Heather)
Chambers, Mr./Mrs. Garry (Anita)	Galage, Mr./Mrs. Tim (Therese)

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Garofalo, Rev./Mrs. Santo (Mary Ellen)	Kooi, Mr. Brent
Gildard, Mr./Mrs. James (Jacki)	Kovak, Ms. Lubica
Gim, Mr./Mrs. John (Carol)	Kreider, Mr./Mrs. Derek (Catalina)
Goeglein, Ms. Lydia	Lamos, Mr./Mrs. Jud (Jan)
Goodrich, Rev./Mrs. Richey (Keli)	Larsen, Dr./Mrs. Eric (Rebecca)
Goodwin, Rev./Mrs. Sam (Elizabeth)	Lee, Rev./Mrs. James (Shine)
Graber, Rev./Mrs. Ben (Anna)	Lee, Mr. John
Grady, Ms. Miriam	Lee, Mr./Mrs. Jonathan (Joy)
Graham, Mr./Mrs. Eric (Anna)	Lee, Mr./Mrs. Chris (Janna)
Gregoire, Mr./Mrs. Dan (Rebecca)	Lee, Rev./Mrs. Paul (Susan)
Grotton, Mr./Mrs. David (Danielle)	Lennox, Mr./Mrs. Patrick (Regina)
Grubb, Mr./Mrs. Glenn (Sharlene)	Letchworth, Rev./Mrs. Bill (Mae Lee)
Gullett, Mr./Mrs. Foster (Laura)	Lim, Rev./Mrs. Tim (Moon Sook)
Hacquebord, Rev./Mrs. Heero (Anyia)	Love, Dr./Mrs. Tim (Laura)
Halbert, Rev./Mrs. Aaron (Rachel)	Lowther, Mr./Mrs. Roger (Abi)
Halbert, Mr./Mrs. Alex (Maggie)	Lundgaard, Mr./Mrs. Kris (Paula)
Hale, Mr./Mrs. Robert (Deborah)	Lupton, Rev./Mrs. Andrew (Laura-Kate)
Han, Mr./Mrs. Beyongseob (Kyungsoon)	Luther, Rev./Mrs. Phillip (Kay)
Harrell, Mr. Frank	Mahaffey, Mr./Mrs. Philip (Karina)
Hart, Mr./Mrs. Tim (Beverly)	Mailloux, Rev./Mrs. Marc (Aline)
Henry, Rev./Mrs. DH (Emily)	Makhalira, Mr./Mrs. Confex (Mwai)
Henry, Mr./Mrs. Paul (Crystal)	Marshall, Rev./Mrs. Verne (Alina)
Henson, Dr./Mrs. Nathan (Kristen)	Martin, Mr./Mrs. David (Jill)
Hill, Rev./Mrs. Scott (Ruth)	Matthias, Ms. Elizabeth
Holliday, Mr./Mrs. Tim (Kristy)	May, Dr./Mrs. Andrew (Krista)
Hoot, Rev./Mrs. Trevin (Ruthie)	McAlpin, Mr./Mrs. Brett (Valerie)
Hurrie, Rev./Mrs. Shaun (Becky)	McCafferty, Rev./Mrs. Brennan (Becca)
Ilderton, Rev./Mrs. Rob (Jenny)	McCall, Mr./Mrs. John (Lorena)
Iverson, Rev./Mrs. Dan (Carol)	McGinty, Mr./Mrs. Coby (Pamela)
Iverson, Rev./Mrs. Jonathan (Maggie)	McMahan, Mr./Mrs. Mike (Robin)
Jacobs, Mr. Joshua	McNeill, Mr./Mrs. Don (Fran)
Jensen, Rev./Mrs. Ben (Julie)	Mills, Mr./Mrs. Tim (Rhianna)
Jesch, Mr./Mrs. Matt (Esta)	Mirabella, Rev./Mrs. Tom (Karen)
Johnson, Ms. Darlene	Mitchell, Rev./Mrs. Pete (Ruth)
Johnson, Ms. Melanie	Moore, Rev./Mrs. Brian (Megan)
Jones, Mr./Mrs. Clay (Hannah)	Mugari, Rev./Mrs. Jorum (Evah)
Jung, Rev./Mrs. Jim (Claudia)	Nairn, Mr./Mrs. Andrew (Megan)
Karner, Ms. Linda	Nakah, Dr./Mrs. Victor (Nosizo)
Kazen, Ms. Kersten	Nam, Rev./Mrs. David (Susanna)
Kelly, Mr./Mrs. Eric (Megan)	Nantz, Dr./Mrs. Quentin (Karen)
Kim, Dr./Dr. Lloyd (Eda)	Newkirk, Dr./Mrs. Matt (Caroline)
Kim, Mr./Mrs. Mark (Rachel)	Newkirk, Ms. Susan
King, Ms. Julia	Newsome, Rev./Mrs. Wayne (Amy)
Kirkland, Rev./Mrs. Philip (Joy)	Norris, Mr./Mrs. Kirk (Anna)
Knowlton, Mr./Mrs. Keith (Rachel)	Norton, Mr./Mrs. Clarke (Khrystyia)

## APPENDIX K

Oh, Dr./Mrs. Michael (Pearl)  
 Olivares, Rev./Mrs. Oscar (Nancy)  
 Parker, Ms. Laura  
 Pervis, Mr./Mrs. David (Erin)  
 Pfeil, Mr./Mrs. Jon (Sarah)  
 Phillips, Ms. Carolyn  
 Pike, Rev./Mrs. Mel (Martha)  
 Pohl, Rev./Mrs. Craig (Stacy)  
 Polk, Rev./Mrs. Jason (Liz)  
 Powell, Mr./Mrs. Jon (Olya)  
 Powlison, Rev./Mrs. Keith (Ruth)  
 Price, Ms. Robin  
 Quinn, Mr./Mrs. Hunter (Laura)  
 Rabe, Ms. Rachel  
 Rarig, Dr. Steve  
 Rayl, Rev./Mrs. Brett (Taylor)  
 Reiter, Mr./Mrs. Ryan (Joy)  
 Rice, Ms. Carrie  
 Richards, Ms. Debbie  
 Robertson, Rev./Mrs. Steve (Amy)  
 Roby, Mr./Mrs. Brian (Sheryl)  
 Rockwell, Mr./Mrs. Larry (Sandra)  
 Romer, Mr./Mrs. Mikael (Zuzanna)  
 Rudd, Mr./Mrs. Marcus (Heather)  
 Rug, Rev./Mrs. John (Cathy)  
 Russell, Dr./Mrs. Julian (Christiana)  
 Sabin, Mr./Mrs. Mike (Eli)  
 Sale, Mr./Mrs. Zach (Joy)  
 Saunders, Mr./Mrs. Jeff (Katie)  
 Schafer, Mr./Mrs. Jason (Mandy)  
 Shadburne, Mr./Mrs. Andy (Missy)  
 Shepherd, Rev./Mrs. Doug (Masha)  
 Sinclair, Rev./Mrs. Bruce (Pam)  
 Sindler, Rev./Mrs. Frank (Cindy)  
 Smith, Rev./Mrs. Luke (Sokha)  
 Smith, Mr./Mrs. Robert (Jeanne)

Sproull, Mr. /Mrs. Todd (Cindy)  
 Stannard, Mr./Mrs. Luke (Michelle)  
 Stanton, Rev./Mrs. Dal (Beth)  
 Stava, Rev./Mrs. Jonas (Pattie)  
 Stephens, Rev./Mrs. Noah (Karleigh)  
 Stevens, Ms. Carla  
 Stewart, Mr./Mrs. Robert (Lisa)  
 Stoddard, Rev./Mrs. David (Eowyn)  
 Stodghill, Mr./Mrs. John (Karen)  
 Stogner, Rev./Mrs. Phil (Wendy)  
 Swanson, Mr./Mrs. Joel (Stephanie)  
 Sweet, Mr./Mrs. Robbie (Lydia)  
 Tafferner, Mr./Mrs. Mario (Elsbeth)  
 Taylor, Rev./Mrs. Nate (Erin)  
 Thomae, Rev./Mrs. David (Jan)  
 Traub, Rev./Mrs. Will (Judi)  
 Vos, Ms. Nelly  
 Wadhams, Mr./Mrs. Michael (Lindie)  
 Warren, Mr./Mrs. Andy (Bevely)  
 Watanabe, Rev./Mrs. Gary (Lois)  
 Webb, Mr./Mrs. Jacob (Suzanne)  
 Wessel, Rev./Mrs. Hugh (Martine)  
 White, Ms. Rebecca  
 Wilkes, Rev./Mrs. Larry (Mandy)  
 Williams, Mr./Mrs. Bert (Nancy)  
 Williams, Mr./Mrs. Steve (Rita)  
 Wilson, Mr./Mrs. Tom (Teresa)  
 Wood, Mr./Mrs. Kenton (Adriana)  
 Wright, Dr./Mrs. Tom (Lucy)  
 Young, Rev./Mrs. Dan (Becky)  
 Young, Rev. Steve

In addition to this list there are 63 long-term missionary units serving in restricted access countries.

## Attachment 2

### INITIAL & TWO-YEAR MISSIONARIES

(as of December 31, 2023)

Bacon, Dr./Mrs. Julian (Rachel)	Markwalter, Mrs. Amy
Bean, Rev./Mrs. Dawson (Shanna)	McFarland, Mr. Peter
Beasley, Mr./Mrs. Stan (Connie)	McWhorter, Mr./Mrs. Carter (Caroline)
Claburn, Mr. Chris	Murray, Ms. Elizabeth
Clifford, Mr./Mrs. John (Rachel)	Nash, Mr./Mrs. John (Ginna)
Conroy, Ms. Abigail	Rutherford, Ms. Ginny
Crews, Ms. Virginia	Scanio, Ms. Libby
Cromley, Mr./Mrs. Sam (Madison)	Sheppard, Mr. Andrew
Curl, Mr. Joshua	Smith, Rev./Mrs. Tom (Mylicah)
DeBoer, Ms. Shannon	South, Ms. Sarah
De Bruin, Ms. Molly	Sprague, Mr./Mrs. William (Jessica)
Evans, Ms. Adair	Stugart, Ms. Rachel
Guo, Mr./Mrs. Graham (Emily)	Tendo, Mr. Clement
Hart, Ms. Rachel	Thomas, Mr./Mrs. Jake (Courtney)
Hegler, Mr./Mrs. Matt (Emma)	Underwood, Mr./Mrs. Josh (Ashley)
Jacobson, Ms. Katie	Urban, Mr. James
Jeong, Mr./Mrs. Mark (Esther)	Van der Swaagh, Rev./Mrs. Kirk (Barbara)
Johnson, Rev./Mrs. Joshua (Elizabeth)	Velez, Mr./Mrs. Angel (Wally)
Jordan, Mr./Mrs. Alex (Heather May)	Winenger, Mr./Mrs. Matt (Kathryn)
Kim, Mr. David	Willis, Mr./Mrs. Justin (Savannah)
Koh, Ms. Rachel	Wong, Mr. Thomas
Lother, Mr./Mrs. Jesse (Reba)	Ziehr, Mr./Mrs. Matt (Jaime)

In addition to this list there are 13 short-term missionary units serving in restricted access countries.

## **Attachment 3**

### **RETIRING MISSIONARIES**

The following missionaries have given many years of their lives in service of world evangelization with Mission to the World. We honor these deeply committed colleagues as they enter a new phase of ministry during their retirement years.

Greete, Rev. Rich/Mrs. Chrissy - International  
effective December 31, 2023

Lee, Rev. Michael/Mrs. Tricia - Panama  
effective March 31, 2023

Marlowe, Dr. Jeffrey/Mrs. Mischa - International  
effective May 31, 2023

Patterson, Mr. Jim/Mrs. Mary Alice – International  
effective May 31, 2023

Ramsay, Rev. Richard/Mrs. Angelica – Latin America  
effective December 31, 2023

Sexton, Mr. John/Mrs. Elizabeth - International  
effective January 31, 2023

White, Mr. David/Mrs. Robin - International  
effective December 31, 2023

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

# APPENDIX L

## MINUTES OF THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA March 23, 2024

The Nominating Committee of the General Assembly convened in Atlanta, GA on Saturday, March 23, 2024. Chairman TE Jared Nelson called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m. and RE Frank Cohee opened with prayer. The chairman then led the Committee in a devotional from Mark 14:38.

Attendance was taken and a quorum was declared. The Chairman welcomed the Committee and recognized four (4) guests, including three (3) guests from the PCA Administrative Committee Office, TE Bryan Chapell, Stated Clerk, Ms. Angela Nantz, Meeting Manager, and Ms. Heidi Harrison, Operations Manager, as well as RE Howie Donahoe. Seventy-eight (78) committee members were in attendance as follows, and five (5) additional members submitted preliminary ballots.

**Members attending:**

<u>Presbytery</u>	<u>Member</u>	<u>Class</u>
Arizona	TE Kelley Hand	2026
Ascension	TE Jared Nelson - <b>Chairman</b>	2025
Blue Ridge	TE Stuart Pratt	2025
Calvary	RE Melton Ledford Duncan	2025
Catawba Valley	TE William Thraillkill	2024
Central Carolina	TE Derek Wells	2024
Central Florida	TE Joseph L. Creech	2025
Central Indiana	TE Charles Anderson	2026
Chesapeake	RE Mike Khandjian	2026
Chicago Metro	RE Don Kooy	2024
Columbus Metro	TE Dave Schutter	2026
Eastern Canada	TE Frank Garcia	2024
Eastern Carolina	TE Chris Garrett	2024
Eastern Pennsylvania	TE Taylor Anthony Bradley	2024
Evangel	TE Michael Brock	2026
Fellowship	TE W. Gregory Marshall	2025



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Georgia Foothills	TE Don Aldin	2025
Grace	TE John Franklin	2024
Great Lakes	RE Jerome Gorgon	2024
Gulf Coast	TE Dennis W. Shackelford	2025
Gulfstream	TE Matt Wilson	2026
Heartland	TE Rick E. Franks	2024
Heritage	RE Tyler Hogan	2025
Highlands	TE Skip Gillikin	2024
Hills and Plains	RE Jeff Chewning	2024
Houston Metro	RE Dave Cias - <b>Secretary</b>	2024
Illiana	TE Alex Eppstein	2026
Iowa	TE Brian Janssen	2026
James River	TE J. Andrew Conrad	2025
Korean Capital	TE Steve Sun Kyo Yoon	2024
Korean Central	TE Paul Chi	2026
Korean Eastern	TE Andrew Kim	2026
Korean Northeastern	TE Hoochan Paul Lee	2024
Korean Southeastern	TE Anthony Lee	2026
Lowcountry	TE Nick Batzig	2025
Metro Atlanta	TE Bruce Terrell	2026
Metropolitan New York	TE E. Bruce O'Neil	2024
Mississippi Valley	RE James Elkin	2024
Missouri	RE John Ranheim	2024
Nashville	RE John Bryant	2025
New Jersey	TE Stephen O'Neil	2026
New River	TE Michael VanDerLinden	2026
New York State	TE Tim LeCroy	2026
North Florida	TE Dennis Griffith	2026
North Texas	RE David Westerfield	2026
Northern California	TE Bryce Hales	2026
Northern Illinois	TE Justin Coverstone	2026
Northern New England	TE Per Almquist	2025
Northwest Georgia	TE Clif Daniell	2025
Ohio	TE Jacob Piland	2025
Ohio Valley	TE Larry C. Hoop	2025
Pacific	TE Kyle Wells	2024
Pacific Northwest	RE Micah Meeuwssen	2024
Palmetto	TE Andrew Davis	2025
Pee Dee	TE Matthew Dallas Adams	2025
Philadelphia	RE Scott Dirksen	2026

## APPENDIX L

Philadelphia Metro West	RE Nathan Carlson	2024
Piedmont Triad	RE Richard Jones	2025
Pittsburgh	TE Jon Price	2026
Platte Valley	TE Michael Gordon	2026
Potomac	TE Porter Harlow	2026
Providence	RE Frank Cohee	2024
Rio Grande	TE Jeffery Douglas White	2024
Savannah River	TE Mike Hearon	2024
Siouxlands	TE Nathan Lee	2025
South Coast	TE Adam Feichtmann	2024
South Florida	TE David Barry	2026
Southeast Alabama	TE Parker Johnson	2024
Southern Louisiana	RE Aaron Collier	2026
Southern New England	TE Robert Steven Hill	2024
Southwest Florida	TE Jonathan Winfree	2025
Suncoast Florida	TE Geoffrey C. Henderson	2026
Susquehanna Valley	TE Vince Wood	2025
Tennessee Valley	RE John Wood	2025
Tidewater	TE Benjamin Cameron Lyon	2026
Warrior	TE Richard Martin Vise Jr.	2025
Westminster	TE Robert E. Dykes	2024
Wisconsin	TE Michael Vogel	2024

**MSP** to adopt the following addition to Article III.B.1 of the Nominating Committee Manual of Operations as recommended by the subcommittee created by the 2022-2023 Nominating Committee:

The aggregated preliminary vote forms received from the members of the Nominating Committee shall constitute the initial list of recommendations of the Nominating Committee as the main motion. The Nominating Committee will evaluate the candidate qualifications as a committee to form the final list of candidates. Nominating Committee members may move to substitute another candidate for any on the main motion. No more than one substitution at a time may be offered. Each substitution shall thereafter be voted on individually.

Preliminary vote tallies were discussed by the Committee. The Committee approved a slate of nominees for each of the Standing Committees, Agencies,

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

and Commission (each as more fully set forth hereinbelow) to be presented to the General Assembly.

**MSP** to empower the Chairman to form a committee to examine the tabulation method of preliminary voting, including but not limited to weighted, ranked-choice, or raw tally, and to make recommendations to the Nominating Committee as soon as possible but not later than two weeks prior to its March 2025 meeting.

Nominations were entertained for Chairman and Secretary of the 2024-2025 Nominating Committee. The Committee elected TE Matthew Dallas Adams, Pee Dee Presbytery, to serve as Chairman and RE Michael VanDerLinden, New River Presbytery, as Secretary.

The Chairman announced that the next meeting of the Nominating Committee will be at General Assembly in Richmond, Virginia, on Wednesday, June 12, 2024, at the close of business. The 2025 meeting will be held in Atlanta, GA, on Saturday, March 22, 2025.

**MSP** The Committee adjourned at 1:15 with prayer by TE Paul Lee.

Respectfully Submitted,  
TE Jared Nelson, Chairman

RE Dave Cias, Secretary

### 1) ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE

#### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2027**

TE Jason Helopoulos, Great Lakes

RE Dave Cias, Houston Metro

RE Alan Walters, Mississippi Valley

#### **Class of 2026**

TE Michael Dixon, Fellowship

RE Danny McDaniel, Houston Metro

## APPENDIX L

### **Class of 2025**

TE Roger G. Collins, Tennessee Valley   RE Richard Dolan, Georgia Foothills  
TE Steve Jeantet, Suncoast Florida

### **Class of 2024**

TE Robert F. Brunson, Metro Atlanta   RE Frank Cohee, Providence  
RE Pat Hodge, Calvary

### **Alternates**

TE Richard Phillips, Calvary   RE EJ Nusbaum, Rocky Mountain

## **B. To be Elected:**

### **Class of 2028**

2 TEs and 1 REs

### **Alternates**

1 TE and 1 RE

## **C. Nominations**

### **Class of 2028**

---

TE Richard Phillips, Calvary   RE EJ Nusbaum, Rocky Mountain  
TE Scott Edburg, Illiana

### **Alternates**

TE Michael Hearon, Savannah River   RE Richard Leino, James River

## **D. Biographical Sketches:**

**TE Richard Phillips:** *Calvary.* BA, Economics, University of Michigan, 1982. M.B.A., Strategic Management, UPenn - Wharton School, 1992. M.Div, Westminster Theological Seminary, 1998. D.D., Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, 2012. Past - Assistant Professor of Behavioral Studies and Leadership, West Point Academy, 1992-1995. Senior Pastor, Second Presbyterian Church, Greenville, SC. Present - council member for the Alliance for Confessing Evangelicals and the Gospel Coalition; Board of Directors at Westminster Seminary (Philadelphia). Past - Board of Knox Theological Seminary. Present -

conference chairman for the Philadelphia Conference on Reformed Theology and a co-editor for the Reformed Expository Series (P&R Publishing).

**TE Scott Edburg:** *Illiana*. B.A., Pastoral Ministry, Moody Bible Institute. M.Div., Reformed Theological Seminary (Jackson). Currently serves as the Senior Minister at Providence Presbyterian Church in Troy, IL. Served as a Recording Clerk in Providence Presbytery. Previously served on the CDM CoC for the 48<sup>th</sup> GA, served as the secretary of the AC CoC for the 49<sup>th</sup> GA, and served on the AC CoC for the 50<sup>th</sup> GA. Currently serves on the Review of Sessional Records Committee in Illiana Presbytery. Follows and publicly presents data concerning the passage of yearly Book of Church Order amendments on online platforms.

**TE Michael Hearon:** *Savannah River*. BA, Management Information Systems, University of N. Alabama, 1983. MA, Birmingham Theological Seminary, 1999. D.Min., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2022. Senior Minister at First Presbyterian Church in Augusta, GA. Served at Briarwood Presbyterian Church, 1983-1991. Founding staff member of Campus Outreach and served as the Director of Campus Outreach Global Network from 2003-2015. Currently serves on the PCA GA Nominating Committee and has served on the MTW CoC in 2019 and 2022. Chaired the 2022 PCA GA MTW CoC.

**RE E.J. Nusbaum:** *Rocky Mountain*. State Farm Insurance Agent since 1985. 2007, retired as a Naval Captain. Moderator of the 35<sup>th</sup> GA. Previously, served on GA Committee for Constitutional Business, 2002-2007, 2008-2012 and the Standing Judicial Commission, 2013-2022. Served as CoC for Administration, Ridge Haven, and on Overtures for nine years, and as the Chairman of the Overtures Committee at the 29<sup>th</sup> GA. Member at Village Seven Presbyterian Church and has served as an RE since 1988, serves as Clerk of Session. Has served on several committees for the Session, including finance, building, and personnel. Moderator of the 35<sup>th</sup> GA. Active-duty infantry officer 1979-1985 (retired).

**RE Richard Leino:** *James River*. BS, Nuclear Engineering, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, 1990. MS, Electrical Engineering, Naval Postgraduate School, 1996. MA, Military Studies, Marine Corps University, 2004. MA, Christian Ministries, New Geneva Seminary, 2018.

Retired LtCol (USMC), as Communications and Data officer. Present - IT Executive for SMX providing mission and digital solutions to commercial and government sectors, successfully solutioned over \$5B in new business. Past - GA Nominating Committee, Review of Presbytery Records, Theological Examining Committee (chair, three years). Present - 2024 General Assembly Planning Committee (co-chair). He has also served on the Overtures Committee several years and multiple CoCs.

## 2) COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS

### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2027**

TE Stephen Tipton, Gulf Coast

RE Chris Shoemaker, S. New England

#### **Class of 2026**

TE Jason Piland, Ohio

RE Bryce Sullivan, Nashville

#### **Class of 2025**

TE J. Scott Phillips, Providence

RE Matt Fender, James River

#### **Class of 2024**

TE Joel Craig St. Clair II, Potomac

RE Fredric Marcinak, Calvary

#### **Alternates**

TE Per Almquist, Northern New England

RE John Ward Weiss, SE Alabama

### B. To be Elected:

#### **Class of 2028**

1 TE and 1 RE

#### **Alternates**

1 TE and 1 RE

## C. Nominations

### Class of 2028

TE Per Almquist, Northern New England RE John Ward Weiss, SE Alabama

### Alternates

TE David Gordon, Ascension RE Joshua Torrey, South Texas

## D. Biographical Sketches

**TE Per Almquist:** *Northern New England.* D. Min “Presbyterian Polity in Action: A Commentary on the Book of Church Order of the PCA.” Pastor-church planter, Free Grace Presbyterian, Lewiston, ME. Served multiple years as CCB chair, multiple years as RPR chair and vice-chair. Represented PCA at Synod for the Eglise Reformee du Quebec. Served on various Assembly CoCs. Stated Clerk, Ministerial Relations Committee chair, and Recording Clerk of Northern New England Presbytery. Previously served as Associate Pastor and Clerk of Session of Christ the Redeemer, Portland, ME and as Associate Librarian for Covenant Theological Seminary.

**TE T. David Gordon:** *Ascension.* B.L.A. from Roanoke College, M.A.R. and Th.M. from Westminster Theological Seminary, and Ph.D. from Union Theological Seminary. Retired Professor of Biblical Studies, Grove City College (1999–2021). Currently Moderator of Presbytery of the Ascension. Previously served two terms on the Committee of Constitutional Business, once chaired the Overtures Committee and twice served as its secretary. Previously served five years as presbytery Moderator. Chaired presbytery Administration Committee for six years. Previously served as Professor at Gordon Conwell (1984–1998) where Dr. Gordon taught Presbyterian denominational standards, presbyterian history, polity, and liturgy.

**RE John Ward Weiss:** *Southeast Alabama.* B.A. History, Presbyterian College. J.D. University of Alabama School of Law. LL.M. Taxation, New York University School of Law. Practices private law in tax and health care regulatory matters. Served two previous terms on CCB as well as terms on the Nominating and Overtures Committees. Has served as

Moderator of Southeast Alabama presbytery and on several special commissions. Ordained as deacon at Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montgomery in 1989. Ordained as RE at Trinity in 1998. Chairman of the board of World News Group, which produces *World Magazine* and *The World and Everything in It*.

**RE Joshua Torrey:** *South Texas*. B.S. In Electrical Engineering, University of Texas, San Antonio. Advanced Micro Devices (AMD) ten years as computer chip engineer and five years at Apple. Has served on RPR and as an alternate for the Theological Examining Committee. Served on various Assembly CoCs: CDM, AC, and OC. Chairs presbytery Nominating Committee and has served three years on credentials. Joshua has been married to Alaina for 17 years, has five children ranging from 12–5 years old, and has served as Ruling Elder at Redeemer PCA for the past four years.

### 3) BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF COVENANT COLLEGE

#### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2027**

Vacancy

TE Thurman Williams, Missouri

RE Michael Kramer, Tennessee Valley

RE Ken Smith, North Texas

RE John Truschel, Eastern Carolina

RE Robert Wilkinson, Missouri

RE R. Craig Wood, Blue Ridge

#### **Class of 2026**

TE Thomas Groelsema, Central Carolina

TE Lance Lewis, Northern California

TE Sean McGowan, Gulf Coast

TE Omari Hill, Central Carolina

RE Don Mellott, Pacific Northwest

RE Towner Scheffler, Piedmont Triad

RE Gordon Sluis, Mississippi Valley

#### **Class of 2025**

TE Bradley J. Barnes, S. New England

TE Alexander Brown, Savannah River

RE David Caines, Tennessee Valley

RE Mark Griggs, Tennessee Valley

RE Bradley M. Harris, Covenant



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RE Drew Jelgerhuis, Great Lakes  
RE Sam Smartt, Tennessee Valley

### **Class of 2024**

TE Matthew David Fray, North Texas	RE Richard T. Bowser, E. Carolina
TE Duncan Highmark, Missouri	RE Robert Curtis, Southwest Florida
	RE Martin A. Moore, Georgia Foothills
	RE William H. Ryan, South Florida
	RE Stephen E. Sligh, Southwest Florida

### **B. To be Elected:**

#### **Class of 2028**

7 members total (TE or RE)

#### **Class of 2027**

1 member total (TE or RE)

One may be from another NAPARC denomination

### **C. Nominations**

#### **2028**

TE Timothy Brindle, Phil Metro West	RE Richard Bowser, Eastern Carolina
TE Matthew Fray, North Texas	RE Paul D. Moore, Calvary
	RE William H. Ryan, South Florida
	RE Stephen E. Sligh, Southwest Florida
	RE Gregory J. Moore, Susq. Valley

#### **2027**

RE John C. Kwasny, MS Valley

### **D. Biographical Sketches:**

**RE Richard Bowser:** *Eastern Carolina.* Graduated Grove City College, Master's degree Westminster Theological Seminary (Philadelphia), Graduated Law school. Currently on faculty of Campbell University of Law in Raleigh, NC. Taught Jr High students at a Christian school in western PA. Previously served on Covenant Board of Trustees. Chaired Board of Covenant Trustees from 2014-2018. Served on the executive committee and chaired the Presidential search committee in 2023. RE

since 1998. He and his wife have two children, both graduates of Covenant College. He is convinced Christian education must be grounded and shaped in the rich theology of the reformed tradition.

**TE Timothy Brindle:** *Philadelphia Metro West*. Bachelor of Education Temple University, Master of Divinity and Master of Theology from Westminster Theological Seminary. Associate Pastor of Olive Street Presbyterian church in Coatesville, PA, Senior Stewardship Officer and Lecturer in Old Testament Westminster Theological Seminary. Public school teacher in the school district of Philadelphia 2003-2008. Social worker in Child Protective Services 2009-2014. Released several reformed hip-hop albums since 2003. Author of *The Unfolding Book*, and co-author of *The Acrostic Theology for Kids* series. He and his wife have 9 children, two in college and one in heaven.

**TE Matthew Fray:** *North Texas*. B.A. Covenant College 2005. M.Div., Westminster Seminary CA, 2009. Assistant Pastor of Christian Formation, Park Cities Presbyterian Church since 2015. Candidates and Credentials Committee Savannah River Presbytery 2010-2014. Chairman, Committee of Commissioners Covenant College 2016. Chairman, Candidates Committee North Texas Presbytery 2016-2022. Administrative Committee North Texas Presbytery 2016-2022. Committee of Commissioners Covenant College 2017. General Assembly Overtures Committee 2018. General Assembly Host Committee 2019. Covenant College Board of Trustees 2019-present. Candidate desires to promote Covenant College's desire to make Christ pre-eminent in every aspect of life and expand the College's reach into the Dallas area.

**RE Gregory Moore:** *Susquehanna Valley*. B.S. Physics and Biology North Park College, Chicago IL. MA degrees SM Nuclear Engineering and PhD Radiological Sciences, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, MA. MD degree Wayne State University School of Medicine, Detroit, MI. Graduate studies in Systematic Theology, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, Wenham, MA, no degree. Diagnostic Residency and Neuroradiology Fellowship, Penn State Hershey Medical Center. Recently retired Senior Technology VP for Microsoft after serving as VP for Google. Former professor Wayne State University of Medicine and Penn State University School of Medicine. Currently working part-time as a physician and independent board director for several private companies.

**RE Paul Moore:** *Calvary*. B.S. Biology Degree, Furman University. Doctor of Medicine, Medical University of South Carolina. Work: Prisma Health Department of Emergency Medicine. Good Shepherd Free Medical Clinic – Medical Director. Member of Session Westminster Presbyterian Church, Clinton, SC. Head of Assistant Pastor Search Committee. Adult Sunday School teaching team, substitute musician, small group ministry participant and past leader. Served on Covenant College Parents Board, assisting the College with recruitment. Seeing our five children thrive at Covenant College, as they were nurtured in faith and life, has instilled in me a deep desire to serve the School.

**RE William Ryan:** *South Florida*. MBA, University of Miami; B.S. Boston College. Built several construction companies in Florida and Illinois. Works as a professional contractor. Served on Campus Crusade staff at MIT. Served as board chair for Coral Springs Christian Academy. Served as elder at First Presbyterian Church in Coral Springs, FL since 1990.

**RE Stephen Sligh:** *Southwest Florida*. Graduate of Covenant College and the National College of Chiropractic. Private practice chiropractic for over 40 years. Elder at Covenant Presbyterian Church in Lakeland, FL for over 40 years. Served on the board of Lakeland Christian School for 40 years. He and his wife Annette have two adult daughters who attended Covenant and are walking with the Lord, and seven grandchildren.

**RE John Kwasny:** *Mississippi Valley*. Ph.D. Christian Education, Trinity Theological Seminary; M.A. Counseling, Regent University; B.A. Psychology, Oral Roberts University. Executive Ministry Director at Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church. Previous experience directing children's, discipleship, and educational ministries. Presently director of One Story Ministries (second largest provider of Sunday School curricula in the PCA), authoring Biblical discipleship curriculum for the church, home, and Christian school. Served on CDM permanent committee in past, as well as CDM children's ministry team. Served on Christian education and credentials committee of presbytery.

#### **4) COMMITTEE ON DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES**

##### **A. Present Personnel**

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

##### **Class of 2028**

TE Richard Burguet, Central Florida  
TE Robert Cathcart, Calvary

RE David Hinkley, Great Lakes

##### **Class of 2027**

TE Christopher Lee Hutchings., Ohio

RE Randy Stair, Metro Atlanta  
RE Taylor Clement, Missouri

##### **Class of 2026**

TE W. Scott Barber, Providence  
TE Dean Williams, Mississippi Valley

RE Dan Barber, Central Indiana

##### **Class of 2025**

TE Thomas Michael Harr Jr., New Jersey

RE Jacob Lightsey Wallace, James Riv.  
RE Jeremy Whitley, South Texas

##### **Class of 2024**

TE Charles Johnson, Evangel  
TE Dave Lindberg, North Texas

RE Dennis Crowe, SE Alabama

##### **Alternates**

TE Dave Vosseller, Savannah River

RE Larkin Chapman, MS Valley

##### **B. To be Elected:**

##### **Class of 2029**

1 TEs and 2 REs

##### **Alternates**

1 TE and 1 RE

##### **C. Nominations**

##### **Class of 2028**

TE Danny Kwon, Korean Eastern

RE James D. Murphy, Blue Ridge

RE Jack North, Pee Dee

### Alternates

TE Jonathan Medlock, Northern CA

RE Larkin Chapman, MS Valley

## D. Biographical Sketches

**TE Danny Kwon:** *Korean Eastern.* Ph.D. Organizational Leadership, Eastern University; Th.M. Biblical and Pastoral Theology, Covenant Seminary; M.Div. Pastoral Ministry, Westminster Seminary; B.S. Human Resource Management, American University. Served on CDM permanent committee 2018-2023. Great Commission Publications Trustee 2019-present. Presently Senior Director of Youth Ministry Content and Cross Cultural Initiatives at Rooted Ministries. Pastor of Families and Youth Ministry 1994-2023. Has taught at Eastern University, Covenant Seminary, and Biblical/Missio Seminary in areas of youth and educational ministries. Has written three books on youth ministry and short term mission trips.

**TE Jonathan Medlock:** *Northern California Presbytery.* PhD candidate in Education at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School where he has had a great deal of exposure to educational and discipleship training, Vice President of People & Culture for Geneva Benefits. Served as chair of various presbytery committees. Served on RBI 2009-2019, chair 2014-2019. Served as a pastor in charge of Christian education at two churches prior to being employed with Geneva.

**RE James Murphy:** *Blue Ridge Presbytery.* Works as an independent consultant, served in the marine corps, served as a ruling elder in Potomac Presbytery as well as Blue Ridge, served on the CDM permanent committee as both an alternate (2015-2016) and member (2016-2022), served on the credentials committee of Potomac Presbytery (2016-2022), vast experience in local churches at leading small group and discipleship ministry, been part of established and church plant opportunities in the PCA.

**RE Jack North:** *PeeDee Presbytery.* Educator (retired), spent career as a teacher and later administrator, ordained as RE in 1988 and served on

sessions of several PCA churches, served on Administration, Shepherding, and Credentials committees for PeeDee Presbytery, served on committees of commissioners at GA for CDM, MNA, CTS, and served on overtures committee.

**RE William Larkin Chapman, Jr.:** *Mississippi Valley Presbytery*. BS Mathematics, MBA in Finance, works as an insurance agent, served as a deacon and treasurer in his church before being called to the office of elder, has served in various roles of teaching and leading his church and also participates in interdenominational service opportunities.

## 5) BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF COVENANT THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### Class of 2027

TE Jimmy Agan, Metro Atlanta

RE Mark Ensio, Arizona

TE Robert Flayhart, Evangel

RE John Fitch, South Texas

TE Fredric Ryan Laughlin, Potomac

RE Dwight Jones, Central Georgia

#### Class of 2026

TE Russell St. John, Missouri

RE James Albritton, Evangel

TE David Sinclair, Calvary

RE Doug Hickel, Missouri

RE Ron McNalley, North Texas

RE Walter Turner, Pittsburgh

#### Class of 2025

TE Brian Cosby, Tennessee Valley

RE Samuel N. Graham, Covenant

RE Miles E. Gresham, Evangel

RE Donald Guthrie, Chicago Metro

RE Otis Pickett, Mississippi Valley

RE Curtis S. Shidemantle, Ascension

#### Class of 2024

TE Hugh M. Barlett, Missouri

RE William Bennett, Evangel

RE Jonathan P. Seda, Heritage

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RE Paul R. Stoll, Chicago Metro  
RE Gif Thornton, Nashville  
RE Frank Wicks Jr., Missouri

### B. To be Elected:

#### Class of 2028

6 members total (TE or RE)

One may be from another NAPARC denomination

### C. Nominations

#### Class of 2028

TE Brian Habig, Calvary  
TE Murray Lee, Evangel

RE David L. Duren, Houston Metro  
RE Bruce Harrington, Rocky Mountain  
RE Paul Stoll, Chicago Metro  
RE Gif Thornton, Nashville

### D. Biographical Sketches

**RE David Duren:** *Houston Metro*. Texas A&M: Mechanical Engineering; Computer Science. Founder, Chairman, CEO of Circon Energy, LLC; Founder, CEO of Kinected Energy LLC; Co-founder Net Zero, LLC (carbon and environmental trading); Chairman, The eAi Institute (not-for-profit research institute). Guest Lecturer, Texas A&M on leadership, sustainability, character development. Married to Gretchen; 5 children. Past Chair, Reformed Youth Ministries, Leadership Council of Texas A&M Association of Former Students; RE Christ the King PCA (Houston); joined CTS Advisory Board in 2023.

**TE Brian Habig:** *Calvary*. Mississippi State University. MDiv, Covenant Theological Seminary. RUF Campus Minister, Mississippi State University and Vanderbilt University. Founding Pastor and current Senior Pastor, Downtown Presbyterian Church (Greenville, SC). Married to Dana; 3 children. Presbytery Moderator; 2008. Contributor to *Presbyterion*. Preached at PCA General Assembly in 2013. Delivered Miller Preaching Lectures at RTS-Jackson. RUF Permanent Committee; joined CTS Board in 2014.

**RE Bruce Harrington:** *Rocky Mountain*. BA, Economics, Vanderbilt. MDiv, Covenant Theological Seminary. MBA, Washington University. Inaugural

Vice President for Advancement, CTS, 1984-1990. CFO at WaterStone, a \$250MM+ Christian community foundation in Colorado Springs. 35 years' experience as TE or RE. Currently, RE at Forestgate Presbyterian Church. Married to Connie; 3 children. Presbytery Shepherding Committee. CTS Advisory Board since 2010, joined CTS Board of Trustees in 2014. Author, *Grace-Centered Economics*.

**TE Murray Lee:** *Evangel*. Samford University. Covenant Theological Seminary. PhD (organizational communication), University of Alabama. Founding Pastor and Senior Pastor, Cahaba Park Church, 2007-2022. Currently, Executive Director with Mission to North America. Married to Kim; 3 children. Joined CTS Advisory Board in 2010 with service on the Advancement Committee.

**RE Paul Stoll:** *Chicago Metro*. BS, LeTourneau College. President of Armin Tool and Manufacturing (Elgin, IL). Married to Katy; 2 children. RE, Westminster Presbyterian Church (Elgin) for six terms. Also served as Deacon at Westminster Elgin. Elected to CTS Board in 2006.

**RE Gif Thornton:** *Nashville*. Graduate of Vanderbilt University and Vanderbilt Law. Managing Partner at Adams and Reese LLP. He is a Ruling Elder at Christ Presbyterian in Nashville and has served on its Administrative Commission and Personnel Committee. He serves on the Committee on Judicial Business at Nashville Presbytery. Gif's wife, Anna, served on the Advisory Board of the Francis A. Schaeffer Institute of Covenant Theological Seminary. The Thorntons have four children. Gif was first elected to the Seminary Board in 2010. Present - Chairman of the Trustee Development and Nominating Committee, serves on Executive Committee of Covenant Seminary Board.

## 6) COMMITTEE ON INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### Class of 2026

TE David Gilleran, Blue Ridge

RE Dennis Watts, Mississippi Valley



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Class of 2025**

TE Wallace Tinsley, Fellowship      RE Billy Ball, Evangel

### **Class of 2024**

TE L. Roy Taylor, Calvary      RE James Isbell, Tennessee Valley

### **Alternate**

TE Nathan Chambers, Pacific Northwest      RE Aaron Reeves, Hills and Plains

### **B. To be Elected:**

#### **Class of 2027**

1 TE and 1 RE

#### **Alternates**

1 TE and 1 RE

### **C. Nominations**

#### **Class of 2027**

TE Nathan Chambers, Pacific Northwest      RE Aaron Reeves, Hills and Plains

#### **Alternates**

TE Kenneth McHeard, Savannah River      Floor Nomination

### **D. Biographical Sketches**

**TE Nathan Chambers:** *Pacific Northwest.* MCS Old Testament at Regent College, PhD Biblical Studies at Durham University. Senior Pastor of Wiser Lake Chapel, Lynden, WA, called in 2019. Stated Clerk, Pasific Northwest Presbytery. Visiting Lecturer at Yellowstone Theological Institute. He is the author of *Reconsidering Creation Ex Nihilo in Genesis 1* (Eisenbrauns, 2020).

**TE Kenneth McHeard:** *Savannah River.* BA, Business Management, State University of NY (2001). MDiv Mid-America Baptist Theological Seminary (2006). Doctor of Religious Studies, Trinity Theological Seminary (2020). Asst Pastor of Discipleship at First Presbyterian Church, Augusta, GA. Stated Clerk NY State Presbytery 2019-2021. Gospel Priorities Conference Speaker 2016, 2018, 2020, 2021. PCA GA

## APPENDIX L

Recording Clerk 2016-present. PCA Historical Center Oversight Committee 2020-present. Interchurch Relations Committee Chair 2022.

**RE Aaron Reeves:** *Hills and Plains*. Oklahoma State University. Deacon, then Ruling Elder, Grace Church in Stillwater, OK. Married to wife Teri, and three children. Management of family business since 1997 along with work in the commercial and residential property management space. Serves on the board of Stillwater Life Services. Spiritual Formation Committee for Hills and Plains.

### 7) COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA

#### A. Present Personnel

##### *Teaching Elders:*

##### *Ruling Elders:*

##### **Class of 2028**

TE Jeremy Byrd, Great Lakes

RE Brett Doster, Gulf Coast  
RE Lance Kinzer, Heartland

##### **Class of 2027**

TE Dean Faulkner, Central Carolina  
TE Hansoo Jin, Korean Capital

RE Timothy Threadgill, MS Valley

##### **Class of 2026**

TE Roland Barnes, Savannah River

RE Brent Andersen, Central Carolina  
RE Jason Kang, Metro Atlanta

##### **Class of 2025**

TE R. Lyle Caswell Jr., SW Florida  
TE Robert A. Willetts, Tidewater

RE Ernie Shipman, N. New England

##### **Class of 2024**

TE Robert Penny, Mississippi Valley

RE Keith W. Goben, Pacific Northwest  
RE Julian Battle, Savannah River

##### **Alternates**

TE Hunter Brewer, Covenant

RE Samuel K. Suttle, MS Valley

**B. To be Elected:**

**Class of 2029**  
2 TEs and 1 RE

**Alternates**  
1 TE and 1 RE

**C. Nominations**

**Class of 2029**  
TE Hunter Brewer, Covenant RE Samuel K. Suttle, MS Valley  
TE Nate Keisel, Pittsburgh

**Alternates**  
TE Zachary Groff, Calvary RE Mitch Young, South Texas

**D. Biographical Sketches**

**TE Dr. Hunter Brewer:** *Covenant.* Graduate of Samford University and Reformed Theological Seminary. Planting Trinity Church PCA in Collierville, TN. Founder of the Mid-South PCA Church Planting Network. Served previously on MNA Permanent Committee. Planted Madison Heights Church PCA in Madison, MS. Assistant Pastor at Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church in Ridgeland, MS and Lakeland Presbyterian Church in Flowood, MS. Served on staff at Orangewood Presbyterian Church in Maitland, FL and Rainbow Presbyterian Church in Rainbow City, AL. Co-host of the 5 Points Church Planting podcast. Adjunct Professor at Birmingham Theological Seminary. In addition, he serves as a Church Planting Coach.

**TE Nate Keisel:** *Pittsburgh.* M.Div. from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 2014. No undergraduate degree. Church Planter at Mosaic Community Church in Jennette, PA. Served on the Credentials Committee for his first 6 years in the Pittsburgh Presbytery. Currently serving on the MTW Presbytery Committee. Filled the pulpit for various churches in the Presbytery and helped guide through mercy ministry or addiction situations. Has attended numerous Church Planter trainings including MNA Assessment, CP Training Tracks 1 and 2, Spanish River Bootcamp, Perimeter Journey Group Training, and MNA Mercy Ministry Training.

Formed a non-profit, Mosaic Community Church Development Center-youth leadership.

**TE Zachary Groff:** *Calvary*. B.A. Political Science, Temple University; M.Div., Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Ph.D. in progress, Highland Theological College. Pastor/Church Planter-Antioch Presbyterian Church, Woodruff, SC. Serves as Treasurer of the Calvary MNA Committee; Chairman, Sub-Committee on Strategic Planning for Church Planting, Calvary Presbytery MNA Committee. Member of the Steering Committee for the PCA Carolinas Church-Planting Network in NC and SC. Editor-in-Chief, *Presbyterian Polity*; Managing Editor, *The Confessional Presbyterian*; regular contributor, *Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals*, *Gospel Reformation Network*; and Song writer. Previously on full-time staff with the Coalition for Christian Outreach college ministry and GPTS (Director of Advancement and Admissions).

**RE Samuel Suttle:** *Mississippi Valley*. 1963 BS, Belhaven University; 1978 Doctor of Medicine, University of Mississippi Medical School; 1978-1981 Medical Residency in Family Practice, University of Alabama Medical School in Montgomery, AL. Current Alternate on the MNA Permanent Committee. Holds certifications from the American Academy of Family Physicians, Senior Medical Aviation Examiner (FAA); Certificate of Added Qualifications in Hospice and Palliative Care and in Geriatrics, and Medical Director in Long Term Care. Holds private pilot's license. Founding member of the Christian Medical and Dental Society. Ruling Elder at First Presbyterian Church in Louisville, MS. Married to Lisa for 41 years.

**RE Mitch Young:** *South Texas*. RE at CrossPointe Church in Austin, TX since early 2000s. Served on Presbytery MNA Committee for 9 years, including 3-years as Clerk of the Committee. Became interested in the Presbytery when his church went through a pastor retirement and seeking wisdom from the Presbytery on how to move forward. Served as Chair of the Search Committee and coordinated pulpit supply for the interim period. Currently is a Consulting Environmental Engineer. Undergraduate degree in Chemical Engineering from University of Texas and graduate degree from University of Washington in Environmental Engineering. Married for 32 years with 2 adult daughters.

## 8) COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO THE WORLD

### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2028**

TE Joshua Rieger, Houston Metro  
RE Scott Wulff, Ohio

RE Bryan Wintersteen, Evangel

#### **Class of 2027**

TE Maranatha Chung, Philadelphia  
TE Owen Lee, Korean Capital

RE Theo Hagg, Westminster

#### **Class of 2026**

TE Shaun M. Nolan, Pittsburgh  
TE Oscar R. Aylor, Eastern Carolina

RE John E. Bateman, North Texas

#### **Class of 2025**

TE Tom Patton, Evangel  
TE William E. Dempsey, Mississippi Valley

RE Byron Johnson, Metro Atlanta

#### **Class of 2024**

TE James E. Richter, Tennessee Valley

RE Daryl Brister, Houston Metro

RE David Kliewer, Rocky Mountain

#### **Alternates**

Vacancy

RE Alexander Jun, Korean SW OC

### **B. To be Elected:**

#### **Class of 2029**

2 TEs and 1 RE

#### **Alternates**

1TE and 1 RE

### **C. Nominations**

#### **Class of 2029**

TE Kevin Smith, Tennessee Valley  
TE Patrick Womack, Suncoast Florida

RE John Kunkel, North Florida

### Alternates

TE Larry Trotter, South Florida

RE David Moore, Central Florida

## D. Biographical Sketches

**TE Larry Trotter:** *South Florida.* B.S. Mathematics and Economics, Duke, 1983; M.Div., Westminster Theological Seminary, 1986; PhD in Communication, Regent University, 2007. Founding Pastor of Florida Coast Church, 2017-present. Served with MTW in Mexico for 27 years (1989-2016); MTW Church Planter Mexico City, Team Leader and Church Planter, Guadalajara, and Country Director of MTW Mexico 2012-2016. Served as Chairman of Missions and Church Planting Committee, Judicial Commission, and Moderator (2019) of South Florida Presbytery. Currently also serves as Adjunct Professor of Practical Theology, Knox Seminary, Ft. Lauderdale and Adjunct Professor of Practical Theology, Spanish Program at Westminster Seminary, Philadelphia.

**TE Kevin Smith:** *Tennessee Valley Presbytery.* Temple University; MTS from Westminster Theological Seminary and Chesapeake Theological Seminary, 1998. Senior Pastor of New City Fellowship, Chattanooga since 2012. Pastoral Intern (3 years) at Tenth Presbyterian, Philadelphia. Cross cultural church planter in Potomac Presbytery 1998-2005. Senior Pastor at Pinelands Presbyterian Church, Miami 2005-2012. Chair of RUF Committee in South Florida Presbytery. MNA church planter assessor for 10+ years. Preached at PCA General Assembly. Chaired GA Study Committee on Racial Reconciliation for 2 years. Served 2 terms on Covenant College Board of Trustees. MTW Regional Retreat speaker overseas since 2018.

**RE John Kunkel:** *North Florida.* BA Business Administration, Texas A&M. Ruling Elder, Pointe Vedra Presbyterian, church member 22 years. KPMG Supervising Senior Auditor 1986-1989, Houston. (1986-2001) VP of Finance and several other senior level positions with Pulte Home Corporation in Texas and Florida. (2001-2018) served as CFO, COO and CEO for Arendale Holding Corporation, a residential land development

company that serves subdivisions and country club developments; responsibilities included managing financial aspects of the projects, strategic planning, and contract negotiations. From 2018-2022 he served as CFO for Metro Diner & ConSul Partners, a restaurant company with 59 locations in 11 states.

**TE Patrick Womack:** *Suncoast Florida.* Western Carolina (BA '89), M.Div. RTS Jackson ('92). Senior Pastor at Bay PCA, Bonita Springs FL since 2022. Pastor of Westview PCA (1992-1996), Carolina PCA (1996-2010), Hazelwood PCA (2010-2020). Presbytery committee service with MTW, MNA, RUF, Shepherding, Credentials and Administration; Moderator of 3 Presbyteries. Since 2006 he served 2 full terms with CMTW and 1 partial term, as well as CMTW Chairman. CMTW chaired several subcommittees; member of CMTW Coordinator Search Subcommittee. Served PCA CoC Administration. Current Board of Christ's College, Taiwan. Led missions teams across the US and to over 5 countries.

**RE David Moore:** *Central Florida.* (BS Electrical Engineering, Auburn). 30-year career with PFM Financial Advisors, led the Southern US region with PFM in Strategic Planning Committee, Board of Directors and Executive Committee. Twenty years as RE at Orangewood PCA, serving as Treasurer, School Board member and now Executive Director of Orangewood Church and School Ministries with multimillion dollar budget. Brings executive business leadership and wide missions experience. Elected as Alternate on CMTW in 2021/2022. Lifelong and multi-generational commitment to missions. Has led missions trips with MTW for 25 years and active supporter of MTW missionaries.

## **9) BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION, INC.**

### **A. Present Personnel**

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2027**

TE Solomon Kim, S. New England

RE William O. Stone Jr., MS Valley

**Class of 2026**

RE Owen H. Malcolm, GA Foothills  
RE W. Russell Trapp, Providence  
DE Andrew Schmidt, Central Carolina

**Class of 2025**

TE Martin Wagner, Evangel      RE Willis L. Frazer, Covenant

**Class of 2024**

TE Patrick W. Curles, Nashville      RE John Alexander, Metro Atlanta  
RE Rob W. Morton, Central Georgia

**B. To be Elected:**

**Class of 2028**

2 members (TE, RE or DE)

**C. Nominations**

**Class of 2028**

TE Patrick Curles, Nashville      RE John Alexander, Metro Atlanta  
RE Robbin W. Morton, Central GA

**D. Biographical Sketches**

**RE John Alexander:** *Metro Atlanta*. B.S. Economics, Duke University. Chartered Financial Analyst (2012). UBS—pension fund, foundation, endowment manager; Nasdaq institutional data division—sales; DYO Investments—partner and general manager. PCA Foundation board member since 2019. Investment Committee at Covenant College (2013-2022). Ruling elder at ChristChurch Presbyterian (2010-present).

**TE Patrick Curles:** *Nashville*. B.A. History, Philosophy, German, Auburn University. M.Div., Westminster Theological Seminary. Th.M. Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. Executive Pastor, Covenant Presbyterian Church, Nashville, Tennessee (2022-present). Trinity Presbyterian Church, Montgomery, Alabama, Executive Minister (2003-2021), Asst. Minister of Discipleship (2001-2002). Associate Pastor, Faith Presbyterian Church, Birmingham, Alabama (1994-2001). PCA Foundation board



member since 2019. Administrative Committee of Commissioners (1999). Bills and Overtures Committee of Commissioners (2002, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2014, and 2015). Evangel Presbytery Candidates, Licentiates, and Interns Committee, Chairman (three years), Member (two years). Southeast Alabama Presbytery Examinations Committee, Chairman and Member (nine years). *Book of Common Worship*, Compiled and Edited (2015).

**RE Robbin Morton:** *Central Georgia.* B.A. Industrial Psychology, Economics, University of Tulsa. Secure Health Plans of Georgia—President/CEO (15 years, retired 2015). Human resource management (30 years, including as corporate vice president). PCA Foundation board member (nine years). PCA Administrative Committee (past PCA Foundation representative). Central Georgia Presbytery, Stated Clerk (2013-2023). North Macon Presbyterian Church, Stated Clerk of Session (2015-present). Covenant Presbyterian Church, Milledgeville, Georgia, Stated Clerk of Session (20 years). Strong Tower Fellowship mission church, Clerk of Temporary Session (six years). Board of Directors, Goodwill Industries International (past). Ruling Elder at North Macon Presbyterian Church.

## 10) BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF GENEVA BENEFITS

### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2027**

RE L. Robert Clark, Tennessee Valley

RE David C. Allegood, Pittsburgh

RE Huey Townsend, MS Valley

#### **Class of 2026**

TE William Chang, Korean SW OC

RE Ken Downer, Highlands

RE Chris Rogers, Covenant

**Class of 2025**

TE Roderick Miles, Northern California    RE Gary D. Campbell, Metro Atlanta  
RE Scott P. Magnuson, Pittsburgh

**Class of 2024**

TE Andrew E. Field, Metropolitan NY    RE Cody Dick, Houston Metro  
DE Theodore J. Dankovich, Calvary

**B. To be Elected:**

**Class of 2028**

3 Members (TE, RE, or DE)

**C. Nominations**

**Class of 2028**

TE Andrew E. Field, Metropolitan NY    RE James S. Clark, Mississippi Valley  
DE Theodore J. Dankovich, Calvary

**D. Biographical Sketches**

**RE James Clark:** *Mississippi Valley*. B.A. Business Administration, University of Mississippi. Master of Business Administration, Millsaps College. Chartered Financial Analyst. Certified Financial Planner. Certified Financial Analyst Society of Mississippi—Member. BankPlus Wealth Management Group—Senior Vice President and Wealth Strategies Manager. Ruling Elder at Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church, Jackson, Mississippi. Geneva Board Recommendation.

**DE Theodore J. Dankovich:** *Calvary*. B.S. Business Accounting, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN. Director-Finance and Operations Co.: Mitchell Road Presbyterian Church, Greenville SC. Member, Deacon (1994-1996, 1999-2001), Finance Chairman (1995-1996, 2000-2001), and Capital Campaign & Building Committee (2012-2015, 2018-2019), Mitchell Road PC, Greenville. Previously served Geneva Benefits Group Board, Class of 2019, Class of 2023 (became 2024). Chapter president: NACBA (2007-2013). Board member: Miracle Hill Enterprises (2018-2023).

**TE Andrew E. Field:** *Metropolitan New York*. B.S Commerce, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA; M-Div, Westminster Theological Seminary,

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Glenside, PA. Executive Pastor, Redeemer West Side, New York City, NY. Advisor, Finance and Ops, Co: Genormera (2010-2014); Associate Co.: Allen & Co. (1990-1992); Analyst Co.: Bear Stearns (1988-1990) Service to Presbytery: Stated Clerk, Candidates Committee, Presbytery Treasurer, Session Records, MNA Committee, Overtures. Treasurer and President, BLS Homeowners Association.

### 11) BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF RIDGE HAVEN

#### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2028**

TE Travis Hutchinson, S. New England RE Tuan La, South Texas

#### **Class of 2027**

TE David Sasser Hall, Fellowship

TE Richard Smith, Susquehanna Valley

#### **Class of 2026**

RE Art Fox, North Florida

RE Ellison Smith, Pee Dee

#### **Class of 2025**

TE Larry Doughan, Iowa

RE John Randall Berger, E. Carolina

#### **Class of 2024**

TE David Hart Sanders, Pee Dee

RE Pete Austin IV, Tennessee Valley

#### B. To be Elected:

#### **Class of 2029**

2 Members (either TE or RE)

#### C. Nominations

RE Thomas A. Cook, Gulfstream

TE Andy White, Westminster

## D. Biographical Sketches

**RE Thomas A. Cook, Jr.:** *Gulfstream*. B.A., Presbyterian College, Clinton, SC. Attended the University of South Carolina School of Law. U.S. Army Reserves (1966-1973). Insurance Broker, Retired. National and statewide advisory councils for the Insurance Co. of North America (now CIGNA), Crum & Forster, and State Auto Mutual Insurance Co. Past president of the South Palm Beach County Insurance Agents Association. President and Director of the Oak Laurel Property Owners Association, Brevard, NC, next door to Ridge Haven, Brevard. Trustee, Deacon, RE (1994-2013), Seacrest Blvd. Presbyterian Church, Delray Beach, FL. Served on Presbytery Credentials Committee; delegate to several GAs.

**TE Andy White:** *Westminster*. BA, King College; M-Div, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, IL; D-Min, Covenant Theological Seminary, St. Louis, MO. Honorably Retired (2012). Previous pastorates Bristol, TN; North Miami, FL; Burlington, NC; Johnson City, TN. Served in Mission to the World, Partner Relations Department (1995-2006). Served two full terms (2012-2023) on Ridge Haven Board, including Vice-President and President. Considers Ridge Haven to play a vital role in recruitment of the next generation of church leaders, pastors, and missionaries.

## 12) COMMITTEE ON REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP

### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2028**

TE Kenneth Foster, Heritage

RE Stephen Berry, S. New England  
RE Tobe Hester, Lowcountry

#### **Class of 2027**

TE Martin Biggs, Hills and Plains  
TE Eric Zellner, Southeast Alabama

RE Justen Ellis, Northwest Georgia

#### **Class of 2026**

TE Iron D. Kim, Northern California

RE Jeremy Kath, Nashville  
RE Rob Grabenkort, Georgia Foothills

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Class of 2025**

TE Joshua A. Martin, Calvary                      RE Charles Powell Jr., Evangel  
TE David Osborne, Eastern Carolina

### **Class of 2024**

TE Jackson Howell, Tidewater                      RE Charles Duggan III, Central GA  
RE Niles McNeel, Mississippi Valley

### **Alternates**

TE David Felker, Mississippi Valley                      Vacancy

### **B. To be Elected:**

### **Class of 2029**

2 TEs and 1 RE

### **Alternates**

1 TE and 1 RE

### **C. Nominations**

### **Class of 2029**

TE David Felker, Mississippi Valley                      RE Stephen Gordon, Ohio Valley  
TE Brian Frey, Pacific Northwest

### **Alternates**

TE Billy Crain, South Texas                      RE John Miller, Eastern Carolina

### **D. Biographical Sketches**

**TE David Felker:** *Mississippi Valley*. M. Div. Reformed Theological Seminary, 2012. Executive Minister, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS. Previously served at First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, as College Coordinator, 2008-2012; Discipleship Minister and Young Adults Minister, 2012-2021. Served on Administrative Committee and Mission to the World Committee in Mississippi Valley Presbytery. Currently alternate for the RUF Permanent Committee.

**TE Brian Frey:** *Pacific Northwest*. B.S. Atmospheric Sciences, University of Georgia, 2004; M. Div. Westminster Theological Seminary, 2011. Pastor, Boise Presbyterian Church. Church planter, Boise Presbyterian Church, 2019-2023; RUF Campus Minister, Boise State University, 2011-2019. RUF Intern, University of Missouri, 2005-2007; Harvest USA Intern, 2009-2010. Served as RUF Committee Chairman, Pacific NW Presbytery, 2020-present; General Assembly Committees of Commissioners, MTW 2015 and RUF 2022. He is a son of the PCA; he and his wife of 19 years have 3 children.

**TE Billy Crain:** *South Texas*. BA History, University of Texas at Austin, 1996; M. Div. Reformed Theological Seminary, 2003. Head Pastor, Christ Church Presbyterian, Kerrville, TX. RUF Intern, Auburn, 1997-1999; College Coordinator, First Presbyterian Church, Jackson, MS, 1999-2003; Account Coordinator, KMA Direct Communications, Dallas, 2003-2004; Teacher and Coach, Providence Christian School of Texas, Dallas, 2003-2007; RUF Campus Minister, Rice University, 2007-2014; Assistant Church Planter/Assistant Pastor Christ Community Church, Fayetteville, AR, 2014-2019. Served various presbytery committees: Candidates and Credentials, Houston Metro; MTW Committee, Covenant; Administrative Committee and Chairman, Hills and Plains; RUF Committee, South Texas (current).

**RE Stephen Gordon:** *Ohio Valley*. B.A. Economics, Virginia Tech; M.A. Economics, George Mason University; PhD. Economics, University of Kentucky, 2017. Data Scientist, Cash App (Block, Inc.); part-time counselor. Member of Bates Creek Presbyterian Church, Lexington, KY; RUF Committee, Ohio Valley Presbytery. Involved with RUF at Virginia Tech as an undergrad; served in local church international student ministry while living in Belgium; has supported RUF prayerfully and financially, also helping to mentor RUF ministers and students.

**RE John Miller:** *Eastern Carolina*. Undergraduate North Carolina State University. Works in Commercial Real Estate. Previously Commercial Construction. Church member at Christ the King in Raleigh, NC. Involved with RUF during undergrad. Lived in and then purchased a house for RUF students at NC State, which continues to be a ministry resource for the RUF students there.

### 13) STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION

#### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

##### **Class of 2028**

TE Rhett Dodson, Ohio	RE Daniel A. Carrell, James River
TE Brad Evans, S. New England	RE John Maynard, Central Florida
TE David Garner, Phil. Metro West	RE John B. White Jr., Metro Atlanta

##### **Class of 2026**

TE Art Sartorius, Siouxlans	RE James Eggert, Southwest Florida
TE Fred Greco, Houston Metro	RE John Bise, Providence
TE Guy Prentiss Waters, MS Valley	RE John Pickering, Evangel

##### **Class of 2025**

TE Paul L. Bankson, Central Georgia	RE Steve Dowling, Southeast Alabama
TE David F. Coffin Jr., Potomac	RE Frederick Neikirk, Ascension
TE Paul D. Kooistra, Warrior	RE R. Jackson Wilson, GA Foothills

##### **Class of 2024**

TE Hoochan Paul Lee, Korean NE	RE Howie Donahoe, Pacific NW
TE Sean M. Lucas, Covenant	RE Melton Ledford Duncan, Calvary
TE Michael F. Ross, Columbus Metro	RE Samuel J. Duncan, Grace

#### B. To be Elected:

##### **Class of 2028**

3 TEs and 3 REs

#### C. Nominations

##### **Class of 2028**

TE Jay Bruce, Hills and Plains	RE Howie Donahoe, Pacific NW
TE Eric Landry, South Texas	RE Frederic Marcinak, Calvary
TE Hoochan Paul Lee, Korean NE	RE Caleb Stegall, Heartland

#### D. Biographical Sketches

**TE Jay Bruce:** *Hills and Plains*. A.B. in Engineering Sciences and English Dartmouth College. B.A. and M.A. in Theology University of Oxford. M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy Baylor University. Philosophy Professor at John Brown University (2020-present) and previously Associate Professor (2014-2020). Associate Pastor Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville (2019-present), previously Assistant Pastor (2018-19). Hills and Plains Presbytery: Administrative Committee (Chairman 2023), Candidates and Credentials Committee (2022-present). General Assembly: Overtures 2022. Author of *Rights in the Law: The Importance of God's Free Choices in the Thought of Francis Turretin*, and over one hundred additional publications.

**TE Eric Landry:** *South Texas*. B.A. Northern Arizona University (1998). M.Div. Westminster Seminary California (2003). Pastor at Redeemer Presbyterian Church in Austin, TX. South Coast Presbytery: Planted Christ Presbyterian Church in Murrieta, CA (2005), Recording Clerk, Chair of Candidates and Credentials Committee. South Texas Presbytery: Mission to North America Committee (current), moderator (current), Judicial Commission (2020). General Assembly: Secretary for Committee of Commissioners for Interchurch Relations (2019) Overtures Committee (2021). Executive Editor of Modern Reformation magazine (2007-10; 2015-20). Chief Content Officer for Sola Media (2021-present). Married to Sarah and father to Andrew and Allison.

**TE Hoochan Paul Lee:** *Korean Northeastern*. Pastor at River End Reformed Church in River Edge, NJ. In Korean Northeastern Presbytery: Candidate Examining Committee chair (2013-present), Presbytery Stated Clerk (2013-present). In the General Assembly: Recording Clerk (2015-18; 21-23), Computing Clerk (2019), Theological Exam Committee (alternate 2009-2010), Interchurch Relations (2016-18), Nominating Committee (2011, 2014-2023), Overtures Committee (2011, 2014-2023), Review of Presbytery Records (2010, 2014-2023; secretary in 2016-17; vice chair in 2019, 2020-21; chair 2022-23), and Standing Judicial Commission (2019-2024).

**RE Howie Donahoe:** *Pacific Northwest*. BS, Political Science, US Air Force Academy. MS, Aeronautical Technology, Arizona State University. Retired Airline Pilot. PCA Member for 41 years and RE for 37 years across eight churches, five states, and four presbyteries. Commissioner to



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

29 of the last 32 GAs. Moderator of the 47<sup>th</sup> GA in Dallas. Elected six times for terms on the SJC, having now served for 25 years. Current SJC secretary. Five children with his wife Debbie, all married and members of their local churches. Eight grandchildren and two on the way.

**RE Frederic Marcinak:** *Calvary*. BA, History, The Citadel. JD, University of South Carolina School of Law. LLM, University of Sussex. Practicing attorney and partner in a law firm he founded in 2019. Served as moderator of Calvary presbytery in 2016. Current chairman of presbytery Administration Committee. Current clerk of session of Woodruff Road Presbyterian Church, and past chairman of Committee on Administration. Experience serving as chairman and clerk for judicial cases at session and presbytery levels. Current chairman of GA's Committee on Constitutional Business. He and his wife Tara are parents of three children.

**RE Caleb Stegall:** *Heartland*. BA, English Literature, Geneva College. JD, University of Kansas School of Law. Practicing attorney and judge for 25 years. Currently serving as Associate Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court. Member of Grace Presbyterian Church in Lawrence, Kansas, for almost 30 years. Served as ruling elder for over 20 years, including leading the church as Moderator Pro Tem through a transition from the EPC into the PCA. He and his wife Ann have five adult sons, two daughters-in-law, and three grandchildren, all faithfully following Jesus.

### 14) THEOLOGICAL EXAMINING COMMITTEE

#### A. Present Personnel

*Teaching Elders:*

*Ruling Elders:*

#### **Class of 2026**

TE Jonathan Master, Calvary

RE James Elkin, Mississippi Valley

#### **Class of 2025**

TE Guy Richard, Metro Atlanta

RE KJ Drake, Central Indiana

**Class of 2024**

TE Bruce Baugus, Great Lakes

RE Edward Currie, Mississippi Valley

**Alternates**

TE Drew Martin, Central Carolina

RE Jim Wert, Metro Atlanta

---

**B. To be Elected:**

**Class of 2027**

1 TE and 1 RE

**Alternates**

1 TE and 1 RE

**C. Nominations**

**Class of 2027**

TE Drew Martin, Central Carolina

RE Jim Wert, Metro Atlanta

**Alternates**

TE Christopher Bechtel, Pacific NW

RE Josh Spears, Hills and Plains

**D. Biographical Sketches**

**TE Drew Martin:** *Central Carolina.* BA Political Science and Psychology, University of North Carolina; MDiv and MA in Theology, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary; PhD, Vanderbilt University. Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Covenant Theological Seminary. Previously taught theology and Church History at Gordon-Conwell Seminary. Has served on Presbytery theological examination committees for ten years and chaired the Exams Committee in Central Carolina Presbytery for five years. He has served on numerous Committees of Commissioners at the General Assembly and also on the Overtures Committee.

**TE Christopher Bechtel:** *Pacific Northwest.* BA Philosophy, Covenant College 2004; MDiv, Covenant Theological Seminary, 2008; PhD in Hebrew Bible, University of Edinburgh, 2012. Senior Pastor, Evergreen Church, Salem OR. Former research associate with Scottish Council on Human Bioethics. Visiting professor of Old Testament, Covenant

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Theological Seminary. Adjunct Professor of Bible at Reach Training Institute, Salem OR. Serving sixth term as chair of the Candidates and Credentials Committee for Pacific Northwest Presbytery. Board member Northwest Church Planting Network. Married to Jackie for 19 years. Five children ages 3-14.

**RE Jim Wert:** *Metro Atlanta*. Political Science and German degrees, University of North Carolina; MBA Harvard Business School and Baker Scholar at Harvard. Member of the Presbytery Credentials Committee from 2000-2022 initially with North Georgia Presbytery and later as part of Atlanta Metro Presbytery. Retiring chairman of the Geneva Benefits Board of Directors; Served on the GA Overtures Committee numerous times and as 43<sup>rd</sup> Moderator of the General Assembly in 2015. Married to Emily for 43 years and they have four adult children.

**RE Josh Spears:** *Hills and Plains*. MA in Philosophy and a BA in Theology. Served for a few years on the Candidates and Credentials Committee for Hills and Plains Presbytery. Served on the Session of City Presbyterian Church for almost seven years. Has taught theology, Bible and philosophy courses for over 25 years in private Christian schools as well as public universities in Oklahoma City.

**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT OF THE  
NOMINATING COMMITTEE  
TO THE FIFTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

The Nominating Committee of the General Assembly convened in Richmond, Virginia at the Greater Richmond Convention Center, on Wednesday, June 12, 2024. Chairman TE Jared Nelson called the meeting to order at 4:33 p.m. with prayer.

Members attending:

<b><u>Presbytery</u></b>	<b><u>Member</u></b>	<b><u>Class</u></b>
Ascension	TE Jared Nelson - <b>Chairman</b>	2025
Blue Ridge	TE Stuart Pratt	2025
Catawba Valley	TE William Thraillkill	2024
Central Florida	TE Joseph L. Creech	2025
Cenrtal Georgia	TE John Mitchell	2024
Central Indiana	TE Charles Anderson	2026
Eastern Canada	TE Frank Garcia	2024
Eastern Pennsylvania	TE Taylor Anthony Bradley	2024
Evangel	TE Michael Brock	2026
Grace	TE John Franklin	2024
Great Lakes	RE Jerome Gorgon	2024
Gulfstream	TE Matt Wilson	2026
Heartland	TE Rick E. Franks	2024
Heritage	RE Tyler Hogan	2025
Hills and Plains	RE Jeff Chewning	2024
Houston Metro	RE Dave Cias - <b>Secretary</b>	2024
Illiana	TE Alex Eppstein	2026
Iowa	TE Brian Janssen	2026
James River	TE J. Andrew Conrad	2025
Korean Eastern	TE Andrew Kim	2026
Korean Northeastern	TE Hoochan Paul Lee	2024
Korean Southeastern	TE Anthony Lee	2026
Metro Atlanta	TE Bruce Terrell	2026
Missouri	RE John Ranheim	2024
Nashville	RE John Bryant	2025
New Jersey	TE Stephen O'Neil	2026

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

New River	TE Michael VanDerLinden	2026
New York State	TE Tim LeCroy	2026
North Florida	TE Dennis Griffith	2026
Northern Illinois	TE Justin Coverstone	2026
Northern New England	TE Per Almquist	2025
Northwest Georgia	TE Clif Daniell	2025
Ohio	TE Jacob Piland	2025
Ohio Valley	TE Larry C. Hoop	2025
Pacific Northwest	RE Micah Meeuwssen	2024
Palmetto	TE Andrew Davis	2025
Pee Dee	TE Matthew Dallas Adams	2025
Philadelphia Metro West	RE Nathan Carlson	2024
Piedmont Triad	RE Richard Jones	2025
Pittsburgh	TE Jon Price	2026
Platte Valley	TE Michael Gordon	2026
Potomac	TE Porter Harlow	2026
Rocky Mountain	TE Matt Giesman	2025
Savannah River	TE Mike Hearon	2024
Siouxlands	TE Nathan Lee	2025
South Florida	TE David Barry	2026
Southeast Alabama	TE Parker Johnson	2024
Southern New England	TE Robert Steven Hill	2024
Southwest Florida	TE Jonathan Winfree	2025
Tidewater	TE Benjamin Cameron Lyon	2026
Warrior	TE Richard Martin Vise Jr.	2025
Westminster	TE Robert E. Dykes	2024
Wisconsin	TE Michael Vogel	2024

Seven floor nominations were reviewed for eligibility, of which none were found to be ineligible.

The Chairman requested volunteers to compile and format the biographical data accompanying the Floor Nominations.

**MSP** that the Committee adjourn.

Chairman Nelson adjourned the meeting at 4:52 p.m. and TE Brian Janssen closed the meeting with prayer.

Respectfully Submitted,

TE Jared Nelson, Chairman

RE Dave Cias, Secretary

## COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS

### Class of 2028

#### Nominating Committee Nominee

TE Per Almquist, N. New England

#### Floor Nominee

TE David Strain, Mississippi Valley

**TE Per Almquist:** *Northern New England.* D. Min “Presbyterian Polity in Action: A Commentary on the Book of Church Order of the PCA.” Pastor-church planter, Free Grace Presbyterian, Lewiston, ME. Served multiple years as CCB chair, multiple years as RPR chair and vice-chair. Represented PCA at Synod for L' Église réformée du Québec. Served on various Assembly CoCs. Stated Clerk, Ministerial Relations Committee chair, and Recording Clerk of Northern New England Presbytery. Previously served as Associate Pastor and Clerk at Session of Christ the Redeemer, Portland, ME, and as Associate Librarian for Covenant Theological Seminary.

**TE David Strain:** *Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.* Senior Minister of the First Presbyterian Church of Jackson, MS, having previously served churches in Columbus, MS, and London, England. He holds degrees from Duncan of Jordanstone College of Art in Dundee, the University of Glasgow, and Edinburgh Theological Seminary, and holds a Doctor of Ministry Degree from Reformed Theological Seminary. He has served as the chairman of the Candidates and Credentials Committee, and as the Moderator of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley, and he has often served the General Assembly as a member of the Overtures Committee. He is the Convener of the Twin Lakes Fellowship.

## COMMITTEE ON INTERCHURCH RELATIONS

### Alternates

#### Nominating Committee Nominee

#### Floor Nominee

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Vacant

RE James B. Isbell, Tennessee Valley

RE Trevor Laurence, Piedmont Triad

**RE James B. Isbell:** *Tennessee Valley*, Owner, Windrock Insurance Agency, RE Covenant Presbyterian Church, Oak Ridge, TN, (2009-present), Class of 2024 member of IRC. Served on Theological Examining Committee and a Judicial Commission for Tennessee Valley Presbytery. Attended General Assembly seven times, Served on Committee of Commissioners for Administrative Committee (2018), and Committee of Commissioners Overtures Commission (2019). Has attended the ARP General Synod and visited a Free Church of Scotland Congregation in the UK, served as fraternal delegate to the OPC in 2023, and NAPARC delegate.

**RE Trevor Laurence:** *Piedmont Triad*, BA, Religion, University of Florida (2009); MA, Christian Thought, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (2013); PhD, Theological Ethics, University of Exeter (2020). Executive Director, Catechesia Institute; Theologian-in-Residence, Trinity Church. Planting pastor of non-PCA Trinity Church (2012–16), led church into PCA in 2016, RE at Trinity thereafter. Moderator, Piedmont Triad Presbytery, 2023. Commissioner to last seven GAs, Overtures Committee (2019, 2021–24). Author, *Cursing with God: The Imprecatory Psalms and the Ethics of Christian Prayer* (Baylor, 2022).

## COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO NORTH AMERICA

### Class of 2029

#### Nominating Committee Nominee

TE Nate Keisel, Pittsburgh

#### Floor Nominee

TE Nate Shurden, Nashville

**TE Nate Keisel.** *Pittsburgh*. M.Div. from Reformed Presbyterian Theological Seminary in 2014. No undergraduate degree. Church Planter at Mosaic Community Church in Jennette, PA. Served on the Credentials Committee for his first 6 years in the Pittsburgh Presbytery. Currently serving on the MTW Presbytery Committee. Filled the pulpit for various churches in the Presbytery and helped guide through mercy ministry or addiction situations. Has attended numerous Church Planter trainings including MNA Assessment, CP Training Tracks 1 and 2, Spanish River Bootcamp, Perimeter Journey Group Training, and MNA Mercy Ministry Training.

Formed a non-profit, Mosaic Community Church Development Center-youth leadership.

**TE Nate Shurden.** *Nashville.* B.A. Bannockburn College, M.Div. Reformed Theological Seminary (Jackson), DMin Candidate Reformed Theological Seminary (Charlotte). Church Planter and Senior Minister of Cornerstone Presbyterian Church in Franklin, TN. Served on the Mission to North America Committee and Campus Ministry Committee of the Nashville Presbytery. Served on General Assembly Committee of Commissioners for MNA, Covenant College, MTW, and Overtures. Adjunct Theology Professor at New College Franklin (Franklin, TN). Board member of Grace Christian Academy (Franklin, TN). Publications in *Tabletalk*, The Gospel Coalition, He Reads Truth, and interviewed recently by Stephanie Hubach for an article in *ByFaith*.

## COMMITTEE ON MISSION TO THE WORLD

### Class of 2029

#### Nominating Committee Nominee

TE Kevin Smith, Tennessee Valley

#### Floor Nominee

TE Jamie Peipon, Mississippi Valley

**TE Kevin Smith:** *Tennessee Valley.* Temple University; MTS from Westminster Theological Seminary and Chesapeake Theological Seminary, 1998. Senior Pastor of New City Fellowship, Chattanooga, since 2012. Pastoral Intern (3 years) at Tenth Presbyterian, Philadelphia. Cross cultural church planter in Potomac Presbytery 1998-2005. Senior Pastor at Pinelands Presbyterian Church, Miami, 2005-2012. Chair of RUF Committee in South Florida Presbytery. MNA church planter assessor for 10+ years. Preached at PCA General Assembly. Chaired GA Study Committee on Racial Reconciliation for 2 years. Served 2 terms on Covenant College Board of Trustees. MTW Regional Retreat speaker overseas since 2018.

**TE Jamie Peipon:** *Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.* Minister of Missions at First Pres-Jackson, (M.Div, RTS-Jackson). Responsible for \$650,000 global mission budget (60 missionaries) and \$300,000 American church planting (15 plants) and RUF support budget. Tchaikovsky Academy of Music-Ukraine (Bachelor's & Master's). Presbytery service: MTW committee, commission to plant local multi-ethnic church. Overseas



experience: Lived in Kyiv, Ukraine, for eight years later serving the church there (married to a Ukrainian). Fluent in Ukrainian and Russian. Upon 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine, spent six weeks in Ukraine and Poland working alongside MTW team. Recently led mission trips/visits to Moldova, Honduras, South Africa, Malawi, Poland, Ukraine.

## BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF COVENANT COLLEGE

### Class of 2027

<b>Nominating Committee Nominee</b>	<b>Floor Nominee</b>
-------------------------------------	----------------------

RE John C. Kwasny, Mississippi Valley	TE Nathan Newman, Potomac
---------------------------------------	---------------------------

**RE John Kwasny:** *Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley*. Ph.D. Christian Education, Trinity Theological Seminary; M.A. Counseling, Regent University; B.A. Psychology, Oral Roberts University. Executive Ministry Director at Pear Orchard Presbyterian Church. Previous experience directing children's, discipleship, and educational ministries. Presently director of One Story Ministries (second largest provider of Sunday School curricula in the PCA), authoring Biblical discipleship curriculum for the church, home, and Christian school. Served on CDM permanent committee in past, as well as CDM children's ministry team. Served on Christian education and credentials committee of presbytery.

**TE Nathan Newman:** *Potomac Presbytery*. B.A from Covenant College, 2011. M.Div. from RTS-DC, 2017. Currently serves as Minister to Members of Congress with MNA's Ministry to State and as an Air Force Reserve Chaplain. Prior pastoral experience includes work at McLean PC. Presbytery work includes service on the committee overseeing interns and candidates and the shepherding committee. At the Assembly level, served as Chairman for the Commission writing the petition regarding the practice of medical and surgical gender reassignment. He has been recognized for his years of recruiting and fundraising efforts on behalf of Covenant College.

## STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION

### Class of 2028

#### Nominating Committee Nominee

TE Jay Bruce, Hills and Plains

#### Floor Nominee

TE Ray Cannata, Southern Louisiana

**TE Jay Bruce:** *Hills and Plains*. A.B. in Engineering Sciences and English Dartmouth College. B.A. and M.A. in Theology University of Oxford. M.A. and Ph.D. in Philosophy Baylor University. Philosophy Professor at John Brown University (2020-present) and previously Associate Professor (2014-2020). Associate Pastor Covenant Presbyterian Church, Fayetteville (2019-present), previously Assistant Pastor (2018-19). Hills and Plains Presbytery: Administrative Committee (Chairman 2023), Candidates and Credentials Committee (2022-present). General Assembly: Overtures 2022. Author of *Rights in the Law: The Importance of God's Free Choices in the Thought of Francis Turretin*, and over one hundred additional publications.

**RE Ray Cannata:** *Southern Louisiana*. B.A., Wake Forest; M.Div. & Th.M. Princeton Seminary; D.Min. Westminster Seminary; Sr. Pastor, Redeemer Presbyterian, New Orleans (19 years). PCA member 34 years and PCA pastor 26 years. Commissioner to each of the last 25 GAs. Moderator of two Presbyteries. Served 8 years on the Standing Judicial Commission. Married to Kathy 33 years. Two children; professing believers: Andrew Calvin & Rachel Grace.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

# APPENDIX M

## PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA FOUNDATION, INC. REPORT TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY

The PCA Foundation is pleased to report that, by God’s grace, the PCA Foundation engaged in 2023 in significant work of the Church as set forth in the Great Commission. We are pleased to see how the Lord continued even through a difficult year to enable the PCA Foundation to advance and manifest His Kingdom.

Total gifts to the PCA Foundation during 2023 were \$47.6 million. These gifts include a number of gifts of appreciated non-cash property or proceeds of its sale (real estate, S corporation stock, cryptocurrency).

We are pleased to report that the PCA Foundation distributed, or granted to ministry, \$32.9 million during 2023. Distributions to PCA churches were \$15.9 million, distributions to PCA Committees and Agencies were \$7.3 million, and distributions to other Christian ministries were \$9.7 million.

We continue to look for opportunities to work with PCA churches and their members, and other individuals and families, to increase giving to advance and reveal the Kingdom. Among other initiatives, we intend to continue and enhance the free Smart Giving Workshops for, and offer smart giving resources to, PCA churches in 2024.

The 2023 distributions and grants to ministry by the PCA Foundation were as follows:

	<u>12/31/2023</u>
Mission to the World	\$ 616,000
Mission to North America	333,000
Committee on Discipleship Ministries	19,000
Administrative Committee	1,643,000
RBI-Ministerial Relief	62,000
Reformed University Fellowship	4,210,000

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Covenant College	129,000
Covenant Theological Seminary	188,000
PCA Foundation	38,000
Ridge Haven	118,000
<i>Total Committees &amp; Agencies</i>	<u>\$ 7,356,000</u>
PCA Churches	15,909,000
Other Christian Ministries	<u>9,661,000</u>
<i>Total</i>	<u><u>\$ 32,926,000</u></u>

The PCA Foundation’s total assets were \$256.8 million as of December 31, 2023, an increase of \$56.5 million over the December 31, 2022 total assets of \$200.3 million. The primary reasons that total assets increased \$56.5 million during 2023 were that gifts to the PCA Foundation to fund accounts exceeded grant distributions by \$14.7 million and asset valuation increased \$41.8 million due to financial market gains, including the increase in value of a non-cash asset from a 2021 complex gift donation. Much of the funds contributed to the Foundation go out as grants within a relatively short period of time — often within the same or the following year. Therefore, the PCA Foundation may realize significant amounts as both contributions and grants in a given year, meaning that total assets may stay about the same from year to year; however, in some years the Foundation may experience substantial increases or decreases.

The PCA Foundation has and continues to make significant progress in serving with members and friends of the PCA. Over the last 20 years, total assets have grown from \$31.6 million to \$256.8 million. These total assets provide a sound base for future financial support of PCA Churches, PCA Committees and Agencies, and other Christian ministries.

Coincident with the growth of its assets over the last 20 years, the PCA Foundation has received \$568.4 million in gifts, and made distributions to ministries totaling \$250.0 million.

During 2023, the PCA Foundation continued its increased intentional outreach to individuals and families, churches, presbyteries and ministries.

While focused primarily in 2023 on technology projects to achieve cost savings and greater service to donors, and creation of full Smart Giving Workshop materials and a suite of complex-gift calculating illustrations, the president of the Foundation continued outreach to donors and prospects, and presented the Foundation's work and services to churches and individual prospects and donors in San Diego, Orange, and Los Angeles counties in California, and Greenville County in South Carolina. In 2024, the Foundation will continue presenting Smart Giving Workshops, both live and via Zoom, sponsored by individual PCA churches.

In response to the COVID-19 pandemic in early 2020, the Foundation introduced an online giving program for PCA churches. For each church that chose to participate, the PCA Foundation provided the church with a link to a secure online giving page to which it could direct its members and donors via the church's website or email or other notification methods. The PCA Foundation imposes a very small charge to defray part of the costs of the service, but no charge to churches that also maintain a church designated fund. Since the program's inception, the PCA Foundation has processed over \$30.1 million in grants to PCA churches resulting from over 87,000 donations.

The PCA Foundation does not participate in the PCA's Partnership Shares or Ministry Ask Programs, nor does it rely on the financial support of churches to help underwrite its operating budget. Rather, its operations are funded primarily by account charges, earnings on investment accounts, and by charitable contributions from individuals, including current and former PCA Foundation Board Members.

Because the main focus of the PCA Foundation is not on raising funds for its own operations, or for any other particular ministry, it has a unique opportunity and niche within the PCA. We assist Christians to carry out their charitable desires, working with them to provide for and make substantial, effective grants that support the propagation of the Gospel and reveal the work of the Gospel in the hearts of believers. By suggesting and facilitating tax-efficient giving strategies such as appreciated non-cash giving and accelerated giving, we enable donors to convert significantly more income tax into Kingdom funding. Our most popular giving-granting tools are the Advise & Consult Fund® and Increase Fund, both of which are donor-advised funds. We also create, manage, and receive endowments, charitable trusts, bequests, and church, presbytery, and PCA-ministry designated funds.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

In 2023, the PCA Foundation continued to refine the structure of a trust it created in 2022, under which it receives and holds most contributions and makes most grants. The trust arrangement facilitates conversion of the maximum amount of income tax into Kingdom funding in gifts of S corporation stock (the most common form of business wealth for giving).

The PCA Foundation is “donor driven,” which means that it engages donors to identify and recommend the grants it makes. This is grass-roots, democratized grant-making. But the Foundation also works increasingly to make those donors better grant advisors by informing them of charitable endeavors worthy of support, and to provide opportunities for donors to give for the support of foreign missions work and of poor and distressed individuals. We provide information to individuals without pressuring them to give to the PCA Foundation for its own operations, or to any other particular ministry.

The PCA Foundation will continue to strive to effectively serve with its present and future donors and the churches, presbyteries, committees, and agencies of the PCA to carry on the work of the PCA as set forth in the Great Commission. By God’s grace, the PCA Foundation will be able to do so.

Please continue to pray that I will be faithful as the Foundation president and will experience and live out the love of Christ in this calling. Also, please pray for the board and staff of the Foundation as they seek to continue leading the PCA Foundation successfully into the future. The PCA Foundation is financially sound, although suffering the effects of the market downturn and volatility in 2022 that rebounded slightly in 2023, and the attendant employment shortage, and is postured well for continued growth.

### **The PCA Foundation’s Recommendations are:**

1. That the financial audit for the PCA Foundation, Inc. for the calendar year ended December 31, 2023, by Capin Crouse, LLP be received and acknowledged.
2. That the General Assembly approve the proposed 2025 Budget of the PCA Foundation, Inc. with the understanding that it is a spending plan and will be modified as necessary by the PCA Foundation’s Board of Directors to accommodate changing circumstances during the year.

APPENDIX M

3. That the Minutes of Board meetings of August 4, 2023, and April 5, 2024, be approved.
4. That the Gift Acceptance and Management Policy (Attachment I) adopted by the PCA Foundation's Board of Directors be approved.
5. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery "Amend *RAO 11-5* to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.
6. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 31** from the New River Presbytery "Amend *BCO 14-1* Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.
7. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 32** from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania "Amend *BCO 23* to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency" with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Timothy W. Townsend

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Timothy W. Townsend". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

President



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Attachment 1  
PCA FOUNDATION  
PLANNED GIVING REPORT**

**January 1, 2023, through December 31, 2023**

New Gifts “IN”		\$47,589,000
Total Distributions Made		\$32,926,000
Distributions Made:	<b>12/31/2023</b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
Total C&A	\$ 7,356,000	22%
PCA Churches	<u>15,909,000</u>	<u>49%</u>
TOTAL PCA	23,265,000	71%
Other Christian	<u>9,661,000</u>	<u>29%</u>
TOTAL	<u><u>\$32,926,000</u></u>	<u><u>100%</u></u>

**1980 through December 2023**

Total Gifts “IN”		\$653,085,000
Total Distributions Made		\$304,738,000
Distributions Made:	<b><u>Amount</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
Total C&A	\$ 64,326,000	21%
PCA Churches	<u>134,631,000</u>	<u>44%</u>
TOTAL PCA	198,957,000	65%
Other Christian	<u>105,781,000</u>	<u>35%</u>
TOTAL 1980 – December 2023	<u><u>\$304,738,000</u></u>	<u><u>100%</u></u>

## Attachment 2

**Gift Acceptance and Management Policy  
for  
Charitable Trusts  
of  
Presbyterian Church in America Foundation, Inc.**

Approved by the Board of Directors on April 5, 2024

Most Recently Amended by the Finance Committee on \_\_\_\_\_

**Prefatory Notes:**

The ecclesiastical Constitution of the Church (Presbyterian Church in America) is defined in the Book of Church Order, Preface III. The provisions of the Constitution shall control over any provisions of this policy that may be in conflict therewith.

This policy constitutes an addendum to the Presbyterian Church in America Foundation, Inc. Estate and Gift Design Policy Guidelines, and the provisions of this policy govern to the extent of any conflict with provisions of those Guidelines.

---

## **Mission and Structure**

### **Mission and Required Stewardship**

The mission of Presbyterian Church in America Foundation, Inc. ("PCAF") is to make grants to PCA churches and other charities to support and manifest the advance of the Kingdom of Jesus Christ. In pursuit of this mission PCAF must not only assist members of PCA churches and other Christians to give more than they could without PCAF's assistance, but also effectively steward the cash and other assets those givers contribute while those assets await granting. Components of that stewardship include not only efficient operations and wise investment of those assets, but also careful consideration of whether, how, and under what terms to propose and accept other gifts, whether, how, and under what terms to liquidate other non-cash assets gifted, and in some cases whether and when to grant out such gifts and the proceeds of and investment earnings on them.

### **Structure and Liability Risk**

PCAF in the pursuit of its mission uses primarily donor-advised funds, each of which PCAF owns in its capacity as trustee of the PCA Foundation Trust ("Trust"), but investment of and grants from which the giver or his designees advise. A giver to such a fund fairly expects that he will be able to advise grants of each dollar given to or earned while in the fund (except to the extent the fund suffers investment losses despite prudent management or as a result of management by third-party managers the giver recommends or specific management choices the giver recommends). Likewise, givers to non-donor-advised charitable-purpose funds of PCAF fairly expect that PCAF will preserve such funds for expenditure for the purposes PCAF stated for them when the givers gave to them. However, as required for giver deduction of contributions to it, PCAF holds each donor-advised fund and charitable-purpose fund as unrestricted and as wholly expendable on a current basis. Because PCAF owns each donor-advised or charitable-purpose fund of the Trust, each fund is subject to the claims of any creditor of PCAF acting in its capacity as trustee of the Trust, including claims of liability arising from PCAF's receipt, ownership, management, or liquidation of assets of a different fund. (Except as otherwise expressly noted, each reference to "PCAF" is a reference to PCAF in its capacity as trustee of the Trust, and each reference to the assets of PCAF is a reference to the assets it holds in such capacity.)

- execute such other duties as are prescribed or delegated in this Policy, or as the Board otherwise may prescribe or delegate.

#### **President and Gifts and Grants Managers**

The Board elects the President of PCAF.

The President appoints the Gifts Manager and the Grants Manager. At any time no person has been appointed and is serving as Gifts Manager or Grants Manager, the President serves *ex officio* as the Gifts Manager or the Grants Manager, as the case may be. In the event that the office of President is vacant, and no person has been appointed and is serving as Gifts Manager or Grants Manager, the Board will appoint the Gifts Manager or the Grants Manager.

*Direct Management Responsibility.* The Board hereby delegates to the President the proposal of gifts and gift strategies to potential givers, delegates to the Gifts Manager the consideration, receipt, management, and liquidation of gifts to PCAF in any capacity, and delegates to the Grants Manager the consideration of grant recommendations and the making of grants of gifted assets and proceeds of and earnings on such assets. The Board authorizes and directs the President, Gifts Manager, and Grants Manager to do the following in the proposal of gifts and gift strategies, the consideration, receipt, management, and liquidation of non-cash gifts, and the consideration of grant recommendations and the making of grants:

- select and engage such qualified legal, tax, business, and other professional advisors, administrators, custodians, brokers, inspectors, accountants, and other service providers as may be required for the proper performance of the foregoing functions;
- execute contracts with, authorize compensation to, and require and receive reports from service providers;
- utilize such gift and custodial strategies, forms, structures, and entities as he or she deems useful and appropriate for the proper performance of the functions assigned to him;
- monitor and evaluate the performance of each advisor and other service provider engaged, and the effectiveness of each strategy, form, structure, and entity employed;

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- propose to the Gift Approval Group Complex Gifts (hereinafter defined) and agreements for or related to the receipt of Complex Gifts or the sale or other disposition of assets received in Complex Gifts, in accordance with this [Policy](#);
- sell, exchange, convert, liquidate, approve redemptions of, approve additions or modifications to, improve, purchase and otherwise deal in gifted assets in accordance with this Policy, and, as applicable, in accordance with decisions and instructions of the Gift Approval Group;
- review assets received in Complex Gifts and advise the Gift Approval Group to take action to achieve or maintain the value, schedule of income or gain, liquidity, and risk characteristics of each gifted asset in accordance with the purpose of PCAF and in accordance with this [Policy](#);
- otherwise advise and execute decisions and actions of the Gift Approval Group; and
- establish and implement procedures for the foregoing functions that are consistent with procedures established in this Policy.

*Responsibility to Delegate.* The Board further delegates to the President, Gifts Manager, and Grants Manager authority and responsibility to delegate to employees of PCAF and external [agents](#) authority and responsibility to perform various tasks in the proposal of gifts and gift strategies, consideration, receipt, management, and liquidation of non-cash gifts, and consideration of grant recommendations and making of grants; and authorizes and directs them to do the following in the performance of this delegation function:

- select employees and external [agents](#);
- establish the scope and terms of the delegation consistent with the purposes of PCAF; and
- review the employee's or external agent's actions no less frequently than monthly in order to monitor his or her performance and compliance with the scope and terms of the delegation.

The delegator may agree to fees for services of an external agent that are commercially reasonable. The delegator may not pay or agree to pay fees for services to an employee or external agent who

which PCAF serves as trustee and every gift to such a trust other than gifts of cash or marketable securities, and every gift to PCAF made in exchange, in whole or in part, for a charitable gift annuity; the consideration and disclaimer or acceptance of every bequest or trust distribution to PCAF other than bequests or trust distributions of cash or marketable securities (each such gift or trust identified in this Policy as a “Complex Gift”); and the consideration and approval of every sale or other disposition of an asset received in a Complex Gift; and authorizes and directs the Gift Approval Group to do the following in the performance of such functions:

- assess the value of each Complex Gift for the advance of the mission of PCAF, and the risk of Loss (hereinafter defined) to PCAF in any capacity arising from the receipt, ownership, management, or liquidation of any asset received in a Complex [Gift](#);
- review and assess the commercial reasonableness of and the risk of Loss to which PCAF is exposed by the terms and conditions of any agreement or certification, representation, warranty, deed, assignment, or other instrument for or related to the receipt of a Complex Gift or the sale or other disposition of an asset received in a Complex [Gift](#);
- approve or disapprove Complex Gifts and agreements and certifications, representations, warranties, deeds, assignments, and other instruments for or related to the receipt of a Complex Gift or the sale or other disposition of an asset received in a Complex Gift, in accordance with this [Policy](#);
- receive, review, and propose and approve responses to reports from the Gifts Manager of Loss or threatened Loss arising from the receipt, ownership, management, or liquidation of assets received in a Complex [Gift](#);
- consider and propose to the Finance Committee exceptions to and amendments of this [Policy](#);
- make a reasonable effort to verify facts relevant to each proposed Complex Gift and each response to Loss or threatened Loss; and
- consult with and advise the Gifts Manager in the performance of his or her functions with regard to Complex Gifts.

assets in connection with which, or the proposal for which, the liabilities and obligations arise hold advisory privileges.

To clarify, for purposes of this Policy, "Loss" does not include a decline in value of gifted assets or invested proceeds of gifted assets. "Loss" does not include a financial obligation or liability that is covered by cash or other liquid assets that are gifted assets or proceeds, or earnings of gifted assets or proceeds, held by PCAF, and cash or liquid assets of a PCAF donor-advised fund, that are fairly chargeable with the obligation or liability.

PCAF will accept gifts under risk that they may be worthless or turn out not to advance PCAF's mission significantly; however, it will decline to accept any gift or to engage in any activity related to gifts or gifted assets that more likely than not will not advance its mission.

#### **Specific Rules**

*Environmental Clean-Up Liability (CERCLA and related):* PCAF will not accept any gift of commercial real estate on which it knows or believes hazardous substances have been released or are threatened to be released, or for which it has not received a Phase I Environmental Survey report sufficient to establish the "innocent landowner" defense under the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation, and Liability Act (CERCLA).

*Restricted Use and Designated Grants:* PCAF will accept a gift only on condition of its own full discretion and control as to use to be made of the gifted asset, its proceeds, and its earnings. PCAF will expressly reserve such discretion and control on receipts provided for contributions to PCAF donor-advised funds, and will not agree to any limitation on such discretion and control. PCAF may grant to any giver the privilege of advising investment of or grants from the giver's gift and proceeds of and earnings on the gifted asset, and of designating others to exercise such privileges, but will not agree as a condition of a gift or otherwise that the giver or any other person may require or direct PCAF to make investments or grants. PCAF may state its intention to use a gift, earnings, and proceeds for a particular purpose or to make grants to one or more specified charities, but must along with any such statement expressly maintain ultimate discretion to change such use upon its own assessment of change in need, purposes or operations of the specified charity, other circumstances, or PCAF's charitable goals or priorities. PCAF may bind itself to use a gift, earnings, and proceeds for a particular purpose, to make grants to one or more specified charities, or to make expenditures or grants on a particular schedule or in certain increments, but must as

- covenants, representations, and warranties the liability for which is expressly limited to the value of cash and marketable-security proceeds of sale or disposition and any additional cash and marketable securities maintained in funds fairly chargeable with such liability.

*Excess Business Holdings:* PCAF will not accept any gift of an equity interest in a business when it knows or suspects that receiving or holding such interest will subject it or any of its officers or employees to a surtax under Section 4943 of the Internal Revenue Code. To this end, PCAF will decline to accept any gift of an equity interest in a business unless the giver first represents to PCAF the disqualified persons (as defined in Section 4943) in relation to the donor-advised fund to which the interest is proposed to be given, and their interests in the business.

*Professional Malpractice:* PCAF and its employees and other agents will not offer legal, tax, business, or other professional advice to any person. When proposing or suggesting any gift or gift strategy to any person, a PCAF employee or other agent must expressly (i) disclaim that he may provide or is providing legal, tax, business, or other professional advice or representation, or is providing any advice or information for the person's reliance, (ii) state that he merely is providing general information and suggestions of gift strategies, tax or other concepts, or other ideas for the person's consideration in consultation with the person's own professional counsel, and (iii) urge the person to seek and receive professional counsel before making any charitable gift.

*Negligent or Willful Misrepresentation, and Tax Fraud:* PCAF may suggest to any person only gift strategies, tax concepts, and conclusions, and engage in activities in the receipt, holding, management, and liquidation of gifts and gifted assets, that have been approved by qualified legal counsel to PCAF as reasonable, likely beneficial and effective, and not productive of economic damage or loss, and in accordance and compliance with reasonable interpretation of applicable law.

*Fraudulent Conveyance:* PCAF will not accept a gift from a person who is, or will be after the gift, insolvent (i.e., unable to pay financial obligations as they come due), and will make no grant of proceeds of gifts from any giver who PCAF discovers was insolvent at the time of the gift. To this end, PCAF will make reasonable inquiries about and conduct reasonable investigation of any person who proposes to deliver or has delivered a gift exceeding in estimated value \$500,000.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*Form Complex Gift Agreement:* PCAF will accept a Complex Gift only under the terms of a separate gift agreement produced or approved in all parts by qualified legal counsel to PCAF that provides at a minimum that:

- limits the remedy for any breach of representation or warranty to rescission of the gift;
- the giver represents and warrants what are the only documents, declarations, and agreements that establish or govern the asset or impose obligations on its owners;
- the giver represents and warrants the ownership interests in the asset (if a business);
- the giver will indemnify PCAF for any liability PCAF incurs in or as a result of the receipt, ownership, management, or liquidation of the asset, to the extent cash and other liquid assets in any fund advised by the giver are insufficient to cover the liability;
- the giver acknowledges that PCAF has not provided any legal or other professional advice for the giver's reliance.

*Minority Ownership Interest:* PCAF will decline to accept a gift of a majority voting interest in any business entity.

*Indirect Ownership:* PCAF may accept gifts of interests in limited liability companies or similar entities created for the purpose of owning underlying assets the givers desire to give to PCAF, in order to further mitigate the risk of Loss, but such "wrapping" does not relieve PCAF of any rule otherwise stated in this Policy.

### **Proposal, Receipt, Management, and Liquidation Procedures**

#### **Gifts of Cash and Marketable Securities**

The Gifts Manager daily reviews and processes all gifts of cash and marketable securities delivered or proposed to be delivered to PCAF. Except as agreed by PCAF in accordance with its investment policies, the Gifts Manager will sell gifted marketable securities as soon as reasonably practicable.

The Gifts Manager makes reasonable inquiries about and conducts reasonable investigation of any person who proposes to deliver or has delivered a gift of cash or marketable securities exceeding a value of \$500,000 in order to determine whether the giver may be insolvent and his gift should be rejected and returned.

*Offer to Giver:* If the gift is approved by the Gift Approval Group, the Gifts Manager submits the gift agreement and transfer documentation to the giver, requesting the giver to review and consider in consultation with his own legal and other professional counsel. When the giver returns the agreement and transfer documentation to the Gifts Manager, he obtains necessary execution by PCAF personnel, returns copies to the giver and files copies, and provides the original transfer documentation to legal counsel for filing in state records as appropriate. The Gifts Manager delivers an estimated value of the gifted asset to the PCAF accounting manager, along with a rationale and supporting information, including any appraisal obtained by the giver and delivered to the Gifts Manager. The Gifts Manager attempts to secure from the giver a copy of the appraisal the giver obtains, and upon receipt delivers it to the PCAF accounting manager.

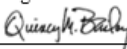
*Marketing and Sale:* Except as PCAF agrees with the donor after approval by the Gift Approval Group, PCAF will sell the gifted asset as soon as reasonably practicable. The Gifts Manager engages the giver and giver-recommended professionals to market the gifted asset, as necessary, and negotiates and executes any listing agreement. The Gifts Manager develops the agreement for the sale or other disposition of the gifted asset, or any asset that is proceeds of the gifted asset or of earnings of the gifted asset or proceeds, with the assistance of PCAF legal counsel, or reviews and negotiates an agreement and transfer documentation developed by buyer's or giver's legal counsel. The Gifts Manager delivers agreement and transfer documentation to authorized personnel of PCAF for execution, attends or attends to closing, obtains and files executed agreement and transfer and other closing documentation, and directs proceeds into the appropriate donor-advised, single-charity, charitable-purpose, or designated fund. If the giver or a person associated with the giver is the buyer, the Gifts Manager obtains before agreement appraisals of the value of the asset and of the negotiated gift price and terms that show the latter value at least equals the former.

*Management.* For the time between gift and liquidation, the Gifts Manager manages the gifted asset, and any asset that is proceeds of the gifted asset or of earnings of the gifted asset or proceeds, engaging and paying or assuring that the giver pays necessary-service providers, and paying or assuring that the giver pays required assessments and taxes.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Approval

I hereby certify, as Secretary of Presbyterian Church in America Foundation, Inc., that the Board of Directors of Presbyterian Church in America Foundation, Inc. approved the original gift receipt and management policy of which the policy set forth in this document is a revision at a duly-called meeting of the Board duly held on April 5, 2024.

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Quincy Mark Bailey

Date: 04/05/2024

I further certify that the Finance Committee adopted the policy set forth in this document as a revision of the gift receipt and management policy of the Presbyterian Church in America Foundation, Inc. at a duly-called meeting of the Committee duly held on \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Quincy Mark Bailey

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## **APPENDIX N**

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Ministry to colleges represents an essential part of the mission of the Presbyterian Church in America. The college years have increasingly become a time for questioning authority, scrutinizing absolutes, throwing out old premises, and reinventing the self. Reformed University Fellowship delivers the good news of Jesus Christ in the face of these unfolding campus narratives to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve. The passion and vigor of college students have proved, over the last 200 years, to affect the Church globally, significantly engaging the world with mission and purpose. The story of redemption playing out is more significant than any story we can imagine.

Reformed University Fellowship goes to the campus with a fixed theology and a flexible methodology that allows us to carry the timeless truths of Christianity to students across all demographics. We are not limited in how and where we preach the Gospel, and we know that a large percentage of people come to faith in Jesus between the age of 18 and 25.

To engage the current academic culture, Reformed University Fellowship sends ordained PCA ministers to serve on the college campus, preach the Gospel of Christ, build Christ's Church, and ultimately prepare students to live all of life under the Lordship of Christ. This is a concrete expression of our commitment to our covenant children and our obedience to the Great Commission to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve.

The Permanent Committee for Reformed University Fellowship wishes to thank all our churches, presbyteries, and the General Assembly for their oversight, financial support, prayers, and encouragement for our campus ministers, staff, and interns, who have served on 188 campuses worldwide.

## **REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP**

Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) offers the truth of God's Word to covenant children, students who are searching as well as equipping believers. By working within the context of the Church, we follow Christ's leadership as He builds His Kingdom. Students are instructed in Evangelism and Missions, Growth in Grace, Fellowship and Service, and a Biblical World-and-Life View. An ordained PCA minister leads each RUF, actively working to accomplish goals in these four major areas. RUF strengthens the Church by reaching students who may not know Christ, as well as equipping those who know Him to serve, and to love Jesus for a lifetime.

## **REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP INTERNATIONAL**

- 1) Campus Growth: We are currently on 23 campuses, including two in California.
- 2) Future Growth: We are hoping to start our 24th and 25th RUF-I Campus Ministry by June 2024:
  - a. NC State University (June 1, 2024 Start)
  - b. Washington University (June 1, 2024 Start)
- 3) Future Growth/Interest
  - a. University of Washington
  - b. University of Alabama
- 4) Team Growth: In June 2023, we hired Joe Slater as an Area Coordinator for RUF-I and RUF-G. Joe will oversee 10 RUF-I and 2 RUF-G campuses (Mexico City & Bogota).
- 5) Evangelism Focus & Growth: We continue to want to grow in our effectiveness in pre-evangelism and evangelism ("Explore") with our RUF- I field staff.

## **REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP GLOBAL**

- 1) Growth: In January of 2023, we added RUF-Global in Kampala, Uganda. In November of 2023, we added RUF-Global in Sydney, Australia with MTW. That brings our current group of RUF-Gs to 7.
- 2) "Missionary Model" (also known as (Traditional Model")). These are PCA TE's serving with MTW.
  - L'viv
  - Ukraine
  - Bogota
  - Colombia

- Dakar
  - Senegal
  - Tokyo, Japan
- 3) “National Model”
- Mexico City, Mexico
  - Kampala, Uganda
  - Sydney Australia
  - \* The model in Dakar, Senegal, both serving with RUF-G.
- 4) Future Growth: There are 6 potential RUF-G Ministries could begin by the end of 2024.
- Banjul, The Gambia
  - Bulawayo, Zimbabwe
  - Toronto, Canada
  - United Kingdom (several opportunities)
  - Cape Town, South Africa
  - Taiwan (RUF-G with Graham Guo, who is a current RUF-I CM)
- 5) Affiliate (New name “Partners”) Training Program
- In 2022 we started a pilot program where we trained MTW and Serge missionaries who are currently doing campus ministry
  - We are moving forward with our 2nd group or cohort for the fall of 2024
  - We have 11 missionaries who are being trained in the RUF Philosophy of Ministry.

## MINISTRY DISTINCTIVES

Weekly large groups, small groups, and one-on-one staff-student meetings provide the structure for campus ministry. Each type of meeting is essential in ministering to college students. In large group meetings, students gather to sing, pray, and hear the good news of Jesus taught from the scriptures. Small groups focus on study, prayer, and fellowship, and many are led by junior and senior students under the direction of the campus minister, campus staff, and interns. One-to-one meetings between students and staff members offer in-depth discipleship, evangelistic encounters, accountability in trust- confidence relationships, and counseling. RUF emphasizes the development of a biblical world-and-life view. As students learn to think biblically, they will make a lasting difference in the Church and the world. A key distinctive of RUF is its connection to the Church. Through exhortation by their campus minister,

attendance with friends at local churches, involvement in the campus community, and exposition of Biblical truth, college students learn to love the Church and develop a lifelong commitment to involvement with God's people. RUF provides a bridge for maintaining (or establishing) a connection to the Church as students transition from home to college to work and family life. RUF does not exist to perpetuate a campus ministry but to grow the Church.

## **CAMPUS INTERNS, STAFF & MINISTRY FELLOWS**

Launched in 1980, the Intern Program has trained over 900 interns. In the last 30 years, the program has grown at a rate of 13% per year. Emily Nixon, Assistant Vice President of Internships, continues to help lead the department, and this year, we have 138 full-time and four part-time young men and women (all recent college graduates) who currently work directly with a campus minister and receive on-the-job training in evangelism, small group leadership, and one-on-one ministry. While interns minister to college students, they also participate in a study program on biblical and theological training. After their internship with Reformed University Fellowship, interns move into vocational ministry and the broader marketplace with a deepened understanding of God's Word and experience in His service. The campus intern and campus staff are equipped to be "an instrument for noble purposes, made holy, useful to the Master and prepared to do any good work" (II Timothy 2:21).

The Campus Staff department within RUF exists to provide a long-term vocational ministry position for women who desire to work on the college campus. While most of our Campus Staff come directly from serving two years as an RUF intern, we have begun expanding outside of that channel to bring in qualified candidates to meet the growing demand on campus. The RUF Campus Staff department held its annual assessment in January of 2024.

Eighteen candidates were assessed, and the department hopes to hire 16 for the campus staff position starting in June 2023. Casey Cockrum, Assistant Vice President of Campus Staff, led the three-day assessment and had seven other staff join her to help determine the candidate's fit for the department. We are so encouraged by these women joining the campus staff ranks. Their addition will bring the anticipated campus staff number to 64 across the ministry. The Lord continues to bring us amazing women to serve in the campus staff role, and we're grateful for the continued growth.

The RUF Fellows Program is designed to provide financial support to current and former RUF Campus Interns pursuing a seminary degree for future

vocational ministry. The program is intended to reward interns who have demonstrated a passion for and have exhibited an ability to excel in ministry. Like the RUF internship program, The Fellows Program encourages participants to learn about ministry more so than to accomplish it. The Program is open to all interns regardless of their current or prospective employment relationship with RUF. Started in June of 2022, the RUF Fellows Program currently has 29 participants.

## **SUMMER CONFERENCE**

Summer Conference May 2024:

We are so excited to be back at Laguna Beach Christian Resort for SuCo2024! We will be welcoming RUF students from all over the country for four weeks this summer, with Harvard University Campus Minister Michael Whitham serving as the Summer Conference Director.

WEEK 1 – April 29-May 4

WEEK 2 – May 6-11

WEEK 3 – May 13-18

WEEK 4 – May 19-24

## **WIVES RETREAT**

We are incredibly grateful for the role wives play in RUF's ministry to college students, and Wives Weekend plays a vital role in encouraging them in their marriages and ministry. We were glad to be together in Austin, January 12-14, 2024 for all Wives Weekend and Palm Spring February 9-11, 2024 for West Wives Weekend.

## **STAFF TRAINING**

December training in Denver for Campus Ministers and Campus staff had 223 people in attendance. RUF training attends to the development of the entire person to create healthy ministers and ministries. The stated purpose of training is "to train pastors/staff, so they learn to understand and do ministry faithfully and fruitfully." To that end, David Strain, (Senior Minister of First Pres Jackson, Mississippi) spent a day teaching on Sanctification by grace. We



also had sessions on Cross Cultural Shepherding, Development and the market, your retirement and your ministry. RUF-I staff training took place the first week of January in Denver, Rich Mendola taught the staff and focused on Ministry and Evangelism.

## **RUF ASSESSMENT**

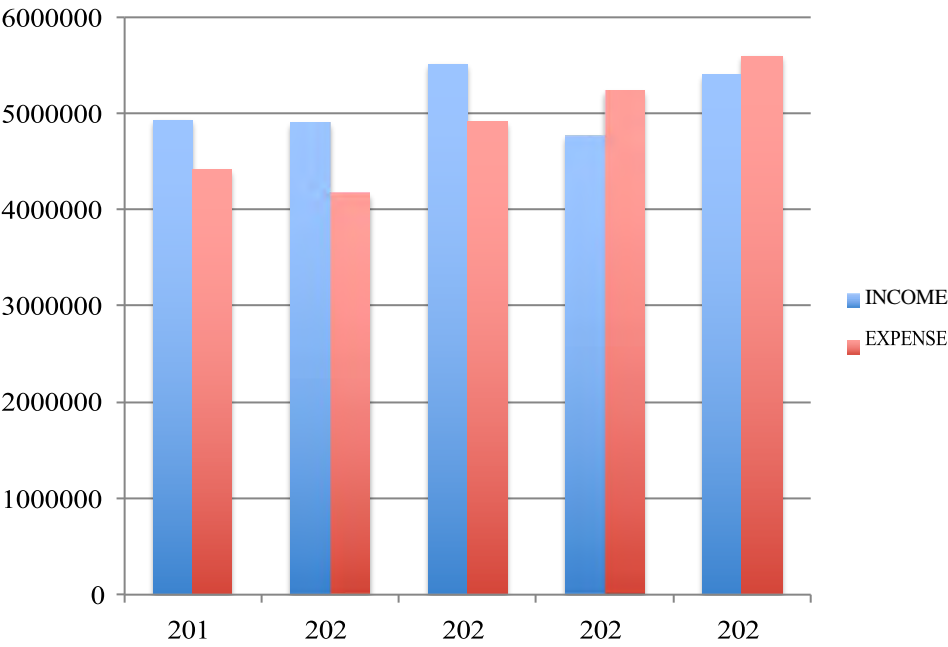
On Feb 13-15th, RUF held a winter assessment in St. Louis, Mo on Covenant Seminary's campus, with 10 campus minister candidates. RUF continues to collaborate with area coordinators and national staff to enhance the necessary hard skills and emotional and cultural intelligence elements of assessment. Pre-screening protocol has helped to say "no" in the application stage and reduced unnecessary assessments' costs and labor. We will hold our second regional assessment July 9-11 in Atlanta, GA and anticipate several candidates. We are building an assessor list of current and former campus ministers and wives to help with the increased staffing needs of regional assessments.

## **RUF CROSS-CULTURAL ADVANCEMENT**

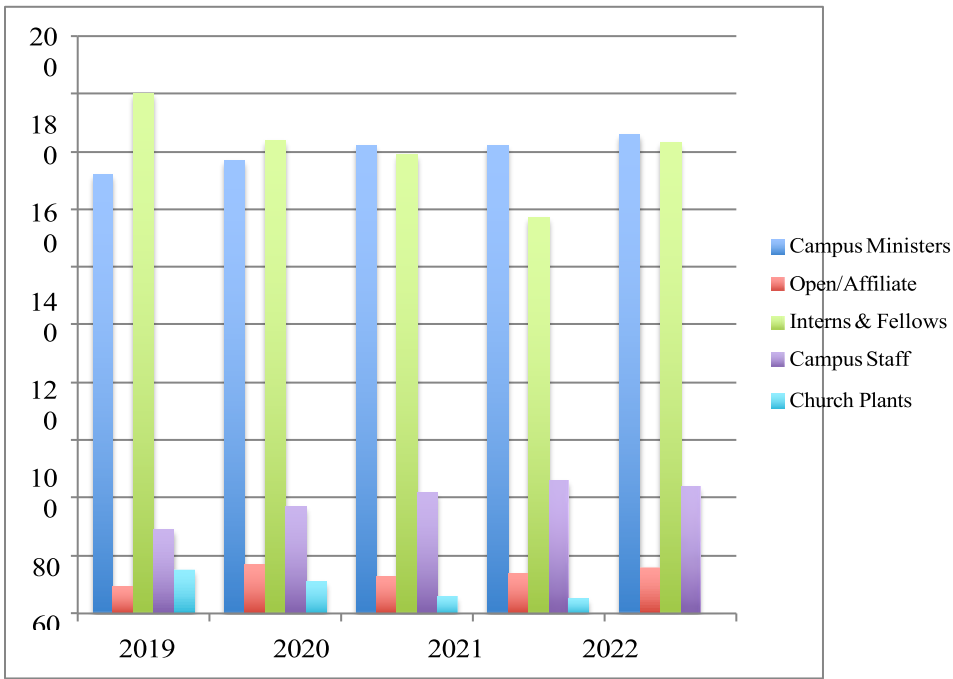
In line with the goals that we set for this year, we have successfully initiated collaboration with some of our campus ministers of color and have scheduled campus visits to explore recruitment possibilities with graduating students. The Permanent Committee has been asked to pray that these collaborative efforts would bear fruit in our recruiting and retention efforts over time; this is a marathon, not a sprint. In our latest installment, we trained our staff on cross-cultural shepherding and received helpful feedback as to the usefulness and applicability of the material to on-the-ground ministry. We are hearing more and more stories of how our staff are integrating these cross-cultural equipping times and this vision into their ministries. A first-year campus minister recently reported gathering a large group of 50 students during his first semester, 40% of whom are students of color. This is encouraging because it shows us the larger potential of RUF's reach if we continue on this trajectory by faith. We have assessed our senior staff and our Area coordinators through IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), but we have more due diligence to accomplish and more questions to answer before we know if there is any further use for this tool for RUF organizationally. We hope to gain greater clarity on this in 2024. The Lord has continued to be gracious to RUF in our pursuit of cross-cultural development. The harvest is plentiful!

## **GROWTH**

INCOME GROWTH - OVERALL MINISTRY



HEADCOUNT GROWTH - OVERALL MINISTRY



RUF’S VISION FOR THE CHURCH

University Church Planting initiative concluded at the end of 2022, yet RUF continues to be a pipeline for leadership in the PCA. Over 195 former RUF Campus Ministers serve our Church as church planters, pastors, associate pastors, assistant pastors, and denominational staff. Thousands of RUF Alumni are serving in the Church, enforcing that RUF is not just about perpetuating campus ministry but about enriching the Church. We are working with MNA to provide similar opportunities for campuses and campus ministers who feel called to plant churches.

CONCLUSION

God is at work through the ministry of RUF. RUF strives to engage the culture and carry out the kingdom’s priorities of the Church. God brings together students and ministers from many different walks of life to accomplish His purposes. We hope that each person influenced by Reformed University

Fellowship will, in turn, affect many other people in the course of his or her life. The Church is strengthened as students learn to love and seek out the Church and are trained to serve as future church leaders.

**Recommendations for the 2024 General Assembly via the RUF Committee of Commissioners:**

1. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the Permanent Committee on Reformed University Fellowship meetings on August 22, 2023, October 4, 2023, and March 20, 2024.
2. That the General Assembly approve the minutes of the executive session meetings of the Committee on Reformed University Fellowship on October 4, 2023.
3. That the General Assembly receive the Financial Audit for Reformed University Fellowship for the fiscal year ending December 31, 2023 by Carr, Riggs, & Ingram, LLP.
4. That the action on the 2025 budget for Reformed University Fellowship be deferred until the Report of the Committee of Commissioners on Administration.
5. That the General Assembly answer **Overture 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process for RAO Amendments” in the Affirmative.

Grounds

The RUF Permanent Committee believes the overture will be a helpful amendment to the RAO. The proposed change will clarify the process for how the Assembly authorizes an RAO amendment while protecting the right of the General Assembly’s Committees and Agencies to speak to any proposed changes affecting them. Since the overture was referred to all the Committees and Agencies, it is wise to present a single response to the General Assembly through the RUF Permanent Committee.

6. That the General Assembly re-elect RE Will W. Huss, Jr. as Coordinator of Reformed University Fellowship for the 2024/2025 term.
7. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly accept the following RUF Permanent Committee responses to citations to their minutes of exceptions of substance from the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly
  - A) Item #1 - October 5th, 2022 Minutes - from the 50th GA RUF Committee of Commissioners Report III.1a.a - Contra RAO - 4-21.d.3, no minutes from the executive session were provided.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*Response - The RUF Permanent Committee did keep executive session minutes from the meeting on 10.5.22, but inadvertently failed to submit those minutes. We have presented the executive session minutes from our meeting on 10.5.22 to the 51st GA's Committee of Commissioners for RUF for review.*

- B) Item #2 - October 5th, 2022 Minutes - from the 50th GA RUF Committee of Commissioners Report III.1a.b - although the minutes refer to recommendations regarding compensation, no record of any action taken is recorded.

*Response - The RUF Permanent Committee failed to record compensation changes approved during the executive session in our meeting minutes. The minutes have been corrected and we will endeavor to avoid this mistake in the future.*

- C) Item #3 - October 5th, 2022 Minutes - from the 50th GA RUF Committee of Commissioners Report - III.1a.c - The permanent committee established and executed a substantial new policy not approved by the general assembly, contrary to BCO 14-1.7.

*Response - RUF serves at the pleasure of the General Assembly and willingly submits to its direction. RUF submits the attached Affiliation Agreement for approval. See Recommendation 9.*

8. That the General Assembly, in consideration of his recent passing, formally acknowledge and praise God for His manifold grace through the life and labors of Mark L. Lowery in the founding and development of the ministry of Reformed University Fellowship and posthumously commend his strategic and fruitful work for the glory of God, the edification of His church and the advancement of His Kingdom
9. That the General Assembly approve the updated Affiliation Agreement version 22 (attachment 1) to preserve ongoing partnerships with presbyteries, strengthen collaboration, and provide legal clarity.

## **Attachment 1**

### **REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP'S RESPONSE TO THE 2023 GENERAL ASSEMBLY AND COMMENTARY ON RUF'S AFFILIATION AGREEMENT**

*Version 22, Recommended by RUF's Permanent Committee to the PCA's 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly*

#### **Response to 2024 General Assembly**

RUF serves at the pleasure of the General Assembly and willingly submits to its direction. As the Assembly determined, an exception of substance occurred when the “permanent committee established and executed a substantial new policy not approved by the general assembly.” The RUF Permanent Committee will submit and request the 2024 RUF Committee of Commissioners recommend to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly the attached updated Affiliation Agreement<sup>1</sup> to preserve ongoing partnerships with presbyteries, strengthen collaboration, and provide legal clarity.

#### **Introduction**

In addition to the revised Affiliation Agreement (AA), this document includes:

- SECTION 1 - The AA's History
- SECTION 2 - Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) followed the previous path in updating the AA and the rationale for that path.
- SECTION 3 - Comments on the content of the revised AA and input requested from presbyteries
- SECTION 4 - RUF PC approved Affiliation Agreement

#### **SECTION 1 - The Affiliation Agreement's History**

##### **Origins of RUF and the Need for an Affiliation Agreement:**

The earliest beginnings of RUF trace back to the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley and its involvement in campus ministry. The fruitfulness of these early efforts to reach and equip college students led the 5th General Assembly of the PCA in 1977 to create a "practical manual of campus ministry." This call

---

<sup>1</sup> We have spent much of the past year reaching out and listening to those with publicly expressed concerns and suggestions for improving the previous 2023 agreement. We have sought to address those in the 2024 agreement.

reflected a recognition within the PCA that there was a need for a more structured approach to campus ministry.

Two years later, in 1979, during the 7th General Assembly of the PCA, a significant development took place with the approval of "A Manual for Campus Ministry." This manual established a Sub-Committee on Campus Ministry under the Mission to the United States Committee (MUS). Among its responsibilities was "to determine job descriptions for and employ campus staff members. (XI.A.6)" While giving the responsibility to employ staff to the Sub-Committee on Campus Ministry, the 1979 "Manual" offers that the calling or sending body "is either a local church, a presbytery, or the MNA Committee." It did so without discussing an AA to guide the relationship(s) between these different courts and committees. Thus, in the early years of RUF, these relationships were largely informal, based on trust, collaboration, and shared values.

### **Transition to Formal Affiliation Agreements:**

The early 1980s marked a transition period for RUF as the ministry grew outside Mississippi. By 1982-83, RUM (as it was known then)<sup>2</sup> was granted a Federal Employment Identification Number (FEIN). It was considered an integrated auxiliary of the PCA as part of MNA and a stand-alone 501c3. Campuses in Alabama and South Carolina and subsequent new works were provided administrative support for payroll by MNA. In contrast, campuses in Mississippi were provided payroll by the Mississippi Joint Committee for Campus Work.

During this time, RUF began entering into AAs with churches and presbyteries. These agreements were intended to clarify expectations and responsibilities for both RUF and the local Presbyteries as ecclesiastical bodies.

Unfortunately, detailed and accurate records of these early agreements were not consistently maintained, making it challenging to trace their specific terms and conditions. However, these agreements were considered internal "memoranda of understanding" to foster healthy collaboration. The

---

<sup>2</sup> The 44<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, in 2016, formally changed the committee's name from Reformed University Ministries to Reformed University Fellowship.

agreements were not approved by or presented to the General Assembly or the MNA Permanent Committee.<sup>3</sup>

### **RUF's Growth into a Program Committee:**

In the early 2000s, as RUF continued to grow and expand its reach, the General Assembly decided to establish RUF as a program committee of the General Assembly. This transition involved a three-year process, including a study committee and approval from the Assembly and presbyteries.

Throughout this process and afterward, RUF continued to enter into AAs with presbyteries for each new campus. These agreements were periodically updated as geographic and numeric growth required standardized procedures, benefits, employment practices, and legal compliance. These updates were not presented to the General Assembly or the RUF Permanent Committee but only to local presbyteries.

While updated AAs were entered into for new works, they were only updated for existing works occasionally. In many instances, RUF and presbyteries failed to enter into updated agreements when church growth led to the creation of new presbyteries within whose bounds an RUF work remained.

### **The Need for Clarity and Legal Liability:**

Multiple versions and missing AA agreements were sufficient reasons to update the agreement, but more pressing needs motivated RUF's recent efforts. Unfortunately, RUF's growing structure and legal realities have not always been accurately reflected in our AAs. Older versions of the RUF AA contained significant ambiguities and legal inaccuracies that created potential liabilities for the PCA, presbyteries, RUF, and campus ministers. These primarily exist because of the evolving nature of RUF's history and the genuine desire to preserve collaborative relationships between the program committee and local presbyteries. As mentioned above, in the early days of RUF, there were multiple models of ministry. In some places, presbyteries were the legal employers of campus ministers. They received donations, provided receipts, issued payroll, and provided benefits. In other places, there were church affiliations. The campus minister was a legal employee of a local church but conducted ministry under the RUF banner. In other areas, the campus minister was an employee of the program committee of the GA (first MNA, then RUF). Eventually, the church affiliation model was phased out, and all presbyteries

---

<sup>3</sup> The earliest reference to an RUF affiliation agreement in the record of General Assembly actions does not occur until 1993. It is not reported as being approved but simply recognized as existing in reference to a budget issue before the Assembly.



transferred employment responsibilities to the RUF program committee. From a legal perspective, RUF has been the employer of all campus ministers (except those serving under the ARP Affiliation agreement and those working with MTW) since RUF became a Program Committee of the PCA. These legal realities were not reflected in different versions of the affiliation agreement. Instead, both Presbyteries and RUF were described as having employment responsibilities. What had once been a legal reality had become a legal inaccuracy that created legal liability. Addressing this liability in a way that preserves and promotes ongoing collaboration between RUF and local presbyteries was the aim of updating the AA.

## **SECTION 2 - The Path and Rationale**

What was the best way to pursue updating an agreement with no constitutional requirement for its existence and no spelled-out process? With no previous agreement approved by the PCA General Assembly or the RUF Permanent Committee, we wanted to make changes with collaboration. That collaboration process began internally with RUF senior staff, area coordinators, and a focus group of campus personnel (a group of whom became significant authors). It included legal counsel of REs, collaboration with REs and TEs outside of RUF but inside the PCA, and discussion and adoption by the RUF Permanent Committee. With RUF's Permanent Committee adoption, RUF began to present the AA to presbyteries where RUF works existed. We aimed to explain the agreement and the process that led to its update and work through any questions raised for individual Presbyteries. This path was chosen with much thought and counsel from various Elders across the church. While the advice and counseling were not uniform, a significant majority directed us toward our adopted path. Given the history of the AA and our historical practice of working directly with and through presbyteries, we addressed presbyteries individually. In our minutes, we indicated our actions and intentions for the RUF Committee of Commissioners to review.

At the instruction of the 2023 PCA General Assembly, the RUF Permanent Committee is recommending that the updated and attached AA be approved. This AA aims to preserve and promote ongoing collaboration between RUF and local presbyteries.

This version differs slightly from the 2023 version. We have spent much of the past year conversing with individuals, committees, and some presbyteries who have expressed concerns and offered suggestions for improvements to the previous agreement. In these conversations, section R-Q was the most

discussed portion of the AA. Below is updated and clarifying language for R-Q and some commentary on the issues behind its existence.

### **SECTION 3 - AA Commentary - R-Q**

#### **Issues of legal employment, ecclesiastical authority, and subsequent responsibilities**

- Having issued payroll, W-2s, required tax documents, and provided benefits, all of which are responsibilities of legal employers, RUF is no doubt viewed in the eyes of the law as the legal employer of campus ministers, which the new AA clarifies. There are other employment laws that RUF is required to adhere to because of the number of staff members we provide and administer payroll and benefits for<sup>4</sup>.
- For a presbytery to assume the role of legal employer of RUF campus ministers, they would need to assume all of the responsibilities for payroll, donor accounting and receipting, and benefits administration, in addition to complying with a myriad of state and federal laws governing employers. Practically, presbyteries would need enormous resources to comply with those responsibilities even if such a legal relationship were desirable.
- Until the recent clarifications of the AA, RUF, and presbyteries acted in good faith under a kind of "legal fiction" by stating that the presbytery hired and fired campus ministers; however, that was not true practically. The practice reflected the genuine "buy-in" and support of loop presbyteries for RUF ministries and ministers within their bounds and followed the mutually agreed upon (although legally untrue) understanding of the AA as it existed in older forms.

---

<sup>4</sup> An employer's size, or number of employees, is a key factor in determining which federal labor laws the employer must comply with. Some federal labor laws, such as the Equal Pay Act, the Immigration Reform and Control Act, the Fair Labor Standards Act, apply to all employers, regardless of size. Laws that apply to employers with 15 or more employees include the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Pregnancy Discrimination Act (PDA), and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (which prohibits employers from discriminating in the workplace based on race, color, sex or national origin). The Age Discrimination in Employment Act and the Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA – which requires employer-sponsored group health plans to offer continuation coverage to eligible employees and their dependents following termination of employment, among other losses of coverage, which may or may not apply to RUF as some "church" based plans are exempt from benefit plan and COBRA guidelines) apply to employers with 20 or more employees. Employers with 100 or more employees must submit an annual EEO-1 report with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. Because RUF operates in multiple states, it may be subject to certain state requirements as well (e.g., NY state law requires that employers of one or more employees must conduct sexual harassment prevention training for all employees each year). Some aspects of these laws may have a different application to RUF as a Christian-based and denominational organization (e.g., requiring campus ministers to be ordained and follow PCA polity; hiring staff that subscribes to denominational guidelines), but for the most part many laws protecting or applying to the employment relationship will apply to RUF.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- The practice of providing job offer letters from RUF has been added in the last ten years to the original creation and prosecution of call letters at the presbytery. The process of interviewing and agreeing upon a candidate for a job is distinct from the action of legally employing them, which is also separate from presbytery credentialing and ordaining/installing a TE. RUF also ordinarily provides qualified, assessed individuals as potential candidates to presbyteries for RUF campus minister positions. (These candidates can come from RUF recruiting efforts or presbytery identifying someone they want to consider.) RUF intends to continue collaborating with presbyteries on interview processes and candidate selection criteria.
- While RUF is the legal employer of campus ministers, an ordained campus minister cannot be placed at an RUF without the formal approval of the Presbytery within whose bounds the work exists.
- The termination of an employee has always had the relational interaction between RUF and the presbytery (ordinarily through the presbytery's RUF committee), and the new clarification seeks to preserve and protect prompt collaboration and trust. Suppose RUF and a presbytery cannot agree on a candidate (which has yet to happen to RUF's knowledge). In that case, either party can step away from the process and not continue employing the person (RUF) or credentialing the person (the presbytery). This has always been the nature of the affiliation agreement, formally signed or simply relationally constituted.
- The need for RUF to terminate employment (as defined by the state as legal employers) protects the individual from wrongful termination (even though RUF is generally considered an at-will employer and has been throughout its history as a standing committee), but this status also protects RUF as a legal employer from liability of false claims against it. The proper legal termination by RUF also protects presbyteries from potential liabilities and claims by campus ministers or other RUF staff that they were wrongfully terminated or that there are other legal compliance violations. In clarifying the AA, RUF seeks to be responsible as an employer to all its employees and the larger organization, to protect against false claims, to limit liability legally, and to uphold the laws of the land. This status has the secondary benefit of reducing legal exposure to presbyteries from employment-related claims.
- The original PCA manual on Campus ministry (1979) says that presbyteries have the right to do campus ministries in several ways, including RUF. The refusal to enter into or the decision of either party

to exit an affiliation agreement (if this should happen) does not undo the right of presbyteries to pursue campus ministry within their bounds in a manner of their choosing. If RUF and a presbytery cannot agree on a candidate to hire or fire, it must pursue another form of campus ministry within its bounds.

- Suppose a presbytery concludes that RUF has acted contrary to the constitution of the PCA in some matter. In that case, they have always been able to object and follow due process to review and involve the proper courts to address concerns.
- RUF, as a program committee, would not have grounds to operate in a presbytery that decides not to continue in such an agreement so that in both the cases of hiring and firing disagreements, the presbytery can refuse to approve or terminate a call. The presbytery could continue to employ a minister (not under the name of RUF) but could assume the responsibilities of a legal employer if they so desired. As we have in the past, issues that rise to the level of the need for termination for legal purposes will be collaborated with the presbytery.
- In the event of misdoings that lead to termination by RUF, the presbytery still maintains the authority and responsibility to pursue pastoral care, shepherding, and appropriate discipline and determine the state of credentials for any TE whose employment has been terminated by RUF.

### **Historical practices of collaboration between RUF and presbyteries in matters of review:**

- Where, historically, there have been matters of performance and character issues that create the basis for the termination of an employee, the RUF area coordinator has worked extensively with the RUF committee chairman, RUF committees, and shepherding committees (or another appropriate committee), and the presbytery as the court that holds a CM's credentials. No terminations have happened that have not extensively included input from all parties, and the intent is that such a relationship and collaboration continue relatively seamlessly.
  - Area coordinators and committees provide input to performance reviews, while the area coordinator understands ministry dynamics on campus. RUF and the presbytery committee have agreed that a campus minister should be removed from the job based on performance issues and have agreed upon an end-of-

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

service timeline. The presbytery has then taken up the dissolution of the call through prescribed committee proceedings.

- Presbytery has the responsibility for credentialing matters, and RUF has always submitted matters of moral failure/concern when it becomes aware of a breach of vows to the presbytery committees if it came to that knowledge before the committee/presbytery through the regular responsibilities of the area coordinator. There are plenty of examples of RUF collaborating and supporting presbytery investigations. Other examples exist of RUF and presbyteries conducting independent and/or parallel (or subsequent) investigations. In these instances, presbyteries have executed their ecclesiastical responsibilities and RUF their employment responsibilities.

<SECTION 4 - Affiliation Agreement to Follow>

RUF Affiliation Agreement (v 22.0 / 2024)  
**Campus Ministry Affiliation of Presbyteries with  
Reformed University Fellowship of the Presbyterian Church in  
America**

Presbytery Name – University/College Name

***PRESBYTERY NAME**, acknowledging that the church is the primary means by which Jesus will draw men and women unto Himself, is committing to this work at **UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE NAME**. RUF seeks to faithfully shepherd believing students during their college years and proclaim the Gospel to students worldwide. The Presbytery is committing to going to the campus to engage in this work, partly by sending an ordained TE and other potential staff members to this campus. Therefore, the Presbytery is entering into this partnership with Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) to reach students for Christ and equip them to serve.*

*Below are the stated responsibilities of Reformed University Fellowship (“RUF”) and the presbytery(ies) to define the roles of parties for the PCA’s denominational ministry at the campus or campuses within the presbytery(ies)’s geographical boundaries.*

*As a court of the Church of Jesus Christ and the PCA, the Presbytery is solely responsible for ordaining and installing Teaching Elders and the primary responsibility for theological and pastoral oversight of the Campus Ministry, including Campus Ministers, Campus Staff, and Interns. As a Program Committee and ministry of the PCA, RUF is a deputized 501(c)3 non-profit ministry with employment, legal, and operational oversight responsibilities over the ministry’s finances and personnel.*

**NOTE: Defined Terms are included at the end of this document.**

**I. General Assembly**

**The responsibilities of the General Assembly (“GA”) of the Presbyterian Church in America shall include, but are not limited to, the following according to the *Rules of Assembly Operations* (“RAO”): GA = General Assembly**

**GA - A.** The GA shall oversee RUF, pray for, and otherwise support the Program Committee of the denomination (Reformed University Fellowship) for college ministry work.

**GA - B.** The GA shall establish and maintain a Permanent Committee (PC) for RUF. The PC is responsible to the GA for overseeing the ministry, providing leadership and encouragement, and considering and making recommendations to the GA. The

PC's responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following as they relate to a unified campus ministry:

- i. The PC shall exercise financial oversight and fiduciary responsibility as described in the *RAO*. This includes presenting an annual budget to the GA for approval, accepting and presenting an audited financial statement, as required, and advising on RUF's financial health.
- ii. The PC shall provide prescribed annual oversight of the Coordinator, present documentation of the Coordinator's performance to the RUF Committee of Commissioners ("COC") and to the GA and recommend electing (or not) the Coordinator with the appropriate compensation.
- iii. The PC shall review practices and procedures for RUF operation following the *RAO*, including what is required in the *BCO* and sent down from the General Assembly. The PC shall recommend policies to the General Assembly through RUF's COC, as described in the *RAO*.
- iv. The PC and RUF staff shall provide the required annual information and presentation to the RUF Committee of Commissioners at each GA, as described in the *RAO*.

**GA - C.** The GA shall provide RUF with a prorated portion of the partnership share of Presbytery and local church giving to the GA.

## **II. Presbytery**

**The responsibilities of *PRESBYTERY NAME* ("*Presbytery*") for the RUF ministry at *UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE NAME***

**(“RUF Ministry or Chapter”) shall include, but are not limited to, the following: *P = Presbytery***

***General Responsibilities***

**P - A.** The Presbytery shall provide oversight, encouragement, accountability, and financial and prayer support for the RUF Ministry.

**P - B.** The Presbytery will help guide and oversee the RUF Ministry/Chapter according to the principles and procedures outlined in the “*Manual for Campus Fellowship, Presbyterian Church in America*” (adopted at the 1979 General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America). It shall hold RUF and the ordained Campus Personnel accountable for conducting ministry following the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America.

**P - C.** The Presbytery shall establish and maintain a committee or subcommittee for campus ministry, including Reformed University Fellowship (the “Presbytery Committee”). Presbyteries may choose to have a joint committee of more than one Presbytery. The Presbytery Committee shall provide encouragement and oversight concerning the campus ministry in the Presbytery’s geographic area in partnership with RUF. Local and National RUF personnel shall be available to present reports at Presbytery meetings at the discretion of the Presbytery Committee and on behalf of RUF.

**P - D.** The Presbytery Committee shall commit to supporting the Campus Ministry/Chapter and Campus Personnel of RUF, both financially and prayerfully. Campus accounts will be managed following RUF’s Account Health Policy, and the Presbytery shall work together with RUF to remedy any account deficits.

**P - E.** The Presbytery should encourage her member churches to pray for the RUF Ministry, refer contacts to Campus Personnel, and make students and covenant children aware of the RUF Ministry/Chapter.

**P - F.** The Presbytery Committee shall invite the designated Area Coordinator from RUF to be a non-voting advisor and guest of the Presbytery Committee.



***Campus Personnel***

**P - G.** The Presbytery Committee should review the budgets for ministry chapters within the Presbytery's boundaries.

**P - H.** All Campus Personnel will be legal employees of RUF, supervised by an RUF Area Coordinator, paid by and through RUF, and subject to RUF employment-related practices and procedures. Ordained RUF personnel will be assessed, trained, and employed by RUF but will be members of and ordained by the local Presbytery (*BCO* 13-1, 13-2). The presbytery shall provide support, shepherding, and care for ordained RUF personnel as members of the Presbytery. Ecclesiastical authority, which is "ministerial and declarative" (*BCO* 11-2), lies with the Presbytery so that "questions of doctrine and discipline" may be resolved (*BCO* 11-4).

**P - I.** In consultation with RUF's Area Coordinator, the Presbytery Committee shall interview and prayerfully consider suitable candidates for a fit at the local RUF Ministry/Chapter, the Presbytery, local church(es), and the region. Acceptable candidates will be presented to the Presbytery for ordaining and approval of RUF employment. The Presbytery shall help encourage ordained RUF personnel to participate fully in Presbytery activities as a PCA Teaching Elder and a Presbytery member (excluding serving on the Presbytery Committee that oversees the RUF Ministry/Chapter).

**P - J.** The Presbytery Committee shall present the RUF call package for all ordained Campus Personnel to the Presbytery for approval. RUF shall develop the call package in consultation with the Area Coordinator and the Presbytery Committee, using the PCA's Geneva Benefits Group recommendations and other pertinent factors to determine the salary and compensation package. Other benefits, perquisites, and terms and conditions of employment are determined by RUF and are standardized for all RUF personnel. RUF will make subsequent adjustments to salary and benefits after consulting with the Presbytery Committee (subject, in the case of housing allowances, to annual review by the Presbytery).

**P - K.** The Presbytery should encourage and help hold all ordained Campus Personnel accountable for participating in RUF's training.

**P - L.** Where appropriate and subject to Presbytery approval, the Presbytery shall receive Campus Ministry Assistants (men pursuing a seminary degree and ordination while serving under a campus minister) under the care of the Presbytery through a local PCA church session.

**P - M.** When necessary, the Presbytery shall support and encourage Campus Ministry Associates ("Band-Aids" in RUF) at an RUF Ministry/Chapter when a previously called and credentialed campus minister is transitioning to another call.

### **III. Reformed University Fellowship**

**The responsibilities of *Reformed University Fellowship (RUF)* for the RUF ministry/chapter at *UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE NAME* shall include, but are not limited to, the following: *R = RUF***

#### ***General Responsibilities***

**R - A.** RUF shall partner with the Presbytery to support the Presbytery in its responsibility to reach the college campuses within its geographic area (see Part 1, "Philosophy of the Church's Ministry to Colleges and Universities" in the 1979 *Manual for Campus Ministries*).

**R - B.** RUF shall provide operational procedures, including advancement/development and guidelines for Campus Ministers, Campus Staff, Campus Ministry Associates, Campus Ministry Assistants, Interns, and RUF National.

**R - C.** RUF shall be all RUF personnel's legal, direct, and responsible employer, while the Presbytery ordains, installs, and holds ecclesiastical authority over ordained Campus Personnel. RUF shall issue a call to a Campus Minister as a "needful work" (BCO 8-4) so that the Campus Minister may labor as a teaching elder within the Presbytery.

**R - D.** RUF shall provide ordained Campus Personnel with an employment arrangement and terms of employment with RUF contingent on Presbytery approval of the call to the RUF Ministry and remaining ordained and in good standing within the Presbytery. RUF shall determine the terms of the call, and Presbytery shall determine whether the call is proper and approved (*BCO* 20-1).

**R - E.** RUF shall supervise and oversee all campus ministry accounting functions, including keeping receipts, acknowledging financial donations, paying all Campus Personnel, reimbursing programming expenses, and producing financial, budget, and donor reports.

**R - F.** RUF shall be accountable for the RUF ministry-at-large, including coordinating and implementing agreed-upon programs, projects, trips, conferences, and fellowships. This includes the Intern program, Campus Staff, public relations, pastoral care, benefits, oversight, and all other items needed for the ministry.

**R - G.** RUF shall provide direct oversight for each Campus Ministry/Chapter through an assigned Area Coordinator hired by RUF National, who reports to RUF's Senior Leadership. Area Coordinators will be credentialed as teaching elders in the PCA. They shall work closely with each Presbytery Committee to advance RUF on the local campuses for which the Area Coordinator is responsible within the Presbytery's bounds, including coordinating with the Presbytery Committee, local pastors, and other interested parties to identify potential new works. RUF shall provide ongoing training for the Area Coordinators related to campus ministry as they shepherd and coach Campus Personnel and participate in the local presbytery where they are credentialed.

**R - H.** RUF shall work with the Area Coordinator and Campus Minister to set a yearly budget for the RUF Ministry, which shall be presented to the Presbytery Committee for review, comment, and approval by RUF National.

**R - I.** RUF shall work to have each RUF Ministry/Chapter reach the school's demographics where the RUF Ministry chapter is

located. This effort will include RUF's recruiting, training, assessment, and orientation.

### **Campus Personnel**

**R - J.** RUF shall be responsible for recruitment, assessment, placement, and ongoing training for Campus Personnel and interns. RUF shall coordinate placement decisions with the Presbytery Committee and make qualified candidates (ordained or ordainable Campus Ministers) available for interviews as needed. RUF shall assess and approve all candidates for ordained Campus positions before presenting the candidate to the Presbytery.

**R - K.** RUF shall establish ordained Campus Personnel's (Campus Minister's) salaries and benefits, subject to the approval of Presbytery (*BCO* 13-2).

**R - L.** RUF shall provide orientation for all new Campus Personnel for all ministry, financial, and operational procedures.

**R - M.** RUF shall provide ongoing campus ministry training on the Philosophy of Ministry ("POM") of RUF for all Campus Personnel.

**R - N.** RUF shall support the Presbytery in holding ordained Campus Personnel accountable for their vows and views as acceptable locally and in the Presbyterian Church in America. RUF shall encourage (and, if necessary, hold accountable) ordained Campus Personnel to promptly disclose any change in views to the Presbytery concerning the Constitution of the PCA. RUF shall immediately report to the Presbytery Committee any disciplinary matters affecting the character of any ordained Campus Personnel that could give rise to process under the *BCO*.

**R - O.** RUF shall help ensure the appropriate submission of all Campus Personnel to the court or church where they hold their membership.

**R - P.** RUF shall expect the attendance and involvement of all ordained RUF personnel in their local Presbytery and in a local PCA church, where available.

**R - Q.** RUF shall first consult and collaborate with the Presbytery, ordinarily through the Presbytery Committee, on matters related to the employment (i.e., the hiring and termination) of Campus Ministers before any actions are formalized. RUF understands the Presbytery will retain the authority and responsibility to shepherd and pastor and retains all jurisdiction for any ecclesiastical discipline concerning all members of its court.

**R - R.** If there is an issue related to the employment of a Campus Minister, RUF may, at its discretion, immediately place the Campus Minister on administrative leave with pay while determining whether employment action needs to be taken. In such cases, RUF shall report the cause of the administrative leave to the Presbytery (ordinarily through the Presbytery Committee). RUF may also ask the Presbytery to begin a *BCO* 31-2 investigation regarding the Campus Minister. If RUF determines that the employment of a Campus Minister should be terminated, it shall report this to the Presbytery in accordance with the procedures outlined in *BCO* 23-1, including bringing a report to the Presbytery as to why such action should be taken. If the Presbytery institutes process against the Campus Minister, RUF shall delay any final action on employment status until the case's conclusion and within the limitations and parameters of RUF Account Health Practices. RUF reserves the right to “staff” the work as needed (including with a Campus Associate) so that the ministry continues during this process. Final decisions regarding the transfer, removal, termination, and/or dissolution of the call of a Campus Minister shall be made by the Presbytery in coordination with RUF. RUF will have the discretion to make decisions according to RUF employment practices regarding the transfer, removal, and/or termination of all non-ordained Campus Personnel and shall communicate the same to the Presbytery Committee.

*The undersigned presbytery(ies) and Reformed University Fellowship now agree to an affiliation to reach students for Christ and equip them for service within their geographical bounds and North America.*

## APPENDIX N

*Through this agreement, the local/area ministry is officially affiliated with Reformed University Fellowship and thereby authorized to use the said name and that of Reformed University Fellowship for local campus fellowship within its geographical bounds and in North America.*

*<Signature Page to Follow>*

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

---

Date of Action

---

Presbytery

---

Presbytery Moderator

---

Presbytery RUF or Campus Ministry Committee Chairman

---

Area Coordinator for Reformed University Fellowship

---

Coordinator of Reformed University Fellowship

## DEFINED TERMS

**Permanent Committee:** The Permanent Committee for Reformed University Fellowship

**GA:** The General Assembly of The Presbyterian Church in America

**RUF:** Reformed University Fellowship, a Program Committee and ministry of The Presbyterian Church in America

**RUF Ministry:** The local RUF ministry at NAME University is directly overseen by an ordained Campus Minister (or, for a short term, by a Campus Associate)

**Presbytery:** The NAME Presbytery

**Presbytery Committee:** The committee of the Presbytery overseeing an RUF Ministry.

**RAO:** Rules of Assembly Operations

**BCO:** Book of Church Order

**Coordinator:** The National Coordinator of Reformed University Fellowship

**Area Coordinator:** Regional supervisor for RUF and liaison to the Presbytery Committee

**Campus Minister:** Ordained RUF employee who oversees a local RUF Ministry and any other Campus Personnel at that ministry

**Campus Staff:** Female RUF employee who works at a local RUF ministry under the supervision of an ordained RUF minister

**Associate Campus Minister:** Ordained RUF employee who works under a Campus Minister

**Campus Associate (“Band-Aid”):** Non-ordained male RUF employee who directs a campus in the absence of a Campus Minister

**Campus Assistant:** Non-ordained male RUF employee who works under a Campus Minister



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Campus Personnel:** All RUF personnel at a local RUF ministry, not including Interns (ordained Campus Ministers and unordained Campus Staff).

**Intern:** RUF intern who works under the oversight of a Campus Minister and the RUF Intern Department

## Attachment 2

### REFORMED UNIVERSITY FELLOWSHIP CAMPUS MINISTRIES (For the Year Ending December 31, 2023)

#### PRESBYTERIES

#### CAMPUS AND STAFF

**Alabama Joint Committee on Campus Work**  
(Evangel, Southeast Alabama, Warrior, Providence  
and Gulf Coast\*)

##### Evangel Presbytery

**Jacksonville State University**  
TE Daniel Hightower  
**Samford University**  
TE Benjamin Griffith  
**University of Alabama-Birmingham**  
TE Brad Owens  
Stephen Merwin  
**Birmingham Southern College**  
TE Gary Purdy

##### Southeast Alabama Presbytery

**Auburn University & RUFI Affiliate**  
TE Tanner Crum  
TE Michael Alsup (RUFI)

##### Warrior Presbytery

**University of Alabama**  
TE Stewart Swain  
Daniel Tortorici

##### Providence Presbytery

**Alabama A&M University**  
Marcus Nobles  
**University of Alabama – Huntsville**  
TE Vinnie Athey

##### Arizona Presbytery

**University of Arizona**  
TE Matt Esswein

##### Calvary Presbytery

**Anderson University**  
TE John Boyte  
**Clemson University & RUFI Affiliate**  
TE Brian Howard (RUFI)  
**Erskine College**  
Open  
**Furman University**  
TE Tom Hart  
**Wofford College**  
TE Oliver Pierce

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Catawba Valley Presbytery**

**Davidson College**  
TE Andrew Goyzueta

### **Central Carolina Presbytery**

**Johnson & Wales University**  
Nicholas DeVusser  
**Queens College (ARP Affiliate)**  
TE Josh Grimm  
**University of North Carolina-Charlotte**  
TE John Baber

### **Central Georgia – Savannah River Joint Committee**

#### **Central Georgia Presbytery**

**Mercer University**  
TE Marlin Harris  
**Valdosta State**  
TE John Gordy  
**Wesleyan College**  
Open  
**Columbus State University**  
TE Tim Grider

#### **Savannah River Presbytery**

**Georgia Southern University**  
TE Nathanael Miller  
**Savannah College of Art & Design**  
TE Martin Antoon

### **Central Indiana Presbytery**

**Indiana University**  
Open  
**Purdue University**  
Nate Osner

### **Chesapeake Presbytery**

**Johns Hopkins**  
TE Jacob Jasin (RUF-I)  
**University of Maryland – Baltimore County**  
TE Trip Beans

### **Chicago Metro Presbytery**

**Northwestern University**  
TE Andrew Barber  
TE Ian Hammond (RUF-I)  
Mike Hernberg (RUF-I) (CMA)

### **Eastern Carolina Presbytery**

**Duke University**  
TE Matt Mahla  
**East Carolina University**  
TE Skylar Adams  
**North Carolina Central University**  
TE Kris Cooper  
**North Carolina State University**  
TE Chuck Askew  
**University of North Carolina – Chapel Hill**  
TE Simon Stokes  
**University of North Carolina – Wilmington**  
TE Sam Kennedy

## APPENDIX N

### **Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery**

**Lehigh University**  
TE Michael Goodlin

### **Fellowship Presbytery**

**Winthrop University**  
TE Mark Ashbaugh

### **Florida Joint Committee on Campus Work (Central Florida, Gulf Coast, North Florida, Southern Florida, Sun Coast and Southwest Florida)**

### **Central Florida Presbytery**

**University of Central Florida**  
TE Hardy Reynolds  
Austin Slater (RUFJ)

### **Gulf Coast Presbytery**

**Florida State University**  
TE Kelly Jackson  
**University of South Alabama**  
Open

### **Gulfstream Presbytery**

**Florida Atlantic University**  
TE Jeff Lee

### **North Florida Presbytery**

**University of Florida**  
TE Steve Lammers  
TE Jon Bonker (RUFJ)  
**University of North Florida**  
TE Tommy Park

### **Suncoast Presbytery**

**Florida Gulf Coast University**  
TE Lucas Tanner

### **Southwest Florida Presbytery**

**University of South Florida**  
TE Aldo Mondin

### **Great Lakes Presbytery**

**University of Michigan**  
TE Robert Knuth

### **Heartland Presbytery**

**Kansas State University**  
TE Jonathan Dunning  
**University of Kansas**  
John “Quinn” Sloan

### **Heritage Presbytery**

**Delaware State (HBCU)**  
TE Daryl Wattley

**University of Delaware & RUFJ Affiliate**  
Open

### **Highlands Presbytery**

**Appalachian State University**  
TE Alec Cotton  
**Western Carolina University**  
TE Andrew Shank

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Hills and Plains Presbytery**

### **Oklahoma State University**

John “JR” Biggs

### **University of Arkansas**

TE Austin Royal

### **University of Oklahoma**

James Post

### **University of Tulsa**

TE Caleb Harlan

### **Houston Metro Presbytery**

### **Rice University**

Open

### **University of Houston**

TE Brooks Harwood

### **Low Country Presbytery**

### **College of Charleston**

TE Jacob Lee

### **South Carolina State**

Joel Brown

### **Metropolitan New York Presbytery**

### **Columbia University and RUFI Affiliate**

TE Eric Lipscomb

Micah Bragg (RUFI)

### **NYC City Campus**

TE Matthew Terrell

### **Gotham Student Movement – Hunter College & Fordham University-Lincoln Center**

TE Wei Ho

### **Lehman College**

Carlton “CJ” Francis

### **Queens College – NYC**

TE Jeffrey Jou

### **New York University**

TE Graham Girard (RUF-I)

### **Mid-South Joint Committee (Covenant, Grace, and Mississippi Valley)**

### **Covenant Presbytery**

### **Arkansas State University**

Open

### **Delta State University**

TE Ro Taylor

### **Rhodes College**

TE John Craft

### **Mississippi State**

TE Joe Johnson

### **University of Memphis**

TE John Crosby

### **University of Mississippi**

TE Austin Braasch

### **Grace Presbytery**

### **University of Southern Mississippi**

TE Davis Morgan

### **Mississippi Valley Presbytery**

### **Belhaven University**

TE Bentley Crawford

## APPENDIX N

	<b>Jackson State University</b> TE Anthony Forrest <b>Mississippi College</b> TE Jeff Jordan
<b>Missouri Presbytery</b>	<b>University of Missouri</b> TE David Barnes <b>Washington University at St. Louis</b> TE Tim Price
<b>Nashville Presbytery</b>	<b>Austin Peay State University</b> TE Will Cote <b>Belmont University</b> TE Kevin Twit <b>Middle Tennessee State University</b> TE Weston Duke <b>Tennessee Tech University</b> Ryan Angel <b>Vanderbilt University</b> TE Chase Daws TE Andrew Terrell (RUF-I) <b>Western Kentucky University</b> TE James Jardin
<b>New Jersey Presbytery</b>	<b>Rowan University</b> Will Bausch
<b>New River Presbytery</b>	<b>West Virginia University</b> TE Peter Green
<b>North Georgia Joint Committee (Georgia Foothills, Metro Atlanta, NW Georgia)</b>	
<b>Georgia Foothills Presbytery</b>	<b>University of Georgia</b> TE Ben Coppedge TE Jeff Thompson (RUF-I)
<b>Metro Atlanta Presbytery</b>	<b>Emory University</b> TE George Hamm <b>Georgia Tech &amp; RUF-I Affiliate</b> Chad Jowers TE Tracey West (RUF-I)
<b>Northwest Georgia Presbytery</b>	<b>Kennesaw State University</b> TE Chris Blackman
<b>North Texas Presbytery</b>	<b>Baylor University</b> TE Way Rutherford <b>Southern Methodist University</b> TE Conrad Quiros TE Fee Kennedy (RUF-I) <b>Texas Christian University</b> TE Bradford Green <b>Texas Tech University</b> TE Davis Sweatt <b>University of North Texas</b> TE Justin Smith

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**University of Texas-Tyler/Tyler Junior College**

**RUI University of Texas – Dallas**  
Indeok Kim (Campus Assistant)  
**University of Texas – Arlington**  
Shaynor Newsome (PT Campus Associate)

**Northern California Presbytery**

**San Jose State**  
Kyle Grow  
**Stanford University**  
TE Crawford Stevener  
**University of California – Berkeley**  
TE John Kong  
TE Paul Schuler (RUI)  
**University of Hawaii**  
Andrew Kawata

**Northern New England Presbytery**

**University of Vermont**  
TE John Meinen

**Ohio Presbytery**

**Kent State University**  
TE Nate Bower

**Ohio Valley Presbytery**

**University of Kentucky**  
TE Nick Bratcher  
**University of Louisville**  
Ellis Walker

**Pacific Presbytery**

**University of California – Los Angeles**  
TE Matthew Trexler  
**University of California – Santa Barbara**  
TE Johnathan Keenan  
**University of Southern California**  
Tyler “Ty” Gregory

**Pacific Northwest Presbytery**

**Boise State**  
TE Drew Burdette  
**University of Washington**  
TE David Birnie  
**Western Washington University**  
Tommy Hannah  
**Oregon State University**  
Open

**Palmetto Presbytery**

**University of South Carolina & RUI Affiliate**  
TE Sammy Rhodes  
TE Scott Andes (RUI)

**Piedmont Triad Presbytery**

**Wake Forest University**  
TE Chris Horne  
**Winston Salem State**  
TE Jonah Hooper  
Travon Williams (Campus Assistant)

## APPENDIX N

<b>Pittsburgh Presbytery</b>	<b>University of Pittsburgh</b> TE Gavin Breeden <b>Indiana University of Pennsylvania</b>
<b>Platte Valley Presbytery</b>	<b>University of Nebraska</b> TE Thomas Kuhn
<b>Potomac Presbytery</b>	<b>George Mason University RUFIAffiliate</b> TE Matthew Delong (RUFIAffiliate) <b>Howard University</b> TE Cyril Chavis Chris Reed (CMA) <b>University of Maryland</b> Ryan Bratt
<b>Rio Grande Presbytery</b>	<b>New Mexico State University</b> TE Daniel Davalos <b>University of Texas El Paso</b> Ed Ovalle <b>University of New Mexico</b> Charlie Fiorillo
<b>Rocky Mountain Presbytery</b>	<b>Colorado State University</b> TE Wes Calton <b>US Air Force Academy</b> TE Jeff Kreisel <b>University of Colorado, Colorado Springs</b> TE Jonathan Clark <b>Montana State University</b> TE Cody Janicek
<b>Siouxlands Presbytery</b>	<b>University of Minnesota</b> TE Brandon Haan <b>North Dakota State University</b> Open
<b>South Coast Presbytery</b>	<b>University of California – Irvine</b> TE Derek Rishmawy <b>University of California – San Diego</b> TE David Billingslea (RUFIAffiliate)
<b>South Texas Presbytery</b>	<b>Texas A&amp;M University &amp; RUFIAffiliate</b> Austin McCann TE Titus Bagby (RUFIAffiliate) <b>Texas A&amp;M University Corpus Christi</b> Open <b>Trinity University</b> Holt West <b>University of Texas – Austin &amp; RUFIAffiliate</b>  <b>University of Texas-San Antonio</b> TE Lee Wright



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **Southern Louisiana Presbytery**

**Louisiana State University**  
TE Ande Johnson  
**Tulane University**  
TE Matt Roelofs  
**University of Louisiana – LaFayette**  
Alec Moyer

### **Southern New England Presbytery**

**Boston University**  
TE Nathan Dicks  
**Brown University/RISD**  
TE Travis Hutchinson  
**Harvard University**  
TE Michael Whitham  
**MIT**  
TE Solomon Kim  
**University of Connecticut**  
David Augustine

### **Susquehanna Valley Presbytery**

**Millersville University**  
TE Chris Peter  
**Pennsylvania State University & RUFI  
Affiliate**  
TE Cameron Smith  
TE Richard Smith (RUFI)

### **Tennessee Valley**

**Carson Newman University**  
TE Chandler Rowlen  
**University of Tennessee – Chattanooga**  
Davis Mooney

**University of Tennessee Knoxville & RUFI  
Affiliate**  
TE Mac Holt  
TE Lee Leadbetter (RUFI)

### **Virginia Joint Committee (Blue Ridge, Tidewater, and James River**

#### **Blue Ridge Presbytery**

#### **James Madison University**

**University of Virginia**  
TE Josiah Carey  
**Virginia Tech**  
TE Heath McLaughen  
**Liberty University – Lynchburg**  
TE Ben Spivey  
**Washington and Lee University**  
TE Willis Weatherford

#### **Tidewater Presbytery**

**Christopher Newport University**  
TE Peter Lyon  
**College of William and Mary**  
TE Ben Robertson  
**Old Dominion University**  
Grant Taylor

## APPENDIX N

<b>James River Presbytery</b>	<b>Virginia Commonwealth University</b> Open
<b>West Hudson Presbytery</b>	<b>Rutgers University</b> TE Joe Fischer
<b>Westminster Presbytery</b>	<b>East Tennessee State University</b> TE Will Barbour
<b>Wisconsin Presbytery</b>	<b>University of Wisconsin – Milwaukee</b> TE Nick Bratcher <b>University of Wisconsin – Madison</b> TE Cameron Brown
<b>MTW Affiliations</b>	<b>National Autonomous University of Mexico</b> Barush Sanchez <b>Bogota, Columbia</b> TE Peter Dishman Will Schaufelberger (CMA) <b>L’VIV, Ukraine</b> TE Jon Powell <b>Malaysia</b>  <b>West Africa</b> TE Collin Jennings <b>Tokyo, Japan</b> Jeff Saunders
<b>Serge</b>	<b>Granada, Spain</b> Aaron Gray

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Reformed University Fellowship Current Interns and Staff

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Year Interns:

Miguel Acuña Bogota Colombia  
Abby Agan University of California-Berkeley  
Billy Anighoro University of North Texas  
Emily Arnold William and Mary  
Sebastian Avalos University of Texas - El Paso  
Sophia Barkhouse Appalachian State University  
Charlotte (Spencer) Bennett Florida Atlantic University  
Canaan Bennett Florida Atlantic University  
Matthew Berry Georgia Southern University  
Lucy Brennan Auburn University  
Hunter Brooks University of Alabama  
Joy Chamberlain Samford University  
Lucy Chapman Harvard University  
Stephen Christenbury University of Texas-Austin  
Audrey Clarke Belmont University  
Zachariah Cleveland University of Texas - San Antonio  
McKenna Coartney Middle Tennessee State University  
Cam Coffee Virginia Tech  
Aidan Creel University of Mississippi  
Lauren Danforth Baylor University  
Sarah Douglass New Mexico State University  
EllaCait Downs College of Charleston  
Emily Elliott University of Florida  
Hyland Fittro University of Alabama-Huntsville  
Janie Fortner Western Kentucky University  
Elizabeth Fortune Jacksonville State University  
Sarah Fritzsche Boston University  
Thomas Gathright University of Oklahoma  
Colton Gonzales University of Texas - San Antonio  
Danny Harry University of Tennessee-Knoxville  
Claire Hatfield Mississippi State University  
Jacob Hatfield Mississippi State University  
Ayden Henson Liberty University  
David Hodges Clemson University  
Matt Holdsworth University of Virginia  
Kathleen Hoover University of Vermont  
Felicity (Courtright) Holton University of Georgia  
Jacob Huneycutt University of South Florida  
Mercy Jackson University of Arkansas  
Paige Jackson University of Arizona  
Natalia Jaramillo Bogota Colombia  
Eliot Jones University of Georgia  
Ticia King Washington University in St. Louis

Kaitlyn (Said) Kuntz Rice University  
Ashley Lanier United States Air Force Academy  
Jackie Lee University of California - Irvine  
Mark Manuel University of California - Los Angeles  
Andrew Mauney Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Gracie (DeLoache) Mauney Massachusetts Institute of Technology  
Garrett McLain Middle Tennessee State University  
Matt McMillan Queens University of Charlotte  
Cole Metzger University of Nebraska - Lincoln  
Jack Myers Tulsa University  
Grace Nelson North Carolina State University  
Caroline Newsom University of Washington  
Gloria Newton University of Tennessee - Knoxville  
Corinne Parsons Tennessee Tech University  
Cordy Phillips Kent State University  
Veronica Pierre East Tennessee State University  
David Prather University of North Carolina - Wilmington  
Robert Randall University of South Carolina  
Hannah (Weippert) Sandridge University of Illinois  
Anthony Short Washington University in St. Louis  
Lorena Silva Brown University & Rhode Island School of Design  
Caleb Sklena Davidson College  
Naomi Slater University of South Carolina  
Johnathan Smith Belhaven University  
Raegan Watkins Texas Tech University  
Lauren Webb University of Hawaii  
Anna Claire White Duke University  
Eli Whitten University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

## APPENDIX N

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Year Interns:

Josh Anderson - Mississippi State  
Anna Ayers - RUF-I Clemson  
Skye Green - UAB  
Olivia Bedenbaugh - Belhaven  
Jessie Benton Clapp- Vermont  
Hannah Blankenship - RUF-I Texas A&M  
Justin Blizard - Baylor  
Annie Brawner - Virginia  
Noel Coppedge - RUF-I South Carolina  
Bailey Cowen - UNC Wilmington  
Matthew Dernberger - Western Carolina  
Chris Duncan - Auburn  
Anna Russell Earrey - Georgia Southern  
Diana Florian - RUF-G Colombia  
Ben Floyd - Washington  
Lily Gerrell - Mississippi State  
Abby Green - University of Texas  
Mallory Green - Mercer  
Justin Helms - Memphis  
Myles Hendrick - Arkansas  
Walt Horton - TCU  
Emily Jacob - Queens University  
Ian Jameson - Christopher Newport  
Andrew Jerome - Florida State  
Joshua Joo - Emory  
Larissa Kanz - Millersville  
Georgia Kibler - East Carolina  
Mary Neill Lucas - Davidson  
Caroline Marshall - Vanderbilt  
Mary Ellen McCrary - Carson Newman  
Christina McWhite - Winston-Salem State  
Breanne Moench - Central Florida  
Cassia Mugge - Missouri  
Hannah Murphy - Tulsa  
Rachel Nguyen - Oklahoma State

Henry Oakley - NC State  
Ben Pate - Columbia  
Emma Pearson - Texas A&M  
Thaddeus Perkins - Boise State  
Nic Recasens - Indiana  
Becca Romano - South Florida  
Gabrielle Ross - UNC Charlotte  
Tim Sandridge - Illinois  
Madison Schipper - Winthrop  
Katie Schlenker - Virginia Tech  
Slaton Schneider - Wake Forest  
Betsy Scott - Georgia Tech  
Jessica Shaver - Penn State  
Mary Claire Sides - Alabama  
Anne Morgan Trapnell - Tennessee  
Joshua Valdez - Houston  
Caleb Warner - Michigan

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Interns:

Grace Bailey – UGA  
Stephen Berry – UT Chattanooga  
Caroline Dean – Ole Miss  
Carey (Horne) Helms – Univ of Memphis  
Johnathan Hillerman – Belmont  
Summer Huelle – Rhodes  
Lydia Johnson – Clemson  
Enjeh Liu – Harvard  
Kate Nobels – Furman  
Anna Plybon – Washington & Lee  
Susannah Porier – Univ of Southern MS  
Natalie Rhea – Valdosta  
Spencer Sipe – Vanderbilt  
Danny Waller – App State  
Emily Williams – Univ of CA Los Angeles

Rachel Wilson – Florida State

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### **RUF Campus Staff:**

Maggie Aldin - Samford	April Johnson - Mississippi State
Latasha Allston – Howard	Serena Jones - Boston U
Katherine Ashbaugh - Winthrop	Chelsea Kelly – William & Mary
Caysie Ashton - UGA	Morgan Kendrick - UC Berkeley
Cayla Ball – James Madison	Shaunna Kennedy – UNCW
Annie Kate Barr - Virginia	Sarah Kettel – Univ of Michigan
Joy Beans – UMBC	Jiwon Kim - Stanford
Joy Benton - Belmont	Jenn Kriesel - Air Force
Alex Bosgraf – Boise State	Ava Ligh – Columbia
Caroline Capper - USC	Alyson McClain – RUF NYU
Anne Michal Carter - Mississippi College	Callie Miller – Pittsburgh
Emily Cartledge - James Madison	Kimmy Mota - Houston
Kathleen Chitty – Stanford	Kelley Murphree - UAH
Catherine Cook – Harvard	Abby Plott - Texas Tyler
Cindy Cook - GA Tech RUF-I	Ann Beverly Prideaux - Furman
Emily Crutcher - UTK	Kelly Sanford - UCLA
Lauren Dishman - Bogota	Monse Santiago – Univ of Michigan
Kate Donnell - WCU	Sarah Schmidt -SCAD
Madeleine Dorst – Univ of Southern CA	Elle Shuford – Alabama
Kaylee Epps - Ole Miss	Katelyn Spallinger – Indiana Univ
Etta Farlow- RUF I Vanderbilt	Laura Straka – Emory
Molly Farrell - Texas RUF I	Hailey Tarbell - UT Dallas RUF I
Juanita Marie Fennema – WA Univ St. Louis	Megan Terrell - City Campus
Angelina Francis- Lehman College	Wendy Twit - Belmont
Janelle Grove – George Mason RUF I	Victoria Wallenstein - FSU
Hanna Hammond - Northwestern RUF I	Amy Wood - TCU
Heidi Hill - SMU RUF I	
Sara Jane Horne – Wake Forest	
Grace Hoyme - UCSB	
Amy Hudson – UAB	
Camerone Hughes – Univ of CA Berkeley	
Hannah Humphreys - SMU	
Amanda Jakana - Maryland	
Leslie Janikowsky – Rhodes College	
Zurielly Jennings - Senegal	

### **RUF National Staff:**

National Coordinator, Will Huss  
Associate Coordinator, John Pearson  
Coordinator Emeritus, Rod Mays  
Chief Financial Officer, Kathy Leedy  
Chief Operating Officer, Dennis Shackelford  
Chief Advancement Officer, Kevin Teasley  
Chief Organizational Development Officer, Keith Berger  
Assistant Coordinator RUF-N, Michael Gordon  
Assistant Coordinator RUF-I & G, Chad Brewer  
Assistant Coordinator of Interns & Campus Staff, Mitch Gindlesperger  
Assistant Coordinator of Cross Cultural Advancement, Russ Whitfield

## APPENDIX N

Area Coordinator, JR Foster  
Area Coordinator, Pat Roach  
Area Coordinator, Derek Bates  
Area Coordinator, Jason Little  
Area Coordinator, Britton Wood  
Area Coordinator, SJ Lim  
Area Coordinator, Chris Morrison  
Area Coordinator, Curtis McDaniel  
Area Coordinator, Mike Wenzler  
Area Coordinator, Colin Peters  
Area Coordinator, Richie Sessions  
Area Coordinator, Joe Slater  
Assistant VP of Events & Communications, Emily Miller  
Assistant VP of Internships, Emily Nixon  
Assistant VP of Campus Staff, Casey Cockrum  
Assistant VP of Accounting, Cheryl Lundy  
Director of Annual Giving, George Crook  
Assistant VP of Donor Services, Michelle Stone  
Director of Marketing, Elisabeth Givens  
Director of HR & Benefits, Courtney Gregg  
Director of Media & Events, Jake Wynn  
Director of Accounting, Davia Lester  
Assistant Director of Accounting, Alana Lowe  
Assistant Director of Donor Services, Amy Work  
Assistant Director of Marketing, Kelly Berkompas  
Assistant Director of Advancement Communications, Anna Grider  
Accounting Associate, Sharine Buchanan  
Donor Services Associate, Deanna Paschal  
Donor Services Associate, Ashley Walden  
Regional Events Associate, Cathy Wilkins  
RUF-I & RUF-G Mobilizer, William Stabler  
Donor Service Assistant, Sojin Chi  
HR & Benefits Assistant, Katie Silcox  
Executive Assistant, Anna Brown  
Intern and CS Assistant, Elizabeth Williams  
Intern Recruiting Assistant, Calais Eledui  
Internal Events Assistant, Caroline Clayton  
Accounting Assistant, Mary Jo Scheufler  
Administration Assistant to the Chief Organizational Development Officer, Ellie Stackhouse  
Accounting Assistant, Sally Cargo  
Assistant Director of Campus Staff, Amanda DeYoung  
Major Gifts Officer – Michael Kuhn  
Assistant Director of Communications & Events, Olivia Shields  
Tech Services Assistant, Collin Smith  
Kristen Thompson, Campus Staff Assistant

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank.

## **APPENDIX O**

### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REVIEW OF PRESBYTERY RECORDS TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA June 2024**

- I. A list of Presbytery Minutes received by the Committee (See VI below)**
- II. A list of Presbyteries that have not submitted all approved responses to exceptions of previous General Assemblies:**  
Arizona  
Columbus Metro  
Illiana  
Korean Southwest  
Korean Southwest Orange County  
Lowcountry  
South Coast
- III. A list of Presbyteries that have submitted Minutes after the March 15 deadline required by *RAO 16-4.d*:**  
Central Indiana - (Printed)  
Chicago Metro - (Printed)  
Columbus Metro - (Printed)  
Gulf Coast - (Responses received late)  
Gulfstream - (Print)  
Houston Metro - (Printed)  
Illiana - (Printed)  
Iowa - (Printed)  
James River - (Printed)  
Korean Capital - (Printed)  
Korean Northwest - (Print)  
Korean Southern - (Print)  
Korean Southwest - (Digital and Print)  
Korean Southwest Orange County - (Printed)



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Lowcountry - (Print)  
Mississippi Valley - (Printed)  
Northern Illinois - (Printed)  
Northwest Georgia - (Printed Minutes, Standing Rules and Directory not Submitted)  
Pacific Northwest - (Printed)  
Palmetto - (Print)  
Philadelphia - (Printed)  
Rio Grande - (Printed)  
Savannah River - (Print Directory)  
South Coast - (Printed)  
South Texas - (Printed)  
Suncoast Florida - (Printed)

### IV. Citations

1. Cite the Columbus Metro Presbytery (*cf.* VI.13.g.b) to appear, per *BCO* 40-5, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission which the 51st GA constitutes its commission to adjudicate this matter, by representative or in writing, at the SJC's fall stated meeting, to "show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in question," following the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15
2. Cite the Metropolitan New York Presbytery (*cf.* VI.44.f.2.b) to appear, per *RAO* 16-10.c. and *BCO* 40-5, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission pursuant to the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15, at a time and date appointed by the SJC
3. Cite Korean Southwest Presbytery (*cf.* VI.40.5) to appear before the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records at its 2025 meeting (date to be determined by the Administrative Committee) with responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly and improved responses to previous General Assemblies.
4. Cite South Coast Presbytery (*cf.* VI.74.e) to appear, per *RAO* 16-4.e and 16-10.c, and *BCO* 40-5, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission which the 51<sup>st</sup> GA constitutes its commission to adjudicate this matter, by representative or in writing, at the SJC's fall stated meeting, to "show what

the lower court has done or failed to do in the matters in question,” following the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15.

*Note: RE Jay Neikirk, member of the Standing Judicial Commission abstained from discussion and all votes with regard to Columbus Metro, North Florida, and Northwest Georgia. All members of the Standing Judicial Commission who are serving on CRPR abstained from discussion and all votes with regard to Metropolitan New York.*

## **V. General Recommendations**

1. Thank Dr. Bryan Chapell, Margie Mallow, Ashley Davis, Karen Frey, Angela Nantz, Karen Cook, Heidi Harrison, TE Billy Park, and the rest of the AC staff who covered their responsibilities in addition to their attentive support, friendly welcome, and support to the officers. 57-0-0
2. Thank the staff of Mission to the World who allowed the Committee to use their building, and who endured disruption in their workplace during the meeting of the Committee. 57-0-0
3. Commend the 2024 Committee on Review of Presbytery Records officers: TE Jon Anderson, TE Eddie Lim, TE Jacob Gerber, and TE Thomas Rickard for their work 57-0-0
4. Commend RE Patrick Sewell and TE Thomas Rickard for their tremendous labors in developing a system to automate the submission of read team reports and to develop the draft report of the Committee. 57-0-0
5. Request the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly send a letter to the presbyteries through the stated clerks of the presbyteries to include the following points: 57-0-0
  - a. Commend clerks for their hard work to create, keep, and submit their records, and every presbytery who sent delegates to serve on the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- b. Urge those presbyteries who failed to send delegates to do so in the future, noting the great learning opportunities that exist through participation in the review process. Note that 74 of 88 presbyteries had representatives appointed to the committee this year, with 66 attending the meeting (including 43 TEs and 23 REs).
- c. Encourage presbyteries and clerks to review carefully the “Guidelines for Keeping Presbytery Minutes” from *RAO* 16-3 and the “Guidelines for Responding to General Assembly” from *RAO* 16-10, and to be sure that the requirements included in those sections are reflected in their minutes.
- d. Note the following list of the 10 most common exceptions of substance found during the 2024 review process (which matters accounted for over 25% of all exceptions of substance) and urge clerks and presbyteries to be particularly attentive to addressing these issues in their minutes, including, if necessary, correction of minutes from meetings in 2024 that occurred prior to the reception of this letter.
  - 1. Minutes of commissions not entered in presbytery minutes and/or executive session minutes not provided for review. (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4, 7)
  - 2. Stated differences not included in the examinee’s own words and/or not judged with the prescribed categories. (*BCO* 13-6; 19-2.e, f; 21-4.e, f; and *RAO* 16-3.e.5)
  - 3. Incomplete record of ordination exam. (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5)
  - 4. No record of review of the records of church sessions. (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1)
  - 5. All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded. (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5)
  - 6. No record of six-month church membership for man coming under care. (*BCO* 18-2, 3)

## APPENDIX O

7. No record of call to a definite work for TE being ordained or received by transfer. (*BCO* 13-5; 20-1)
  8. Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes and/or 10 day notice not demonstrated. (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1)
  9. No record of sessional endorsement for man coming under care. (*BCO* 18-2)
  10. No record of annual reports of candidates, TEs serving out of bounds, and TEs without call, and no record of reports on interns at each stated meeting. (*BCO* 8-7; 13-2; 18-6; 19-12)
- e. Encourage presbytery stated clerks to attend the annual Presbytery Clerks' Meeting in December. *57-0-0*
6. Amend *RAO* 16-3.e.5 *57-0-0*
5. Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure, ~~and/or ordination, and/or transfer~~ which have been accomplished. This does not mean that a separate vote on each item must be recorded.
  6. Minutes of presbytery shall record that each candidate being examined for licensure, ordination, or transfer from another denomination was required to "state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions" (*BCO* 13-6; 19-2; 21-4). ~~This does not mean that a separate vote on each item must be recorded.~~ Presbytery minutes shall record ministers' and ministerial candidates' stated differences with our Standards in their own words. Each presbytery shall also record whether:
    - a. the candidate stated that he had no differences; or
    - b. the court judged the stated difference(s) to be merely semantic; or
    - c. the court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but "not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine" (*BCO* 19-2; 21-4); or

- d. the court judged the stated difference(s) to be “out of accord,” that is, “hostile to the system” or “striking at the vitals of religion” (*BCO* 19-2; 21-4).

Renumber 16-3.e

7. Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1 57-0-0

- 1. Exceptions of substance: Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and important delinquencies, and any noncompliance with *RAO* 16-3.e.56 should be reported under this category.

**VI. Report Concerning the Minutes of Each Presbytery:**

1. That the Minutes of **Arizona** Presbytery: 65-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Apr 27, 2023; May 29, 2023; Aug 24, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 19, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Notice for called meeting not in order (call not recorded in minutes)  
**2024-2: Mar 30, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2021-1: Aug 20, 2020** (*BCO* 38-1) — Full *BCO* 38-1 statement not recorded in minutes.

**Response:** We were negligent to not record the statement in the minutes. We will be more watchful in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not yet submitted the full *BCO* 38-1 statement.

**Response:** My error. Statement included in 24 August minutes and prior minutes corrected at Presbytery then to include statement.

**2022-1: Jan 21, 2021** (*BCO* 19-2.b.3) — Candidate licensed after *BCO* exam expressly not sustained.

**Response:** We were negligent to not record the candidate's eventual passage of all aspects of his exam, including on the *BCO*, in the minutes. We will be more watchful in the future. As a note, the then-candidate is no longer part of the Presbytery.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** My error. Statement included in 24 August minutes and prior minutes corrected at Presbytery then to include statement.

**2022-2: Jun 15, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the minister's own words.

**Response:** We were negligent to not record his own words in the minutes. We will be more watchful in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the candidate's stated differences in his own words for review.

**Response:** Record corrected at 24 August Presbytery where minister's own words of differences recorded and submitted for record.

**2022-3: Nov 11, 2021** (Standing Rules I.C.1; *BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Meeting improperly classified as stated instead of called; purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** We were negligent to improperly classify this meeting. We will be more watchful in the future and explicit in our purposes for called meetings.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not recorded the purpose verbatim and ratified the work of the meeting.

**Response:** Record corrected at 24 August meeting and adopted to reflect was called meeting and for the purpose of: acting upon changes to Standing Rules concerning TE attendance and participation in Presbytery matters and selection of leads; to change appointment of Team members from Moderator to Chairs; to approve a commission to particularize [church name omitted]; to thank and dismiss commission to respond to GA exceptions; to propose internship funding; and to remove TE [name omitted] from rolls. Work as stated above ratified at 24 August meeting.

**2022-4: Jun 15, 2021 (BCO 13-6)** — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery.

**Response:** We failed to observe the requirements of *BCO* 13-6 for transfers and will correct going forward. Many apologies.

**Rationale:** No indication that Presbytery corrected its record or its actions (*BCO* 13-6; *RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** Record corrected at 24 August meeting to reflect examination done on item and completion of examination according to *BCO* 13-6.

**2023-1: Jan 28, 2022; Apr 29, 2022; May 26, 2022; Jun 16, 2022; Aug 26, 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Our apologies for our negligence. We have remedied in requiring reports annually to be submitted for our August stated meetings. Reports attached in 24 August minutes.

**2023-2: Apr 29, 2022; Jun 16, 2022; Aug 26, 2022 (BCO 20-1)** — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** Calls of TEs [names omitted], respectively adopted and ratified at 24 August Presbytery. Calls attached in 24 August minutes.

**2023-3: Apr 29, 2022 (BCO 20-1)** — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** Written submission from school submitted at 24 August stated meeting, statement by TE [name omitted] , and formal determination made on 24 August his work is a valid work

**2023-4: Apr 29, 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**Response:** Written submission from school submitted at 24 August stated meeting, statement by TE [name omitted] , and formal determination made on 24 August his work is a valid work.

**2023-5: Apr 29, 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record that out-of-bounds TE is engaged in preaching and teaching the Word.

**Response:** Written submission from school submitted at 24 August stated meeting, statement by TE [name omitted] , and formal determination made on 24 August his work is a valid work.

**2023-6: Apr 29, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam. (Greek/Hebrew/PCA history)

**Response:** Candidate was examined in committee on all areas, including the items above and subject to examination at April 29 Presbytery. Minutes corrected at 24 August 2023 meeting to reflect this. In the future, our minutes will properly reflect examinations in all areas in detail required by the *BCO*.

**2023-7: Apr 29, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery. (Sacraments)

**Response:** Transfer candidate was examined in Ordination Team committee on all four areas of *BCO* 13-6 and subject to open examination at called Presbytery on all areas. In the future, our minutes will properly reflect examinations in all areas in the detail required by the *BCO*. Our apologies for this omission. Minutes corrected at 24 August meeting.

**2023-11: May 26, 2022; Jun 16, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** Corrected at 24 August meeting, amending minutes

**2023-12: May 26, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — Incomplete record of exam for minister seeking admission from another denomination.

**Response:** Candidate was examined in committee on all areas, including the items above and subject to examination at May 26 Presbytery. Minutes corrected at 24 August 2023 meeting to reflect this. In the future, our minutes will properly reflect examinations in all areas in detail required by the *BCO*.

**2023-13: Jun 16, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete exam of TE from another denomination - Greek, Hebrew, Etc.

**Response:** TE was a transfer from the PCA. He was examined in Ordination Team committee on all four areas of *BCO* 13-6 and subject to open examination on all areas at Presbytery. In the future, our minutes will properly reflect examinations in the detail required by the *BCO*. Minutes corrected at 24 August meeting

**2023-14: Aug 26, 2022** (*BCO* 15-2) — Commission appointed to respond to CRPR report does not meet the minimum requirement for a commission.



**Response:** Error noted at 24 August 2023 meeting and any actions taken ratified at meeting. Commission was thanked and concluded at said meeting.

**2023-15: Aug 26, 2022 (RAO 16-10.a)** — No record in minutes of exceptions taken by GA.

**Response:** Error noted and record corrected at 24 August 2023 meeting to include exceptions for previous calendar year

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-8: Apr 29, 2022; Aug 26, 2022 (BCO 15-2)** — Presbytery's "Administrative Commission" does not meet the minimum requirement for a commission.

**Response:** Error noted and corrected at 24 August meeting with adoption of change to Standing Rules and addition of required RE to the AC.

**Rationale:** Change to standing rules does not result in a constitutional quorum.

**2023-9: Apr 29, 2022; Aug 26, 2022 (RONR (12th ed.) 8:1-10; 9:31-36; Standing Rules)** — Presbytery's "Administrative Commission" conducted business and effectively approved a summary of multiple electronic videoconference sessions over a several month span, but without adhering to the rules of an official meeting.

**Response:** Actions taken outside the confines of deliberative meetings on those dates ratified at 24 August Presbytery.

**Rationale:** The corrective action (pg 75, Item 7) did not ratify specific actions, but sought to legitimize the meetings. Response did not address how the presbytery will remedy this going forward.

**2023-10: Apr 29, 2022; Aug 26, 2022 (BCO 15-1)** — No record of quorum for commission meetings.

**Response:** Actions taken outside the confines of deliberative meetings on those dates ratified at 24 August Presbytery.

**Rationale:** The corrective action (pg 75, Item 7) did not ratify specific actions, but sought to legitimize the meetings. Response did not address how the presbytery will remedy this going forward.

- f. **That responses shall be submitted to the following GA as no responses were received in 2024:**

**2023-16: Aug 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

2. That the Minutes of **Ascension** Presbytery: *61-0-1*
- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 28, 2023; Apr 29, 2023; Jul 29, 2023; Nov 04, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
  - d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2023-1: Apr 23, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets its failure to include the minutes of the commission. The minutes of the meeting of April 23, 2022, are hereby amended at 22-22 to show that the commission minutes were omitted and are appended to the minutes of the November 2023 stated meeting. Reviewers for the 51st General Assembly will be able to review the commission minutes at that point **2023-2: Nov 05, 2022** (*BCO* 38-3.a.) — Presbytery may not permit TE to withdraw if he is not in good standing; furthermore, it may not “withdraw from him all authority to exercise his office” if the Presbytery does not judge the branch the TE has affiliated with “as failing to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity” (*BCO* 38-3.b.).

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with this exception.

The minutes of our July meeting make clear that Presbytery was unwilling to accept the TE’s statement that he was “leaving you.” Presbytery reminded him of his ordination vows, and of Presbytery’s desire to see the man repent and be restored to office. Presbytery’s communication to the TE also stated “...we continue to hold and vouch for your credentials as a minister of the Gospel, albeit under Indefinite Suspension from Office. As a Presbytery we will continue to pray for you and your restoration and will periodically communicate with you through the Minister and Church Care Committee, but we cannot simply remove you from the rolls of Presbytery.” (See 22-60.1)

By the November meeting, however, the situation had changed. The minutes of that meeting show that the Stated Clerk had received a communication from the Pastor of an independent Baptist Church

saying the TE had been received as a member there. Further, it was Presbytery's understanding that the leadership of that Church was aware of the circumstances of the TE's indefinite suspension by Presbytery. Presbytery was now confronted with the question of how to deal with a TE who has joined what is, so far as we can tell, another branch of the true Church while under the censure of indefinite suspension from office.

*BCO* 38-3.a discusses how a Presbytery should deal with a situation where a TE who is in good standing chooses to affiliate with another church that maintains the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity, but does so without being transferred. It also tells us how to handle the situation where a TE joins a branch of the true Church when there is an investigation in progress or when there are charges pending. That paragraph, however, does not tell courts how to deal with the situation where a TE who has already been convicted and censured with indefinite suspension from office (as was the case here) then joins another communion. Indeed, we can find nothing in the *BCO* that tells a Presbytery how to deal with a TE who is not in good standing and who joins another branch of the true church. Thus, we had to use wisdom and the inferences from other sections of the *BCO* in determining how to handle this situation.

We do agree that we should not have cited *BCO* 38-3.b in our action, and we understand that may be the point that caused confusion. If that is the only point of the exception we happily agree. We hereby strike “(cf., *BCO* 38-3.b)” from our minutes at 22-71.4. It does not, however, appear to us, that the exception is limited to the passage we cited in support for our action. It is our understanding that the heart of the exception is that a Presbytery cannot act on a TE who is under the censure of indefinite suspension and who joins another branch of the true Church by “withdrawing from him all authority to exercise his office as derived from this Church” (which is the full quote of Presbytery's action omitting the citation we voted to strike). At that point we disagree.

The authority to exercise one's office is conveyed to the individual by a particular communion. In ordinary circumstances, that authority is accepted by another branch of the true Church when it receives the TE by transfer. *BCO* 38-3 discusses the **membership status** of a TE

who affiliates with another communion. But, it does not and cannot mandate that the communion the TE joins must accept that TE's authority to minister the Word and Sacraments. If the communion receives the TE by means other than transfer, then it is the other communion that must determine whether the man is properly serving in the office of teaching elder. This is consistent with Preliminary Principle 2: "...every Christian Church, or union or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion and the qualifications of its ministers...." Thus, if the independent congregation the TE joined wishes to consider him as having a valid ordination, that is their business. In our judgment, however, what the man cannot do, is say "I am now a member of Church X but I continue to exercise my ministerial authority as derived from the PCA (rather than Church X)." When the TE joins another communion without benefit of transfer he (and the other communion) are, in essence, saying that the man has renounced his ministerial authority as derived from the PCA. That conclusion must have even more force when one considers that the man in this situation was already indefinitely suspended from the exercise of office. If this should have been recorded in some other way, we are happy to be instructed. But if, as we understand it, the exception means that a Presbytery cannot say to a TE who joins another true Church without being transferred and who is under indefinite suspension "you can no longer administer the Word and Sacraments based on your PCA credentials," then we dissent.

Further, we note there is no remedy for this situation. Robert's Rules of Order lists among the actions that cannot be rescinded "c) when a resignation has been acted upon, or a person has been elected to or expelled from membership or office, and the person was present or has been officially notified of the action." [RRONR, 12th ed., 35:6] Robert's goes on to say that the only way to reverse an expulsion is to follow the principles prescribed for admission. Surely that is not tenable in this case. That conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the minutes are clear that Presbytery did not take its action by way of additional censure against the TE. The action was taken explicitly in response to the fact that the TE had been received into the membership of another Church (as is its right under Preliminary Principle 2,

particularly when the man had not been suspended from the Sacraments by Presbytery). Presbytery was simply seeking to make the man aware of the implications of that action.

We are also persuaded that the one alternative apparently offered in the exception (“Presbytery may inflict the censure of deposition before transferring the TE to another branch (*cf. BCO 46-8*)”) simply does not fit in this situation. This is not a matter of a transfer. Further, *BCO 46-8* must envision the assignment of the deposed TE to a PCA church as we have no authority to assign someone to a church in another communion, but the TE in question had already joined a non-PCA church. Also, before Presbytery could censure the TE with deposition, we would have to restore him to the roll of Presbytery, and, as was shown above, this is not possible. Most importantly, we do not believe it would be good for the man’s soul (or the Congregation he previously pastored) to somehow try to force him back into a relationship with the Presbytery of the Ascension.

Finally, we want to assure the 51st General Assembly that if it does not accept this response we will comply in any future analogous situation with the Constitutional interpretation suggested by the exception, but we disagree with that interpretation and we believe there is nothing more that can be done in this case.

3. That the Minutes of **Blue Ridge** Presbytery: 64-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Nov 08, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 27, 2023; Aug 12, 2023; Nov 04, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Apr 28, 2023** (*BCO 18-2*) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.  
**2024-2: Apr 29, 2023** (*BCO 12-1*) — Presbytery improperly cited the session of [church name omitted] for “failure to vote to allow TE [name omitted] Assistant Pastor, to attend Session meetings.” The report of the Ad-Hoc Committee on Review of Sessional Records appended to the minutes states as follows: “TE [name omitted] was not approved to sit on Session meetings. As an assistant pastor he is not a member of the Session”.

**2024-3: Apr 29, 2023** (BCO 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2023-1: Jan 29, 2022; Apr 22-23, 2022** (BCO 23-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with these exceptions and will be careful in the future. Presbytery has received these documents and will amend their minutes under to amend a previous action at the Stated Meeting January 26-27, 2024.

**2023-2: Apr 22-23, 2022** (BCO 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidates' Session.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with these exceptions and will be careful in the future. Presbytery has received these documents and will amend their minutes under to amend a previous action at the Stated Meeting January 26-27, 2024.

**2023-3: Apr 22-23, 2022** (BCO 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidates.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with these exceptions and will be careful in the future. Presbytery has received these documents and will amend their minutes under to amend a previous action at the Stated Meeting January 26-27, 2024.

4. That the Minutes of **Calvary** Presbytery: 63-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Jan 28, 2023; Apr 27, 2023; Jul 22, 2023; Oct 26, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **No response to previous assemblies required.**

5. That the Minutes of **Canada West** Presbytery: 61-4-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Mar 04, 2023** (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.  
**2024-2: Mar 04, 2023** (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-3: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-4: Mar 04, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation.

**2024-5: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; *BCO* 40-3) — Results of review of records of church Sessions not stated.

**2024-6: Mar 04, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Presbytery did not require the candidate to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions.

**2024-7: Mar 04, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Presbytery did not require the candidate to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions.

**2024-8: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Presbytery did not require the candidate to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions.

**2024-9: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**2024-10: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 19-16; *BCO* 21-2) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement not recorded.

**2024-11: General 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-12: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Presbytery did not require the candidate to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions.

**2024-13: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g) — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that appears to be out of accord with the fundamentals of our doctrinal standards. Candidates stated difference, "WLC 177 – worthy participation of the Lord's Supper I am more than willing to submit in teaching and practice to the confessional position of requiring a public profession of faith from covenant children before admitting them to the Lord's Table. I am strongly against Federal Vision and I am intentionally distancing myself from such distinctive

teachings in the CREC (to which I never agreed). However, it seems to me that, within the context of faithful family nurture and given the place of covenant children in both the old and new covenants, we should expect that our children already possess the prerequisite faith from the earliest age, and that they will gradually, organically, display this faith in an age-appropriate manner. While we do not know whether our children are elect or not, and we cannot peer infallibly into their hearts, I think we should treat them with the judgment of charity expressed, for instance, in Canons of Dordt 1.17 and Luke 18:15ff, teaching them to pray "Our Father in heaven" and to sing "Jesus loves me" in the full sense of the words. Nevertheless, as I said, I am very happy to abide by the confessional requirements of a public profession of faith (*WLC* 177; *DFW* 56- 4.j) and have already spoken with my own children about doing so. To administer the Supper and fence the table in this way would pose no harm to my conscience whatsoever."

**2024-14: Mar 04, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.b) — Minutes show the Presbytery examined the candidates in biblical counseling. While this may be prudent, it is not an area of examination for ordination according to the *BCO*, nor does Presbytery include it in its Standing Rules.

**2024-15: Oct 13, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.b) — Minutes show the Presbytery examined the candidates in biblical counseling. While this may be prudent, it is not an area of examination for ordination according to the *BCO*, nor does Presbytery include it in its Standing Rules.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Mar 03, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2.d, f) — Incomplete record of licensure exam.

**Response:** Both candidates were examined for licensure in the previous Presbytery meeting of March 4, 2022 in which these requirements were examined and evaluated and found to be satisfactory. Those minutes also recorded what stated differences either candidate had and Presbytery's response to it. Their relative positions were reconfirmed at the time of ordination but not reflected in the minutes. The Clerk apologizes for the oversight

**2023-2: Mar 3, 2022; Sep 30, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4.c (2) and (3) — Incomplete record of ordination exam. [name omitted]: no record of exegetical and theological papers, or their approval for ordinands;



[name omitted]: no record of a sermon preached or 3/4 majority vote, no record of stated differences, no theological papers; [name omitted]: no record of a sermon preached or 3/4 majority vote, no record of stated differences, no theological papers; [name omitted]: no record of stated differences; [name omitted]: no record of stated differences.]

**Response:** TE [name omitted] has been a candidate and licentiate for over five (5) years in the Presbytery up to this point. A summary of his credential process is outlined in the “Executive Session” minutes of March 4, 2022. The recording of his credentials goes back many years. The issues surrounding [names omitted] above were recorded in the March 4, 2022 Stated Meeting minutes. [name omitted] had no stated differences for the Presbytery to consider. This was reported but inadvertently left out of the minutes. The Clerk apologizes for the error and has corrected it. The minutes included in the package sent to RPR for the Autumn Stated Meetings are almost always in “draft” form as the Presbytery does not meet the following year in time to approve the minutes and get them to RPR on time. Therefore, required corrections can generally be made to the minutes in time to approve them after exceptions are received. [name omitted] had stated differences as per below which were examined at the time. The Presbytery judged them to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (BCO 21-4) (RAO 16-3.e.5). The minutes have been corrected to reflect this.

**TE [name omitted] stated exceptions:** WLC 109 – images  
WLC 109 forbids "the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever." While I certainly agree that no image can fully capture the being or attributes of God, and that, due to the idolatrous propensity of the human heart, it is unwise to have such images in places of public worship (so Tyndale and Luther), it seems to me that God himself has revealed aspects of his being and character using visible forms such as the burning bush and the descending dove. These sights surely imprinted themselves on the minds of the eyewitnesses and their description has been recorded for us in Holy Scripture, thereby giving us a warrant (I think) to use them respectfully and carefully for didactic purposes (e.g.

children's books). In particular, the incarnation of Christ resulted in a true, visible body, mysteriously united to and yet distinct from his divine nature, which body was seen, touched, and surely remembered by the apostles, both before and after his resurrection (*cf.* 1 Jn 1). While I would be perfectly happy never to see another pictorial representation of Christ (I am not zealous about this by any means!), I would have a hard time requiring my congregation to get rid of their otherwise sound storybook Bibles on the basis of the second commandment.

#### WCF 21.8 - Sabbath

I understand and know well the arguments for the enduring nature of the sabbath (especially being a GPTS grad!), and I certainly see the benefit and wisdom of ceasing from all labour and worldly recreations on the Lord's Day. As for me and my house, we endeavour keep the sabbath, I would readily encourage this for the *bene esse* of the church. However, the explicit statements of the NT that seem to abrogate the sabbath (e.g. Col 2; Rom 14) give me enough pause as to be somewhat reluctant to discipline a sincere believer who is, for instance, attending public worship faithfully every Lord's Day and engaging in the life and fellowship of the church, but then going off to work or spending some Sunday afternoons watching or playing organized sports. I would certainly urge such a person toward what would be best for him (devoting that time to spiritual commerce on "the market day of the soul"), but at this point I'm not sure that I could say he was positively sinning until he did so. This is something I am still thinking through.

#### WLC 177 – worthy participation of the Lord's Supper

I am more than willing to submit in teaching and practice to the confessional position of requiring a public profession of faith from covenant children before admitting them to the Lord's Table. I am strongly against Federal Vision and I am intentionally distancing myself from such distinctive teachings in the CREC (to which I never agreed). However, it seems to me that, within the context of faithful family nurture and given the place of covenant children in both the old and new covenants, we should expect that our children already possess the prerequisite faith from the earliest age, and that they will gradually, organically, display this faith in an age-appropriate manner. While we do not know whether our children are elect or not, and we cannot peer

infallibly into their hearts, I think we should treat them with the judgment of charity expressed, for instance, in Canons of Dordt 1.17 and Luke 18:15ff, teaching them to pray "Our Father in heaven" and to sing "Jesus loves me" in the full sense of the words. Nevertheless, as I said, I am very happy to abide by the confessional requirements of a public profession of faith (*WLC* 177; *DFW* 56-4.j) and have already spoken with my own children about doing so. To administer the Supper and fence the table in this way would pose no harm to my conscience whatsoever.

**2023-3: Sep 30, 2022** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — Responses to CRPR by the presbytery not included in the minutes.

**Response:** The documented exception responses were not recorded in the minutes by the Clerk. This was an oversight and has been corrected by the Clerk. They have been added to the official minutes. The Clerk apologizes for the error

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: Mar 5-6, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4.f; 40-2) — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that may be hostile to our system of doctrine (*WCF* 1.1-10). More information or clarity is needed on the exception.

**Response:** The Candidates expressed view is that, the gifts of tongues and prophecy, though no longer normative, still occur in a manner that can be defined by such terms. There have been individuals who have reportedly received, in a miraculous manner, the gift of knowing (speaking and/or reading) a language they have had no previous experience or training in. He believes these gifts can be given as a means of grace from God and would categorize this in the realm of the "gift of tongues". Also, individuals may at times be blessed with extraordinary insight on a certain issue for which they may have not previously demonstrated any particular knowledge, expertise or have no training in. The Candidate defines such situations as being in the realm of the "gift of prophecy", using its wider definition. "Prophecy" being looked at as per 1 Corinthians 14:3-4 as speaking to people for their upbuilding and encouragement and consolation... (to) build up the church." It would be defined as: "the gift of communicating and enforcing revealed truth". Though such situations could also come

under the definition of being gifts of “wisdom”, “knowledge”, and/or “discernment”, the definition of “prophecy” as an over-arching term for such is also acceptable for such circumstances. The Candidate agrees that “prophecy” defined as new revelation from God to a person that is “extra-Biblical” or outside of God’s revealed and complete Word, does not exist.

**Rationale:** Presbytery does not acknowledge any biblical support for the continuation of such gifts, nor does it provide any rationale as to how a person can meaningfully differentiate between modern day “prophecy” and Scripture.

**Response:** The candidate affirmed that the supreme judge by which all controversies of religion are to be determined, and all decrees of councils, opinions of ancient writers, doctrines of men, and private spirits, are to be examined, and in whose sentence we are to rest, can be no other but the Holy Spirit speaking in the Scripture (Mat 22:29; Mat 22:31; Eph 2:20; Act 28:25).

**Rationale:** Presbytery did not address the issue the Assembly took with its previous response. Presbytery provides no “biblical support for the continuation of such gifts, nor does it provide any rationale as to how a person can meaningfully differentiate between modern day “prophecy” and Scripture,” in its response. Further, its response is merely a citation of *WCF* 1.10, and so provides the Assembly with no new information, as the candidate stated no difference with that portion of the Standards.

6. That the Minutes of **Catawba Valley** Presbytery: *60-0-0*
- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 28, 2023; Sep 23, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: May 20, 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that congregation concurred with the dissolution of pastoral relations.  
**2024-2: Nov 11, 2023 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.
  - d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-2: May 24, 2022 (BCO 46-8)** — No record that divested minister was assigned to a particular church.

**Response:** CVP demitted a TE [name omitted] at his request, following a second vote on the matter, according to *BCO* 46-8. At that time, it was entered in the minutes under the Shepherding Committee report, “The Committee was asked to inquire where his church membership is to be remanded, and report this back to presbytery.” CVP Presbytery acknowledges that this inquiry was not completed by the next meeting of presbytery, but CVP has corrected this omission at our Fall meeting, Sept 2023 and approved a recommendation to commend Mr. [name omitted] to the [church name omitted] in West Asheville NC at his request, as that is where he has been attending. CVP recognizes that since the Anglican Communion is outside the jurisdiction of the PCA, we are unable to “assign” him to that congregation, as *BCO* 46-8 requires (“When a Presbytery shall divest a minister of his office without censure, or depose him without excommunication, it shall assign him, to membership in some particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church.”), but CVP has received verbal confirmation from Mr. [name omitted] that he is under the care of [church name omitted] in Asheville, NC

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-1: Jan 22, 2022** (*BCO* 43-8) — Four timely and orderly complaints dismissed without a hearing.

**Response:** CVP responds by noting that these four complaints were in fact adjudicated by a Commission but the Commission was unable to proceed after reviewing the complaints, finding all four complaints to be “out of order administratively,” in that they were not filed against an action of a court (*BCO* 43-1). CVP was also notified by the Complainant’s civil attorney that the Complainant desired to withdraw his complaints and to receive no further interaction with CVP concerning these matters.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not rescinded the unconstitutional denial of the complaints. The complaints were, in fact, against actions of a court (*BCO* 43-1), and it was improper to dismiss the complaints as “out of order administratively” on the stated grounds without affording the

Complainant the right of a hearing. A purported subsequent withdrawal of a complaint could dispose of a complaint only after an unconstitutional action is rescinded.

7. That the Minutes of **Central Carolina** Presbytery: 62-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; May 23, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Feb 25, 2023; Aug 26, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2023-1: May 24, 2022 (BCO 21-4) — 3/4 vote for ordination candidate sermon given to committee not recorded.**

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has corrected its minutes to reflect that both ordination sermons preached before the Committee were unanimously accepted by Presbytery. Presbytery regrets its error and promises to be more careful in the future.

8. That the Minutes of **Central Florida** Presbytery: 66-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Aug 22, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Jan 17, 2023 (BCO 20-8) — No record commissioners appointed by the church presented and prosecuted the call of a TE before Presbytery.**  
**2024-2: Apr 18, 2023 (BCO 20-8) — No record commissioners appointed by the church presented and prosecuted the calls of TEs before the Presbytery.**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 8-7) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that out-of-bounds TEs will be engaged in preaching and teaching the Word and will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.**

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception. The terms of call for TEs laboring out of bounds are reviewed and approved when they come before presbytery, though presbytery has failed to explicitly record in its minutes its assurance that the TEs will be engaged in

preaching and teaching the Word and will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church, in keeping with *BCO* 8-7. Presbytery commits to be more careful to record this assurance in the future. By action of the 189th Stated Meeting the following was inserted into the respective Minutes for 183rd meeting - [names omitted] 184th meeting – [names omitted], 185th meeting – [name omitted] will be engaged in preaching and teaching the Word and will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church, in keeping with *BCO* 8-7 [added by 189th 8/22/23]

**2023-2: General 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report from some TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception. While most of the TEs who serve out of bounds in the presbytery submitted annual reports, not all of them did. Presbytery commits to be more diligent in obtaining these reports in the future.

**2023-3: Jan 25, 2022; Apr 26, 2022; Aug 23, 2022; Nov 15, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session or six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. In each of these cases, presbytery's Candidates Committee reported the session's endorsement and six months' membership. These records can be found in the appendices of the respective minutes. However, Presbytery will make specific mention of these facts in the Minutes.

**2023-4: Jan 25, 2022; Apr 26, 2022; Aug 23, 2022; Nov 15, 2022** (*BCO* 19-9) — No record that Presbytery received statement of inward call to the ministry of the Word from internship applicants.

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. The actions cited are for persons who were taken under care as Candidates and at the same meeting became Interns. In each case, the person gave testimony of his call to gospel ministry. It is true that the words "inward call" are not in the Minutes, but the words "call to ministry" are in the Minutes. Our Minutes state in each case: M/S/C to hear the personal testimony and call to ministry of...M/S/C that Presbytery, having heard the testimony and call to gospel ministry of Mr. \_\_\_, and finding his examination and testimonial to be satisfactory according to *BCO* 18-3

**2023-6: Jan 25, 2022; Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 15-3) — Presbytery did not vote to approve judgments of judicial commissions.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and commits to be more careful in the future. By action of the 189th Presbytery the following notation was inserted in the Minutes of January 25 and April 26, 2022. Presbytery approved of the judgment of the Commission [Amended 8 -22-23]

**2023-7: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 39-2; 45-1) — Protest admitted by a member who did not have a right to vote in a case.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception. This was an oversight on the part of presbytery. The following notation was inserted in the Minutes of April 26, 2022: The action to allow the Protest was determined to be out of accord with *BCO* 45-1 – Noted 8/22/23 (189th Stated Meeting).

**2023-8: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — 3/4 vote for extraordinary clause for ordination candidate not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception. A 3/4 vote was taken, but it was not recorded. Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future. The April 26th record has been so noted

**2023-9: Apr 26, 2022 ES** (*BCO* 31-8) — Presbytery policy that accusations from a specific communing member be “automatically denied” on the basis of *BCO* 31-8 exceeds the scope “great caution” permitted.

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. This action was taken after a three-year period of numerous complaints and charges that, in the judgment of presbytery, rose to the level of exhibiting “a malignant spirit” and a “litigious, rash or highly imprudent” character (*BCO* 31-8). The action was not all-encompassing but was specifically limited to complaints “that are in any way connected to [the complainant’s] ongoing vendetta against [church name omitted] and/or their Teaching Elders.” Later unrelated complaints from this individual were admitted. Further, the issue is now moot as the individual has been excommunicated from the Church.

**2023-10: Aug 23, 2022** (*BCO* 5-2; 13-1; 13-9) — Presbytery assigned oversight of mission churches within its bounds to a different Presbytery.



**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. *BCO* 5-2 states that mission churches “ordinarily” are established within the boundaries of a presbytery, a qualifier that allows for non-ordinary circumstance. The non-ordinary circumstance was explained in the motion: “Whereas the transfer of Pasco County from CFP to SWP has been delayed due to an administrative error on the part of our Presbytery and not because the 49th General Assembly rejected it; and whereas it is strongly anticipated that the 50th General Assembly will approve the transfer of Pasco County from CFP to SWP next year; and whereas any new church plants in Pasco County between now and then will eventually be overseen by and included within SWP; be it resolved that any new church plants in Pasco County from this point forward will be evaluated, approved, and overseen by SWP, as if those church plants were within the geographical bounds of SWP. This motion is dependent on the approval of SWP before it will take effect.” This arrangement was discussed with the PCA Stated Clerk at the 49th General Assembly when the administrative error was discovered and was judged to be a reasonable solution. Further, there were no Central Florida Presbytery churches in Pasco County at the time of this temporary arrangement. Finally, the issue is now moot, since the 50th General Assembly has acted to transfer Pasco County to the Southwest Florida Presbytery.

**2023-11: Aug 23, 2022** (*BCO* 5-9) — All specific requirements of particularization of church not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. *BCO* 5-9 lists the following steps for organizing a particular church: receive a petition (*BCO* 5-9.g), appoint an organizing commission (*BCO* 5-9.h), and set a date and time of the organizing service (*BCO* 5-9.h). The Minutes include the petition as Appendix E. The Minutes show that a commission was appointed and a date and time set. The organization service was held on September 18, 2021, and the report of the organizing commission is included in the November 15, 2021 Minutes detailing all the particulars.

**2023-12: Nov 15, 2022** (*BCO* 25-11; Preliminary Principle 6) — Presbytery approved the withdrawal of a church from the PCA, when withdrawal is not conditional on Presbytery approval.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception. While presbytery's approval is not required for a church to withdraw from the PCA, *BCO* 25-11 notes that a congregation should be given "at least thirty-days' notice of any meeting where the congregation is to vote on a proposed withdrawal." Presbytery was striving to honor its responsibility to see that this requirement be observed and did not intend to imply that its approval was necessary for the congregation to withdraw. Presbytery promises to be clearer in the future.

9. That the Minutes of **Central Georgia Presbytery:** 66-0-0
- a. Be approved without exception: **Aug 07, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance:
    - 2024-1: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam
    - 2024-2: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 13-5) — TE included on roll of Presbytery without explanation.
    - 2024-3: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.
    - 2024-4: May 09, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.
    - 2024-5: Jan 28, 2023** (PP 6) — No record that members of the provisional Session were called by the congregation.
    - 2024-6: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation.
    - 2024-7: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation.
    - 2024-8: General 2023** (*BCO* 40-3; *BCO* 13-9.b) — Results of review of records of church sessions not stated.
    - 2024-9: May 09, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation.
    - 2024-10: Sep 12, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.
  - d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: General 2022** (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church sessions.

**Response:** Central Georgia Presbytery acknowledges this significant oversight in our minutes and states that we did in fact examine Sessional records in 2022. We are correcting this for current and future minutes of Presbytery.

**2023-2: May 10, 2022** (BCO 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** Central Georgia Presbytery agrees with the RPR committee and will correct the minutes to include the fact that Teaching Elder [name omitted] took no exceptions to the Westminster Standards at the time of his ordination examination on the floor of Presbytery.

10. That the Minutes of **Central Indiana** Presbytery: 63-0-0

- a. **Not be approved** because it is unclear that all the minutes were approved. Further, that all minutes and responses to exceptions submitted in 2023 be submitted next year.

11. That the Minutes of **Chesapeake** Presbytery: 63-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 21, 2023; May 09, 2023; Sep 12, 2023; Nov 11, 2023**

- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Mar 14, 2023** (BCO 19-2.f; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Presbytery approved a candidate for licensure whom they judged held a view that was hostile to the system or striking at the vitals.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Sep 13, 2022** (BCO 19-2.d; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of licensure exam.

**Response:** The Stated Clerk apologizes for this unintended oversight and has corrected the meeting minutes to include the following statement: “MSA that the written and orally delivered sermon presented to the LDC on Matthew 5:1-5 entitled ‘Blessed are the Meek’ be approved.”

12. That the Minutes of **Chicago Metro** Presbytery: 60-1-2

- a. Be approved without exception: **Mar 30, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-6) — Annual reports of candidates not included.
  - 2024-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Annual report of interns not included.
  - 2024-3: General 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Reports on every intern by the committee charged with the oversight of interns at each stated meeting not included.
  - 2024-4: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report of TEs laboring out of bounds.
  - 2024-5: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual report of TEs without call.
  - 2024-6: Feb 15, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.
  - 2024-7: May 17, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.
  - 2024-8: May 17, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2024-9: Aug 16, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.
  - 2024-10: Aug 16, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.
  - 2024-11: Aug 16, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.
  - 2024-12: Nov 11, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.
  - 2024-13: Nov 11, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5; *BCO* 21-2) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-14: Nov 11, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5; *BCO* 21-2) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-15: Nov 11, 2023** (*BCO* 46-6; *BCO* 13-7) — No record regarding the reception of a certificate of dismissal from transferring presbytery.

**2024-16: Nov 11, 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-17: Nov 11, 2023 (BCO 21-9)** — For a TE whose call changed from Assistant to Associate, there is no record of appointing a commission to install.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-1: Aug 18, 2021 (BCO 19-2.e; 19-2.f)** — Licensure candidate's stated difference makes a separation between the Old Testament Sabbath and the Lord's Day that seems to be hostile to our system of doctrine.

**Response:** The Presbytery respectfully disagrees. While we agree that the candidate's position is indeed a difference with our standards, we interpret the candidate's position to be consistent with the Continental or Calvinistic view of the Sabbath (as expressed in the Heidelberg Catechism Q&A.103, which the candidate affirms) and do not believe this view is hostile to the system or strikes at the vitals of religion.

**Rationale:** Presbytery stated how they believed that this view was consistent with other confessional traditions but not how it was consistent with our doctrinal standards. Candidate's stated difference appears to make a separation between the Old Testament Sabbath and the Lord's Day that seems to be out of accord with our system of doctrine. Further clarification is needed. (BCO 19-2.e; 19-2.f)

**Response:** Following Charles Hodge, the Chicago Metro Presbytery contends that the "fundamentals of our system" are those doctrines which belong "to the integrity of the Augustinian, or Reformed System" (Hodge, *Discussions in Church Polity*, 1878, p. 336). The candidate's stated affirmation of HC Q&A 103, a central doctrinal statement of our Continental Reformed brethren, demonstrates that, though he differs with the teaching of the Westminster Standards on this matter, his difference is not hostile to the integrity of the "Reformed System." More specifically, while the candidate states that he does not believe that "the Sabbath day...has now become the Lord's Day," the candidate nevertheless agrees with the Westminster position that the moral law expressed in the 10 Commandments is the "perfect rule of righteousness" and "doth forever bind all," himself declaring that we must "keep the moral

command to fulfill the Sabbath by resting in Christ and from all our strivings.” The candidate also follows Westminster’s recognition of the first day of the week in affirming that “the Lord’s Day is a day to be observed through public worship and private rest.” Given these considerations, we determined that “the candidate’s declared difference is not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine because the difference is neither hostile to the system nor strikes at the vitals of religion.” Finally, CMP notes that *RAO* requires RPR, when citing an exception of substance, to “include citation of any relevant scriptural and/or constitutional references, and provide the committee’s rationale for finding the exception of substance” (16-7.c.3). CMP respectfully suggests that replying is difficult when RPR omits citations or theological reasoning for its assertion that a candidate’s position “seems to be hostile to our system.”

**2023-1: Jan 19, 2022; Sept 29, 2022 (BCO 13-12)** — Notice for called meeting not in order (no record of 10-day notice, no verbatim meeting call).

**Response:** The notice for both called meetings were in order, but Presbytery erred in not recording it in the minutes. This was the verbatim meeting call for the January 19, 2022 meeting, which was made on January 4, 2022.

**2023-2: Feb 16, 2022 (BCO 19-2)** — Use of extraordinary clause for licensure candidate not explained.

**Response:** The candidate had not been a member of his church for six months but had received an endorsement from his church’s session. He had also previously been under the care of Missouri Presbytery, where he completed his internship requirements. Presbytery erred in stating that he had been a member of his church for at least six months, and we will be careful in the future to record such information accurately.

**2023-3: Feb 16, 2022 ES (BCO 18-2)** — Use of extraordinary clause for licensure candidate not explained.

**Response:** As stated in the minutes, the candidate had been under care of the Southern New England Presbytery seeking to be dismissed to Chicago Metro Presbytery. He had moved to the area for doctoral studies and received an endorsement from the Session of his new church. Presbytery was following the process of *BCO* 18-7, but we

will be careful to note the details of the candidate's situation more carefully in the future.

**2023-4: May 18, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2.e; 19-2.f) — Ordination candidate's stated difference appears to make a separation between the Old Testament Sabbath and the Lord's Day that seems to be out of accord with our system of doctrine. Further clarification is needed.

**Response:** Presbytery's response to this citation is in reference to the citation of the August 18, 2021 licensure exam.

**2023-5: May 18, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** Presbytery considered the church to be a valid out-of-bounds work because the TE will be allowed to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments with full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church (*BCO* 8-7). Two other TEs had already been approved for out-of-bounds calls to the same church in prior years and continue to serve there with such freedom, but we erred in failing to include such a note in the approval of this particular call. In the future Presbytery will be more careful to note why it considers out-of-bounds works as valid Christian ministry.

**2023-6: May 18, 2022** (*BCO* 38-3.b) — Presbytery erred when they invoked 38-3.a to divest without censure a TE pursuing membership at Holy Cross Antiochian Church of Grand Rapids, MI.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees that it erred in how *BCO* 38.3a-b was invoked and that we erred in not reconsidering the earlier vote to handle the matter properly. We will be more careful in the future to handle these matters in good order.

**2023-7: Aug 17, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by the candidate's Session.

**Response:** Both candidates had been endorsed by their Sessions, and those endorsements were reviewed by the Candidates and Credentials Committee. Presbytery's historical practice, for which we have hitherto never been cited, has been to note Session endorsements without including the text of those endorsements in the minutes.

**2023-8: Aug 17, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — Use of extraordinary clause for individual taken under care not explained.

**Response:** Presbytery acknowledges that “pastoral residency” is not a *BCO* category. It is often used in churches to describe a higher level training program for those who have completed or nearly completed their graduate education. It is not used as a constitutional statement nor do any of the parties understand it to be so used. The extraordinary clause was invoked for the specific reasons cited in the minutes; namely, that whereas the candidate had not been a member of the church for six months, the Session was eager not to delay establishing a formal relationship with Presbytery as he began his training program at the church.

**2023-9: Aug 17, 2022 (BCO 13-10)** — No record of transfer or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church.

**Response:** The commission to handle the transfer and dismissal of members did not have its first meeting until 2023 so record of their work is included in our 2023 minutes.

**2023-10: Aug 17, 2022 (BCO 19-2.e; 19-2.f)** — Presbytery granted an exception for a stated difference on the grounds that the stated difference was more than semantic but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine. Candidate’s stated difference with *WLC* 109 claims that it “can be spiritually helpful for our children in particular, to allow God the Son to be represented for the purpose of illustration.” Presbytery needs to provide further clarification as to how the quoted material is not hostile to our system of doctrine.

**Response:** At the time of his examination Presbytery considered these stated differences to be consistent with similar exceptions which were judged as not hostile to our system of religion. We have not sought additional clarification on the candidate’s views because he transferred to Pee Dee Presbytery in August 2022.

**2023-11: Aug 17, 2022; Nov 16, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** The Sessions of both pastors concurred in the dissolution of their respective pastoral relations, but Presbytery erred in not recording those concurrences. We will be more mindful in the future to record such matters.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**



**2022-2: Aug 18, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4.f; 40-2) — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that may be hostile to our system of doctrine. More information or clarity is needed on the exception, wherein the candidate expresses his belief that images of Christ may be suitable “for purposes of instruction and (with great care) **public worship**” (emphasis added).

**Response:** [2023] The candidate was referring to depictions of Jesus in such instances as instructional material and Christmas pageants; not to iconography, crucifixes, or other images that are venerated in other religious traditions. Hence, we judged his view to be not hostile to our system of doctrine.

**Rationale:** The response does not explain how use of images of Christ might be appropriately used in public worship.

13. That the Minutes of **Columbus Metro** Presbytery: 64-0-2

- a. Be approved without exception: **May 16, 2023; Jun 21, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Feb 09, 2023; General 2023; Sep 19, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Jan 17, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.  
**2024-2: Mar 21, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate’s Session.  
**2024-3: Nov 21, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam. No record of candidate being examined thoroughly in Bible, Theology, and Church Government. No record of examination in languages. No record of exegetical and theology papers.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Apr 20, 2021** (*BCO* 13-12) — Requirements for called meeting not shown to have been met.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. We reviewed minutes and electronic correspondence. We identified that the call for the meeting was issued at the March 16, 2021 meeting, with the concurrence of the 3 TEs and 3 REs from four churches. This action was one month prior to the actual called meeting. We will improve our record keeping.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not provided proof of correction of minutes clarifying that requirements were met.

**Response:** NB: Minutes amended to reflect unanimous vote for April 20, 2021 Called Meeting. We agree with this exception. We reviewed minutes and electronic correspondence. We identified that the call for the meeting was issued at the March 16, 2021 meeting, with the concurrence of the 3 TEs and 3 REs from four churches. This action was one month prior to the actual called meeting. We will improve our record keeping. See Addendum RPR-2021-03

**2022-2: Apr 20, 2021; Jun 8, 2021** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record of congregational vote to dissolve pastoral relationship.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. With respect to the April 20, 2021, meeting, no action to dissolve a pastoral relationship was taken at this meeting. With respect to the June 8, 2021, meeting, please see below: “Session representatives from [church name omitted] verbally present... We will improve our record keeping in the future.”

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not provided proof of corrected minutes.

**Response:** Amend Presbytery Minutes to reflect that a review of [church name omitted]) Session Minutes record a congregational meeting occurring on June 6, 2021. [church name omitted] minutes reflect the unanimous vote to dissolve the pastoral relationship between TE [name omitted] and [church name omitted]. We agree with this exception. With respect to the April 20, 2021, meeting, no action to dissolve a pastoral relationship was taken at this meeting. With respect to the June 8, 2021, meeting, please see below: “Session representatives from [church name omitted] verbally present... We will improve our record keeping in the future.” See Addendum RPR-2021-06

**2022-3: Jun 08, 2021** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order; 10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. We reviewed electronic communications. We note that a request for a called meeting from the stated clerk was emailed on May 28, 2021, and that the request was supported by three teaching and ruling elders from three churches. The

notice of the call issued by the Moderator follows: “On behalf of [church name omitted] Church, I request a Called Meeting of the Columbus Metro Presbytery on June 8 for the following business: 1) Motion to dissolve TE [name omitted]’s relationship with [church name omitted]; 2) Motion to approve TE [name omitted]’s request to labor out of bounds; 3) Motion to approve TE [name omitted]’s call and terms of call by 3/4 vote contingent upon [church name omitted]’s 4/5 affirmation; 4) Motion to form a CMP Commission for TE [name omitted]’s Installation as Pastor of [church name omitted] on TBD contingent upon [church name omitted]’s affirming vote.” Session representatives from [church name omitted] verbally presented the results of the congregational meeting to dissolve TE [name omitted]’s pastoral relationship. The vote was unanimous to dissolve the relationship. We regret that the minutes of the June 8, 2021, meeting do not reflect that. The call for the meeting included matters relative to TE [name omitted], but these matters were not discussed at the June 8, 2021, meeting. We will improve our record keeping in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not provided proof of concurrence of call for meeting from 3 TEs and 3 REs from at least three different churches (*BCO* 13-12).

**Response:** The call for the CMP meeting was issued on May 28, 2021. [names omitted] concurred with the call for this meeting., We agree with this exception. We reviewed electronic communications. We note that a request for a called meeting from the stated clerk was emailed on May 28, 2021, and that the request was supported by three teaching and ruling elders from three churches. The notice of the call issued by the Moderator follows: “On behalf of [church name omitted] Church, I request a Called Meeting of the Columbus Metro Presbytery on June 8 for the following business: See Addendum RPR-2021-06

**2022-5: General** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** We will do better moving forward. Session Records reviewed in 2023.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-4: Sep 04, 2021** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6 ) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved.

**Response:** We reviewed this exception. No actions to dissolve a pastoral relationship were taken at the April 20, 2021 meeting. Did not take action at that meeting, took action at May 2021 Meeting. See Addendum RPR-2021-04 :Amended May 2021 Minutes to reflect vote

- f. That responses shall be submitted to the following GA as no responses were received in 2024:**

**2023-1: Directory** (*RAO* 16-4.c.1) — No Directory provided.

**2023-2: Standing Rules** (*RAO* 16-4.c.2) — No Standing Rules provided.

**2023-3: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**2023-4: May 17, 2022; Aug 18, 2022** (*BCO* 13-11; *RAO* 16-3.e.7) — Minutes of executive session not included.

**2023-5: Aug 18, 2022** (*BCO* 13-11) — Minutes of called meeting not included.

**2023-6: Nov 15, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

- g. That the General Assembly cite Columbus Metro Presbytery to appear before the Standing Judicial Commission according to the provisions of BCO 40-5 for “a credible report” of “an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings”:**

**1.** Find that the October 6th, 2023 letter from [name omitted] et al. is a “credible report” of “an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings” (*BCO* 40-5): specifically, there is evidence that (1) Presbytery dissolved a congregation without following correct process (*BCO* 13-10), and (2) the Presbytery acted improperly by acquiring the property and assets of a congregation removing one of the few rights a congregation holds in the PCA (*BCO* 25-6, 7, 9);

**2.** Cite the Columbus Metro Presbytery to appear, per *BCO* 40-5, before the PCA’s Standing Judicial Commission which the 51<sup>st</sup> GA constitutes its commission to adjudicate this matter, by representative or in writing, at the SJC’s fall stated meeting, to “show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in

question,” following the Operating Manual for the SJC, particularly chapter 15; and

3. Direct the CRPR Officers to appoint one or more representatives of the GA and Report (*OMSJC* 15.2) to present this case to the SJC.
4. Further, that the nonspecific allegations in the final paragraph of [name omitted]’s letter against a Teaching Elder do not constitute a credible report of a “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding.”

**Rationale:** Congregations within the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA) maintain limited but crucial rights under its governing documents. These rights include the election of leaders (PP 6), the ability to affiliate with the denomination (*BCO* 25-11), and ownership of property (*BCO* 25-9). However, on June 21, 2023, the Columbus Metro Presbytery, in an executive session, took action that deprived the congregation and her members of these fundamental rights.

While it is true that the Presbytery possesses the authority to dissolve a church under certain circumstances (*BCO* 13-9.f or *BCO* 5-2.c), this authority is circumscribed by the boundaries set forth in the PCA's constitution (*BCO* 13-10). The immediate dissolution of a church and the acquisition of its assets, as executed by the Presbytery, exceeds the parameters of its granted authority. As articulated by FP Ramsay, "As the churches have no other sort of welfare, this is equivalent to saying welfare. Here, again, the Presbytery is not by this clause given any power beyond limitations or contrary to regulations elsewhere laid down." Ramsay's elucidation underscores the Presbytery's obligations, namely "to devise measures for the enlargement of the Church within its bounds" and to attend to matters pertaining to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care. However, the actions taken by the Presbytery precluded the congregation from exercising their rights, such as the election of new elders, seeking dismissal to a new denomination, or their right of ownership of their property. The presbytery acted outside of their constitutional authority which in the view of the Assembly is an important delinquency, and grossly unconstitutional proceedings.

Given the importance of the situation, recourse must be sought through the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC), which possesses the authority to address and rectify the Presbytery's alleged misconduct.

*RE Jay Neikirk abstained from discussion and all votes with regard to Columbus Metro.*

14. That the Minutes of **Covenant** Presbytery: 63-0-1

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 07, 2023 (BCO 38-3)** — No record that upon an attempt of a PCA TE to transfer to the PC(USA) that Presbytery judged whether or not the PC(USA) is failing to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity.

**2024-2: May 16, 2023 (BCO 43-8)** — A complaint may not be dismissed, and the Presbytery “shall hear the complaint,” unless there is evidence that the complainant currently does not have standing or has withdrawn or abandoned his complaint.

**2024-3: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 34-10)** — No record of 2/3 vote to divest TE.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Feb 1, 2022; May 17, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the exception of substance noted in the RPR report regarding the minutes of Feb 1, 2022 and May 17, 2022: the failure to comply with BCO 23-1. The minutes have been corrected with the notation after 154-17.4 as follows: [Note – These minutes failed to properly report the request of TE [name omitted] to have the pastoral relationship dissolved and the concurrence of the congregation of [church name omitted] TN, per their action at a duly called congregational meeting November 14, 2021.] and after 154-17.6 [Note – These minutes failed to properly report the request of TE [name omitted] to have the pastoral relationship dissolved and the concurrence of the congregation of [church name omitted] TN, per their action at a duly called congregational meeting January 23, 2022.] The minutes have been corrected with the notation after 155-13.3 [Note - These minutes failed to properly report the request of TE [name omitted] to have the pastoral relationship dissolved and the concurrence of the

congregation of [church name omitted] MS, per their action at a duly called congregational meeting May 8, 2022.] In the future we will strive to be more careful to record in our minutes that the requirements of *BCO* 23-1 have been met.

**2023-2: Feb 01, 2022 (*BCO* 15-1)** — Commission must consist of at least two TEs and two REs.

**Response:** Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the exception of substance noted in the RPR report regarding the minutes of February 1, 2022. This commission was acting as a temporary Session. We wrongfully applied *BCO* 12-1 instead of *BCO* 15-1. Ruling elders having been duly elected, the temporary Session having been disbanded, and with no complaints having been issued regarding any action taken by the temporary session, and there being no corrective action needed (RRNR § 35:6.b), Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the mistake and promises to endeavor to be more careful in the future. In addition, the following note will be added to the minutes of the 154th Stated Meeting as follows: following 154-17.3 [Note – Covenant Presbytery erred in not having at least two teaching elders and two ruling elders to this commission, in violation of *BCO* 15-1.]

**2023-3: May 17, 2022 (*BCO* 8-7)** — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**Response:** Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the exception of substance noted in the RPR report regarding the minutes of May 17, 2022. Presbytery did receive that the minister operating outside the bounds had the full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church from the floor, but it was not accurately recorded in the minutes. Upon approval of this response, the minutes will be changed to read “155-13.5 The motion was seconded and approved to allow TE [name omitted] to labor out of jurisdictional bounds as Senior Minister at [church name omitted]. Presbytery notes the irregularity of TE [name omitted]’s acceptance of this call having asked to be designated as honorably retired at the previous meeting of Covenant Presbytery. The commissioners questioned TE [name omitted] about the circumstances surrounding the call and the beginning of this new church. Upon hearing the explanation, and having been given assurance that TE [name omitted] will have full freedom to maintain

and teach the doctrine of our Church: after debate, permission was granted. TE [name omitted] prayed for TE [name omitted] informed Presbytery that the committee took up the power of a commission to approve TE [name omitted] as stated supply at [church name omitted] per their request for the remainder of the 2022 year. [Note – This action should have been ratified at the 157th Stated Meeting but the matter was not considered. The stated supply relationship having ended, no further action is needed.]

**2021-1: Oct 01, 2019** (*BCO* 13-11; *RAO* 16-3.e.7) — Complaint sent to Presbytery not recorded in minutes (“full and accurate record”).

**Response:** [2022]: Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the two exceptions of substance noted in the RPR report regarding the minutes for October 1, 2019 and will endeavor to comply with *BCO* requirements.

**Rationale:** [2022]: Presbytery has not corrected their minutes to address the exception and submitted for review (*RAO* 16-10.b).

**Response:** [2023]: Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the exception of substance noted in the RPR report regarding the minutes of October 1, 2019: the failure to note a complaint being sent to Presbytery. The complaint was sent to the judicial commission hearing the complaint on behalf of presbytery on October 10, 2019, posted to the members only page of Presbytery’s website prior to the meeting on October 1, 2019, and available to any.

**Rationale:** [2023]: No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the complaint for review (*BCO* 13-11).

**Response:** [2024]: Covenant Presbytery acknowledges the exception of substance noted in the RPR report regarding the minutes of October 1, 2019: the failure to note a complaint being sent to Presbytery. The complaint was sent to the judicial commission hearing the complaint on behalf of presbytery on October 10, 2019, posted to the members only page of Presbytery’s website prior to the meeting on October 1, 2019, and available to any member upon request. The minutes of October 1, 2019, will be amended by adding the following “[Note – The appendix to the minutes failed to attach the complaint received by Covenant Presbytery and assigned to a *BCO* 15-3 judicial commission which had been made available to the members on the



website and upon request]. In the future we will strive to be more careful to record in our minutes that the requirements of *BCO* 23-1 have been met. Also, the complaint is attached to this response for review in accordance with *BCO* 13-11 and the complaint added to the appendix of the 147th Stated Meeting. \*NOTE – The complainant filed two complaints within a matter of weeks surrounding the same issue. The complaints were adjoined and heard as one complaint. There was no objection.

15. That the Minutes of **Eastern Canada** Presbytery: 62-1-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Oct 27, 2023; Dec 01, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: Feb 24, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate’s Session.
  - 2024-2: Feb 24, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1) — No record of quorum for meeting of a commission.
  - 2024-3: Apr 28, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate’s Session.
  - 2024-4: Feb 24, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — Extraordinary clause “invoked” to waive six-month membership of a candidate without a vote by presbytery.
  - 2024-5: Feb 24, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — Extraordinary clause “invoked” to waive six-month membership of a candidate without a vote by presbytery.
  - 2024-6: Jun 02, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c) — Extraordinary clause “invoked” to waive theological and exegetical papers without a vote by presbytery.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**
  - 2022-1: Jun 04, 2021** (*BCO* 19-1) — Presbytery permits a church’s pulpit to be regularly filled by an unlicensed minister from another denomination.

**Response:** We agree; we failed to uphold this particular mandate. We will assign a pastoral committee to investigate the nature of the relationship between [church name omitted] Church, [name omitted] , and the Presbytery.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not yet demonstrated that it has remedied this situation.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. In regards to [church name omitted] the minister in question was licensed at the stated meeting of the Presbytery on October 27, 2023. In regards to [church name omitted], the interim Session called a congregational meeting on January 13, 2024, and the congregation voted to withdraw from the PCA (*BCO* 25-11).

**2023-1: Apr 22, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** We disagree with the exception. Under the title on p1012, the minutes state “The meeting was called for the Presbytery to decide upon the recommendations of the *BCO* 31-2 investigation into allegations made against TE [name omitted], in light of the findings of the third party investigation initiated by [church name omitted].”

**2023-2: Apr 22, 2022** (*RAO* 16-3.e.1) — Reasons for a chair’s ruling on a point of order not given.

**Response:** We agree with the exception: we ought to have recorded the reason for the chair’s ruling. Moderator [name omitted] ruled the motion out of order because, in his opinion, it fell outside the stated purpose for calling the special meeting. We will correct the minutes as follows: “The motion was ruled out of order because, in the opinion of the Moderator, it fell outside the stated purpose for the special meeting.”

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-3: Jun 03, 2022** (*BCO* 18) — Potential candidate not a member of PCA church; presbytery voted to “waive” requirement, but *BCO* 18 makes no such provision for waiving this requirement.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. Our intention was to invoke the extraordinary circumstance permitted in *BCO* 18-2: an applicant for care shall be a member of the congregation for at least six months ... “except in those cases deemed extraordinary by the Presbytery.” The Presbytery judged this to be an extraordinary case for the following reasons: 1) Mr. [name omitted] is pastoring his own

church full time, making it difficult to attend or become a member of a PCA church, 2) Mr. [name omitted] had been undergoing supervision and training by the pastors of [church name omitted], and 3) Mr. [name omitted] desires to bring his church into the PCA. We will correct the minutes as follows: “MSC to waive the 6 month membership requirement by invoking the extraordinary clause of *BCO* 18-2 for the following reasons: 1) Mr. [name omitted] is pastoring his own church full time, making it difficult to attend or become a member of a PCA church, 2) Mr. [name omitted] had been undergoing supervision and training by the pastors of [church name omitted], and 3) Mr. [name omitted] desires to bring his church into the PCA.”

**Rationale:** The situation presented still does not resolve the issue that there is no provision in *BCO* 18 for approving a candidate that is not a member of the PCA (i.e., “the Church” in *BCO* 18-1). The “extraordinary clause” is not applicable to cases of membership in the Church in full communion.

**2023-4: Jun 03, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7; 20-1) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church; presbytery approved a call not from a church, Presbytery, or General Assembly without making “a record of the reasons why it considers the work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. The Presbytery judged that a professorship of ministry at Redeemer University is a valid call to gospel ministry, considering that he will be equipping and teaching students for ministry in the church. We will correct the minutes as follows: “MSC that the Presbytery accept the terms of call for TE [name omitted] to serve as Assistant Professor of Ministry at Redeemer University because a professorship of ministry at Redeemer University is a valid call to gospel ministry, considering that he will be equipping and teaching students for ministry in the church (*BCO* 8-7, 20-1).”

**Rationale:** Presbytery's response fulfills the requirements of *BCO* 20-1, as Presbytery judged this to be a valid call. However, Presbytery's response fails to fulfill the requirements of *BCO* 8-7, as the response does not indicate that it received assurance that an out-

of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

16. That the Minutes of **Eastern Carolina** Presbytery: 62-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 28, 2023; Apr 15, 2023; Jul 15, 2023; Oct 21, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2023-1: Apr 23, 2022** (*WCF* 29-4; *BCO* 58-3, 4) — Error to conclude that celebration of Lord's Supper by the Session of [church name omitted] Church without congregation present was not an exception of substance.

**Response:** We are pleased to concede and agree with the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records of the 50th General Assembly in their judgment that the session of [church name omitted] erred in its celebrating the Lord's Supper non-publicly at a joint meeting of their session and diaconate, without the congregation present. Furthermore, we will inform the session of [church name omitted] of our new judgment—that we now regard this event as an exception of substance—and require their response.

17. That the Minutes of **Eastern Pennsylvania** Presbytery: 64-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Feb 11, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Sep 09, 2023** (*BCO* 38-3) — No record that presbytery made determinations required by *BCO* 38-3.  
**2024-2: Sep 09, 2023** (*BCO* 38-3) — No record that presbytery made determination required by *BCO* 38-3  
**2024-3: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No record in minutes of approval of response to GA for 2022 citation.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2022-1: Sep 11, 2021; Nov 16, 2021** (*RONR* 9:34) — Motion approved at assembly lacking opportunity for simultaneous aural communication (minimum requirement for a deliberative meeting, not met by email).

**Response:** We agree that business requiring deliberation should not be conducted via email. There are however noncontroversial matters that arise which require no discussion. When such matters arise and require timely action by the Presbytery, it has been our practice to attempt a vote by email. Presbyters are informed that a single “no” vote or a request for discussion will nullify the process and demand a face to face meeting. Since there is no provision for this practice in *RONR*, we will amend our Standing Rules to formally adopt this practice for our presbytery.

**Rationale:** Every motion by its nature requires a deliberative meeting, which an email vote does not permit. The Presbytery continued the practice of e-mail voting in 2022 and made changes to their Standing Rules to permit email voting. This cannot correct the error of not allowing a deliberative meeting.

**Response:** This is a new response, given that our previous response to the 50th GA was found unsatisfactory. Having reconsidered this matter, the presbytery concurs with the ruling of RPR, and will now end its longstanding practice of email voting on timely non-controversial matters.

**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1)** — No record of review of records of church sessions.

**Response:** We regret the delay regarding this matter. A mechanism for the review of records of church sessions has been reestablished, and the process has begun again. We expect to report this year that the backlog of unreviewed minutes is diminishing.

**2023-3: Feb 12, 2022 (BCO 21-4)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** We regret the oversight in reporting here. As is our regular practice, TE [name omitted] was in fact examined on the floor in Bible, theology, and church government. We will take greater care to note this in the future. In addition, the minutes of Feb. 12, 2022 will be amended to reflect the full examination.

**2023-4: Sep 10, 2022 (RONR 9-34)** — Presbytery conducted business via email, which does not constitute a deliberative body.

**Response:** Having reconsidered this matter, the presbytery concurs with the ruling of RPR, and will now end its longstanding practice of email voting on timely non-controversial matters. In

deference to the position of RPR, several email votes that took place in the spring of 2023 were subsequently ratified unanimously at our September 9 stated meeting of Presbytery.

**2023-5: Nov 15, 2022 (RONR 9-34)** — Presbytery approved a change in standing rules to allow for “non-controversial” business to be done via email, which does not constitute a deliberative body.

**Response:** To comply with the ruling of RPR and with Robert’s Rules of Order, we have ended our practice of email voting, and have voted to amend our Standing Rules to remove the newly added section allowing for non-controversial business to be done via email.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-2: Feb 12, 2022 (BCO 19-1)** — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** We regret the failure to report the fulfillment of this requirement. Mr. [name omitted] did indeed preach a sermon approved by the elders at [church name omitted] in fulfillment of the requirements for his licensure. We will be more diligent about recording these things in the future. In addition, the minutes of Feb. 12, 2022 will be amended to reflect that a sermon had been preached

**Rationale:** Licentiate sermons must be preached before presbytery or before a committee of presbytery (BCO 19-2.d) and approved by presbytery action, not session action.

18. That the Minutes of **Evangel Presbytery:** 63-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Sep 14, 2021; Feb 14, 2023; Aug 08, 2023; Dec 11, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Congregation or Session concurred with dissolutions of pastoral relations.

**2024-2: May 09, 2023 (BCO 15-1; RAO 16-3.e.4)** — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-3: Nov 14, 2023 (BCO 21-4.b)** — No record of requiring licentiate to indicate whether he has changed his previous views.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-1: Sep 14, 2021** (*BCO* 13-12) — Minutes of called meeting not submitted (see Nov 9, 2021 [2.1.c.ii]).

**Response:** The presbytery agrees with this exception. We approved the minutes of the Sept 14, 2021 called meeting at our November 2021 stated meeting but neglected to submit those minutes to RPR.

**Rationale:** Minutes were not submitted and need to be submitted for review (Sep 14, 2021).

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. Our Sep 14, 2021 minutes will be submitted to RPR along with our 2023 minutes.

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Session [Mentioned in 2/8/22, but nothing noted that it was completed.]

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. Feb 8, 2022 minutes, page 18, provides a “Reminder to submit session minutes by Aug 31.”. Nov 15, 2022 minutes ... While our Administrative Committee did review session records (as indicated in the appendix, page 18, we failed to record such in the minutes. The minutes should have reflected “The Administrative Committee fulfilled its duty to review session minutes (*BCO* 13-9b; 40-1).” At the 180th Stated Meeting (Feb 13, 2024), presbytery voted to amend the minutes of the Feb 2022 minutes to correct the error.

**2023-2: Feb 08, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4.a.1; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. The ruling of the court on the differences TE [name omitted] had with the *WCF* should have indicated, “The committee recommends this be ruled as more than semantic but not striking at the vitals of religion out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine.” At the 180th Stated Meeting (Feb 13, 2024), the presbytery voted to amend the minutes of the Feb 2022 minutes to correct the error

**2023-3: Mar 31, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice)

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. While notice of this meeting was sent at least 10 days in advance (sent March 20, 2022), this was not reported in the called meeting minutes. At the

180th Stated Meeting (Feb 13, 2024), the presbytery voted to amend the minutes of the March 2022 minutes to correct the error

**2023-4: Mar 31, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. While the minutes note that the moderator explained the purpose of the meeting, the purpose (as stated in the notice) was not included in the minutes. At the 180th Stated Meeting (Feb 13, 2024), the presbytery voted to amend the minutes of the March 2022 minutes to correct the error.

**2023-5: Aug 09, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. The ruling of the court on the differences TE [name omitted] had with the *WCF* should have indicated “The committee recommends this be ruled as more than semantic but not striking at the vitals of religion out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine.” At the 180th Stated Meeting (Feb 13, 2024), the presbytery voted to amend the minutes of the Feb 2022 minutes to correct the error.

19. That the Minutes of **Fellowship** Presbytery: 64-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Apr 22, 2023; Sep 28, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jul 18, 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 13-11; *RAO* 16-3.e.7) — Executive session not included and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-2: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Sep 22, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1, 15-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — No record that congregation/session concurred with the dissolution of the pastoral relationship.

**Response:** Fellowship Presbytery acknowledges that, in its 84th Stated Meeting on September 22, 2022, it erred when it failed to record a congregation’s concurrence with the dissolution of a pastoral relationship. The congregation had in fact concurred. Presbytery



regrets its error, and has amended its Minutes of September 22, 2022, to reflect the concurrence.

20. That the Minutes of **Georgia Foothills Presbytery:** 64-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Jan 21, 2023; Apr 18, 2023; Jun 30, 2023; Sep 19, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Mar 13, 2023; Apr 13, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: General 2023 (BCO 8-4)** — No record of receipt of report from teaching elder laboring out of bounds.
  - 2024-2: General 2023 (BCO 18-6)** — Annual reports of candidates not included.
  - 2024-3: General 2023 (BCO 19-12)** — Reports on every intern by the committee charged with the oversight of interns at each stated meeting not included.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**
  - 2021-1: Jun 11, 2019; Sep 17, 2019 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Stated differences not judged with prescribed categories.

**Response:** The clerk sent the Response to Exceptions to the 48<sup>th</sup> General Assembly as an email to the Stated Clerk's office but failed to include the Response to Exceptions in the complete minutes sent to RPR. Here was the *The clerk acknowledges his mistake and will record the Presbytery's evaluation of the difference using the exact language of RAO 16-3.*

**Rationale:** Still no record of presbytery's evaluation being made, or being recorded in minutes.

**Response:** The Stated Clerk acknowledges he misunderstood what was being asked and the appropriate way to respond. The Stated Clerk reviewed the stated differences from Jun 11, 2019 and Sep 17, 2019 with Presbytery and the court affirmed the following regarding those stated differences: the court judged the stated differences(s) to be more than semantic, but "not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine" (BCO 21-4).

Here are the stated differences from Jun 11, 2019 –

*My only difference is with Westminster Confession of Faith, 21:8 where it says "... about their worldly employments and recreations, but*

*also taken up, the whole time, in the public and private exercises of his worship, in the duties of necessity and mercy."*

*I agree that one day and seven should be set aside to rest from our work (Genesis 2) and that on that one day, we should not do any of our work that we do the other six days (Exodus 20) with the exception of deeds of necessity and mercy. However, in my view, the Confession crosses the line from setting apart the Sabbath day to make it holy into binding the conscience with the prohibition of recreation and the proscription of spending the entire day in private and public exercise of worship. Jesus gave more liberty as to what can be done when setting a part one day from the other seven, when he said, "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath" (Mark, 2), as he approved of his disciples walking through the grain fields, plucking heads of grain.*

Here are the stated differences from Sep 17, 2019 –

**1. WCF 21.5:** *"...singing of psalms with grace in the heart..."* While I support the singing of Psalms in worship, I am not a proponent of exclusive psalmody. I believe Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16 (Eph. 5:19, "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart." Col. 3:16, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God.") allow for singing any number of theologically-accurate songs in worship.

**2. WCF 21.8; WLC #117, #119; WSC #60, #61; WCF 21.8:** *"This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest, all the day, from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations, but also are taken up, the whole time, in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy."*

*My wife and I treat Sunday as a day of rest but in good conscience we engage in various forms of recreation: hosting friends for meals after church, trips to the beach, playing sports together, etc. These are all activities that I believe is in keeping with the principle of rest.*

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Presbytery acknowledges that we have not been diligent in receiving annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds. Presbytery has directed the Stated Clerk to send a communication to all TEs laboring out of bounds to submit an annual report.

**2023-2: Jan 22, 2022** (*BCO* 21) — No record of appointment of commission to install (which later reported).

**Response:** Presbytery reviewed the matter and acknowledges their failure to approve and record the commissioners who served at these installations. The call of these associate pastors installed as senior pastors and the installation reports of both TEs were reviewed and the Presbytery determined that the interests of presbytery were carried out even though the men were not formally approved to serve as commissioners

**2023-3: Jan 22, 2022; Apr 19, 2022** (*BCO* 5-2.c; 13-10) — No record of transferal or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church.

**Response:** Presbytery acknowledges the failure to record the transfer or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church. Those that helped this church move through the dissolution process affirmed to Presbytery that attention was given to make sure that all members were cared for during the dissolution process.

**2023-4: Jun 10, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes, nor a record of 10-day notice.

**Response:** It was recorded in the minutes (see below the “Roll Call”) that the Moderator stated verbatim the purpose of the meeting. Regrettably, the Stated Clerk failed to record the 10-day notice. However, Presbytery confirmed that the Stated Clerk’s records indicate that a 10-day notice was given.

**2023-5: Jun 10, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged according to prescribed categories [Some language is present; some is missing].

**Response:** The Presbytery reviewed its minutes from Jun 10, 2022 and affirms that it did in fact use the prescribed categories. Here is the text from the minutes: “TE [name omitted]’s stated differences with the standards were judged to be more than semantic, but “not out

of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (*BCO* 21-4). His stated differences are as follows: ...”

**2023-6: Sep 20, 2022** (PP 6) — No record that members of provisional session were approved by the congregation.

**Response:** Presbytery acknowledges their mistake. The provisional session described in those minutes has since been disbanded. A new provisional session has been appointed to serve this church and Presbytery has instructed the church to hold a congregational meeting to approve this session and send those meeting minutes to the Stated Clerk.

21. That the Minutes of **Grace** Presbytery: 63-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Mar 30, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 10, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record Presbytery cited the church to appear by its commissioners to show cause why the resignation of a TE should be accepted.

**2024-2: May 09, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record Presbytery cited the church to appear by its commissioners to show cause why the resignation of a TE should be accepted.

**2024-3: Sep 12, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record Presbytery cited the church to appear by its commissioners to show cause why the resignation of a TE should be accepted.

**2024-4: Sep 12, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**2024-5: Jan 10, 2023** (*BCO* 13-2; *BCO* 34-10) — Process of *BCO* 13-2 and 34-10 not followed in cases of TEs without call for three or more years

**2024-6: May 09, 2023** (*BCO* 24-1; *BCO* 12-1) — Presbytery approved REs to “augment” church sessions apart from constitutional election.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Jan 11, 2023** (*BCO* 21-6) — In ordination/installation of assistant pastor, vows propounded to congregation instead of to session.

**Response:** Presbytery regrets the error of having congregational vows in the installation of Assistant Pastors in the Orders of Worship and points out that the Charges were given to the Session in both instances. Future Presbytery Commissions will be reminded of this distinction when installing Assistant Pastors.

**2023-2: Sep 13, 2022** (BCO 21-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Presbytery regrets the error of not recording the congregation's concurrence in the dissolution of the pastoral relationship. The Minutes of the Congregational Meeting were provided after the publication of the White Book and were inadvertently omitted from the Minutes. The Minutes of the Congregational Meeting follow.

22. That the Minutes of **Great Lakes** Presbytery: 63-0-1

a. Be approved without exception: **Jul 07, 2023; Sep 15, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 14, 2023** (BCO 18-7) — Candidate under care removed from rolls without explanation.

**2024-2: May 06, 2023** (BCO 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer examination for TEs.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Apr 30, 2022; Sep 15-16, 2022** (BCO 13-6; 21-4) — Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception, corrects its records, and will strive to more carefully document these exams in the future. Note: the candidate did receive the full transfer examination which was sustained in its entirety.

23. That the Minutes of **Gulf Coast** Presbytery: 63-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **Feb 13, 2023; Jun 06, 2023; Oct 10, 2024**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Oct 10, 2023** (RAO 16-3.e.5) — No record of candidate's six month membership requirement or endorsement from candidate's session. (all three stated meetings)

**2024-2: May 09, 2023** (RAO 16-4.b) — No minutes included for May 23 called meeting.

**2024-3: May 09, 2023** (BCO 5-9.g.8) — Record of particularization incomplete. Commission report missing.

**2024-4: Oct 10, 2023** (BCO 8-7) — Reports from TEs working out of bounds not received.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: General 2022** (BCO 15-1) — No reports of commissions, including commissions to install.

**Response:** Gulf Coast Presbytery regrets failing to attach a copy of the reports from the following commissions. We have approved amending the appropriate 2022 minutes with the following reports; 1) Feb 7: report from installation commission of [name omitted] March 27, 2022, at [church name omitted] (ATTACHMENT: PDF title, "ADD to Feb 7 - Install [name omitted] "); 2) May 10: report from installation commission of [name omitted] May 22, 2022, at [church name omitted] (ATTACHMENT: PDF titled, "ADD to May 10 – [name omitted] Installation"); 3) May 10: report from installation commission of [name omitted] May 29, 2022, at [church name omitted] (ATTACHMENT: PDF titled, "ADD to May 10 – [name omitted] Installation"); 4) Oct 11: report from installation commission of [name omitted] Oct 10, 2022, at – [church name omitted] (ATTACHMENT: PDF titled, "ADD to Oct 11 - Commission report re TE [name omitted] ) Please see the pdfs in document.

**2023-2: Feb. 7, 2022; May 10, 2022** (BCO 18-7; 46-6) — TEs and a candidate are received from other PCA presbyteries but no evidence of action of other Presbytery.

**Response:** Regarding the incoming transfers of TEs [names omitted] we could have more clearly stated (as is our custom) in the "Communications" from the Stated Clerk that the Stated Clerk had received necessary confirmation of approval from the other presbyteries. Gulf Coast Presbytery will make a point to keep record in the Stated Clerk's report of "communications" confirmation of appropriate action by other presbyteries in future minutes.

**2023-3: Feb. 7, 2022 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session nor of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** Gulf Coast Presbytery acknowledges neglecting to record and attach confirmation of the Session's endorsement of Mr. [name omitted].

**2023-4: Feb. 7, 2022; March 1, 2022; March 15, 2022 (BCO 32-3, 4, 5)** — No evidence of an indictment, no copy of a citation to the man being charged, and no verification that the indictment and citation were delivered to the individual.

**Response:** Gulf Coast Presbytery regrets not attaching appropriate documentation to the minutes in question regarding the discipline of TE [name omitted] Proof Delivery 1" & PDF titled "ADD to Mar 15 – [name omitted] Proof Delivery 2" & PDF titled "ADD to THREE - [name omitted] Citation 1-2 and Suspension").

**2023-5: May 10, 2022 (BCO 8-7; 13-2; 13-5; 20-1; 21-1)** — Presbytery accedes to a request from another PCA Presbytery that a TE member of the other Presbytery be allowed to labor in the bounds of Gulf Coast Presbytery in a non-PCA work. There is nothing in the minutes about why this arrangement is necessary. No record that the Presbytery is assured that the TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** Because TE [name omitted] was to be serving with a Christian school that is related to one of the congregations of Gulf Coast Presbytery, it was readily known that he would be able to maintain and teach the doctrine of the Church freely.

**2023-6: May 10, 2022; Oct. 11, 2022 (BCO 23-1; 46-6)** — The minutes record that a man has been transferred to another Presbytery. No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations, that Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relation, nor that Presbytery voted to release the TE to a different Presbytery.

**Response:** Gulf Coast Presbytery acknowledges a failure to take appropriate actions at the meeting in question regarding TE [name omitted].

**2023-7: Oct. 11, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — The minutes report that a pastoral relationship is dissolved. There is no evidence that either a

commission or the Presbytery voted on this, nor that Presbytery heard from the Session the man was serving.

**Response:** The body of Gulf Coast Presbytery acknowledges the lack of recording full details. The Stated Clerk had received email communication from the Session of [church name omitted] that it was their desire for the relationship with TE [name omitted] to be dissolved as they supported his accepting the call to ministry at another congregation in our presbytery (actions taken in the same meeting). Representatives from both congregations and TE [name omitted] were present at this meeting. The body was aware of the consent and propriety of all actions. We will endeavor to more fully and accurately record details required by the *BCO*.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-8: Oct. 11, 2022** (*BCO* 13-2) — No evidence of annual reports for TEs without call.

**Response:** The Chairman of Gulf Coast Presbytery's "Ministers & Candidates" committee diligently solicits and reminds TEs without call of their duty to submit annual reports. It was not the will of the body to take further action for men without submitted reports at the October 11, 2022, meeting.

**Rationale:** No record that presbytery has corrected its records (*RAO* 16.10.b.1)

- 24. That the Minutes of **Gulfstream** Presbytery: 63-0-2

- a. Be approved without exception: **Apr 18, 2023; Oct 17, 2023**

- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 17, 2023**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-3) — Results of review of records of church Sessions not stated. In addition, given the duty of the Presbytery to review Session records at least once a year and approve, disapprove or correct them, and given a previous exception of substance for incomplete review of records, reviews and results of reviews should address previous year(s) records.

**2024-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-2) — No record of reports received from TEs without call.



**2024-3: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-4) — No record of reports from TEs in work needful to the church.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2021-1: Jan 21, 2020** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements for ordination exam not recorded; seminary degree, thesis paper/examination on knowledge of Greek and Hebrew; did not preach a sermon.

**Response:** [2022]: Gulfstream regrets the inadequacy of its minutes. In preparing its minutes, Gulfstream has always relied upon Form 039- Checklist for Ordination, as found in the Clerks Handbook. The specific omissions named in this exception have always been examined as part of the preliminary checklist, and may not have been included in the minutes. Nor have some other elements of the preliminary checklist. Gulfstream will endeavor to include these details in future minutes.

**Rationale:** [2022]: Presbytery needs to correct the inadequacy in their minutes and submit for review.

**Response:** [2023] Gulfstream has amended its minutes accordingly.

**Rationale:** [2023] Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** The specific requirements of the candidates ordination were fulfilled, and the minutes have been amended to reflect this.

**2021-2: Oct 20, 2020** (*BCO* 19-2.d) — Licensure exam with no mention of written sermon.

**Response:** [2022]: Gulfstream regrets the inadequacy of its minutes. Gulfstream will endeavor to include this detail in future minutes.

**Rationale:** [2022]: Presbytery needs to correct the inadequacy in their minutes and submit for review.

**Response:** [2023] Gulfstream has amended its minutes accordingly.

**Rationale:** [2023] Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** The specific requirements of the candidates ordination were fulfilled, and the minutes have been amended to reflect this.

**2021-3: Oct 15, 2019** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4.c.2-3) — Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination. No record of thesis, no record of exegetical paper.

**Response:** [2022]: Gulfstream regrets the inadequacy of its minutes. In preparing its minutes, Gulfstream has always relied upon Form 041- Checklist for Reception of Minister From Another Denomination, as found in the Clerks Handbook. The two specific omissions have not previously been itemized on the checklist form. Gulfstream will endeavor to include these details in future minutes.

**Rationale:** [2022]: Presbytery needs to correct the inadequacy in their minutes and submit for review.

**Response:** [2023] Gulfstream has amended its minutes accordingly.

**Rationale:** [2023] Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** *BCO* 13-6 states that if applicants come from other denominations, the presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4. We have taken that to mean the examinations outlined in *BCO* 24-1, since it specifically begins with the phrase "a careful examination as to:"

We have understood that the thesis and exegetical paper are part of the "trial for ordination" that new candidates must undergo, not those transferring from another denomination.

**2022-1: Jan 19, 2021** (*BCO* 34-10, 38-2) — No record of 2/3 vote and requires two stated meetings.

**Response:** [name omitted] was notified and given a written letter according to *BCO* 34-10 and this was noted in previous minutes.

**Rationale:** No mention of whether a 2/3 vote was recorded at the previous meeting. Review of the October 20, 2020 meeting minutes (previous stated meeting) does in fact record there was a motion passed, however there is no record there of a 2/3 vote.

**Response:** Minutes have been amended to show that there was indeed a 2/3 vote prior to the letter being sent.

**2022-2: Jan 19, 2021** (*BCO* 34-10, 38-1, 38-3.b) — The court did not make full record of the matter and did not notify the offender of its action.

**Response:** TE [name omitted] was given an opportunity to “be heard in his own defense,” but chose not to do so and even made an effort to note to the court that he does not object in any way.

**Rationale:** Presbytery should have treated this as a case without process (*BCO* 38-1, 38-3.b) and does not indicate whether the church the TE transferred to maintains Word and Sacrament in fundamental unity.

**Response:** The court treated this as a case under *BCO* 34-10. Since the court did not treat this is a *BCO* 38-1 matter, we did not take the corresponding actions.

**2022-3: Jan 19, 2021** (*BCO* 19-2.d, 21-4.c.(4)) — Candidate is required to preach a sermon before the Presbytery or committee thereof, upon 3/4 vote.

**Response:** This motion does not negate the *BCO* requirement of a candidate to preach a sermon before the presbytery or a committee of the presbytery. This motion ensures the presbytery hears and reads a sermon prior to the meeting.

**Rationale:** Distributing recordings of a candidate’s sermon prior to the meeting of presbytery in order to evaluate it contradicts the *BCO* requirement to preach a sermon in the presence of the presbytery or a committee thereof. [The motion, as worded “to evaluate the sermon of candidates before the presbytery” implies the sermons will only be evaluated based on the recordings. If it were worded along the lines of “Motion to help evaluate the sermon of candidates before being

presented before the presbytery...” that would seem to not contradict the *BCO* requirement. *BCO* 19-2.d “Provide his written sermon on an assigned passage of Scripture embodying both explanation and application, and present orally his sermon or exhortation before Presbytery or before a committee of Presbytery.” *BCO* 21-4.c.4 “He shall further be required to preach a sermon before the Presbytery or committee thereof, upon three-fourths (3/4) vote.” *BCO* 21-4.c “No Presbytery shall omit any of these parts of trial for ordination except in extraordinary cases, and then only with three-fourths (3/4) approval of Presbytery.” Minutes text was: “Motion to evaluate the sermon of candidates before the presbytery by distributing a written manuscript along with an audio and/or video recording of the whole sermon to the presbytery (*BCO* 19-2-d; 21-4-c-(4)). APPROVED”]

**Response:** The court now recognizes that this motion goes against the *BCO* requirement and has since amended the motion and required candidates to preach in person before the presbytery.

**2022-4: Oct 19, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Unclear record of ordination exam.

**Response:** Gulfstream Presbytery regrets this omission from its records. The candidate did complete a written exam, which was disseminated to the presbytery for review, as well as an oral examination of all areas noted in *BCO* 21-4. The minutes have been amended accordingly.

**Rationale:** Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** The specific requirements of the candidates ordination were fulfilled, and the minutes have been amended to reflect this.

**2022-5: Oct 19, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** Gulfstream Presbytery regrets this omission from its records. The candidate did complete an ordination exam that covered all areas noted in *BCO* 21-4. The minutes have been amended accordingly.

**Rationale:** Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** The specific requirements of the candidates ordination were fulfilled, and the minutes have been amended to reflect this.

**2022-6: Oct 19, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4) — Use of extraordinary clause for ordination candidate not explained.

**Response:** Gulfstream Presbytery regrets this omission from its records. Presbytery noted this irregularity and discussed the reason for it, but it was not noted in the minutes. The minutes have been amended accordingly.

**Rationale:** Minutes of presbytery relating to examinations must list all specific requirements and trials for licensure and/or ordination which have been accomplished, including that each candidate being examined for ordination was required to “state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions” (*BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** The specific requirements of the candidates ordination were fulfilled, and the minutes have been amended to reflect this.

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 8-4) — No record of annual reports received from TEs doing work needful to the Church.

**Response:** Gulfstream regrets this omission from its records and will endeavor to include these reports in future minutes.

**2023-2: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — Incomplete record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** Gulfstream has attempted to retrieve minutes from several churches within its bounds to no avail. We have since implemented a system for better retrieving and reviewing records of church sessions, so this should not be a problem in the future.

**2023-3: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual reports received from TEs without call.

**Response:** Gulfstream regrets this omission from its records and will endeavor to include these reports in future minutes.

**2023-5: Jan 18, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** In looking at the minutes, it seems that all the requirements of the licensure exam are recorded almost verbatim, according to what is listed in *BCO* 19-2. If there is some specific requirement missing, please advise.

**2023-6: Jan 18, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** The minutes of January 18, 2022 list that an endorsement was received for both [names omitted] from their respective sessions. *BCO* 18-2 states that this endorsement should include 1) testimonials of his Christian character, 2) promise of usefulness in the ministry, 3) the activities of ministry the applicant has participated in with brief evaluation, 4) and that he shall be a member for at least 6 months. Should all these requirements be listed in the minutes, or does a statement that endorsement was received suffice?

**2023-7: Jan 18, 2022** (*BCO* 22-4) — No record of request from congregation to a change of call from assistant pastor to associate pastor.

**Response:** Gulfstream regrets this omission from its minutes. The congregation did vote and approve this change prior to the presbytery meeting, as was shown in the minutes of the congregational meeting, but it was not stated in the minutes. The minutes have been amended accordingly.

**2023-8: Oct 18, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Gulfstream regrets this omission from its minutes. The congregation did vote and approve this dissolution prior to the presbytery meeting, as was shown in the minutes of the congregational meeting, but it was not stated in the minutes. The minutes have been amended accordingly.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-4: General 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Gulfstream regrets this omission from its records and will endeavor to include these reports in future minutes.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review [or summarized the actions taken during session and recorded them in its minutes]. The actions of a commission are the actions of Presbytery, thus subject to the general review and control of General Assembly “for the preservation both of truth and duty” (*BCO* 40; PP II.3).

25. That the Minutes of **Heartland** Presbytery:

59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Jul 18, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 04, 2023** (*BCO* 6-2; *BCO* 57) — Presbytery accepts a response from a session that had “received members while imposing conditions on their membership.” While session admitted their error and promised not to repeat it in the future, there is no evidence that they removed the “conditions” from the members in question.

**2024-2: Apr 28-29, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g) — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that appears to be out of accord with the fundamentals of our doctrinal standards. The examinee’s stated different was: “2. *WLC* Q. 109. What are the sins forbidden in the second commandment? A. The sins forbidden in the second commandment are, all devising, counselling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; tolerating a false religion; the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, either inwardly in our mind, or outwardly in any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever... My exception here is in regards to the phrase “of any of the three persons...” With reference to Jesus Christ, no image should be made depicting His divinity. However He has appeared in the flesh, presenting to us His image. To image the humanity of Christ I do not believe is forbidden in the second commandment. Thus by application, I have no problem with the making of films depicting the life of Christ. God has imaged Himself in the Son. Secondly, the phrase “or outwardly any kind of image or likeness of any creature whatsoever...” I take to be specifically prohibited for the purpose of worship. To

disconnect it from that qualifier makes the commandment itself reduce to absurdity because it would prohibit all paintings, art, photography or anything else that represents any creature of God's creation."

As it stands, this statement seems to say we can make "images" that picture the incarnate second person of the Trinity as opposed to merely representing his humanity. If that is the position it would seem to strike at the vitals of religion.

**2024-3: Apr 28-29, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of why Presbytery considered a call from a non-PCA source to be a valid Christian ministry.

**2024-4: Aug 26, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *BCO* 21-1) — A man is examined for ordination without Presbytery having the call in its hands.

**2024-5: Aug 26, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2; *BCO* 18-7) — No record of a man being a candidate in this or any other presbytery prior to his being examined for "transfer of license and ordination."

**2024-6: Sep 29-30, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c(4)) — Presbytery establishes a 6 member committee to hear licensure and ordination sermons for the next 3 years. For ordination this would require a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote.

**2024-7: Oct 28, 2023** (*BCO* 18-7) — No record of a certificate of dismission for a candidate coming from another PCA presbytery.

**2024-8: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-6; *BCO* 19-12) — No record of annual reports of candidates nor of reports on interns at each stated meeting.

**2024-9: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7; *BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual reports for one of the men serving out of bounds or for two of the three men without call.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Apr 22-23, 2022; Nov 4-5, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidates.

**Response:** The Heartland Presbytery agrees with this Exception of Substance. It was a clerical error in that we failed to record that each candidate mentioned had fulfilled the six-month membership requirement. This requirement was affirmed within each endorsement from the respective Session. We will be more diligent in the future to record both the Session endorsement and fulfillment of the six-month membership requirement separately in our minutes.



**2023-2: Nov 4-5, 2022 (BCO 18-7)** — Insufficient reason given for removing candidate from the roll.

**Response:** The Heartland Presbytery agrees with this Exception of Substance. It was a clerical error in that we failed to record the reasons for removing the candidate from the roll. The candidate, [name omitted] , moved to South Carolina to study at Greenville Presbyterian Theological Seminary and has become a candidate under the care of Calvary Presbytery. We will be more diligent in the future to fully record the reasons for removing candidates from the roll.

26. That the Minutes of **Heritage Presbytery:** 62-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Mar 14, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 28, 2023 (BCO 21-4c.(1)(a))** — Incomplete record of Ordination Exam, specifically examination as to “his acquaintance with experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management...”

**2024-2: May 09, 2023 (BCO 21-4 c.(1)(a))** — Incomplete record of Ordination Exam, specifically examination as to “his acquaintance with experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management...”

**2024-3: Sep 09, 2023 (BCO 19-2.d)** — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded

**2024-4: Nov 18, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six month membership for candidate or Session endorsement

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Feb 04, 2022 (BCO 13-12)** — Notice for called meeting not in order.

**Response:** The Stated Meeting scheduled for January 29, 2022 was cancelled due to snow. We called a meeting for February 4, 2022 to take care of approvals that needed to meet deadlines, prior to our next Stated meeting in May 2022. At that time, we did not realize the 10-day notice was necessary. We apologize and thank you for this notification. We have made this correction and will continue to do moving forward. Note: Since then, we have had the need for another

Called meeting. Having been reminded of the 10-day advanced notice, we did so and will in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: May 11, 2021** (*BCO* 38-3) — No determination of a judgment by presbytery as to the withdrawal of a minister from the PCA to another body.

**Response:** The Heritage Presbytery moved/seconded and approved the motion [p.1] to accept the resignation of then TE [name omitted] , at the May 11, 2021 124th Stated Meeting). This action was predicated on the email we received from the TE documented on page 18 of the approved Minutes from the May 11, 2021, 124th Stated Meeting, resigning from the Heritage Presbytery and the PCA. This report was approved at the 131st Heritage Presbytery Meeting on January 28, 2023.

**Rationale:** Presbytery needs to judge the matter under *BCO* 38-2 or the appropriate section of *BCO* 38-3.

**Response:** [2023] [Name omitted] was divested under 38-2, removed as irregularity under provision of 38-3 (a) because he affiliated with another branch of the visible church the presbytery recognized as maintaining the word and sacraments in their fundamental integrity.

**Rationale:** Presbytery needs to judge the matter under *BCO* 38-2 or the appropriate section of *BCO* 38-3. The Presbytery still needs to judge the matter in either provision. If he is divested, he no longer falls under *BCO* 38-3.

27. That the Minutes of **Highlands** Presbytery: 59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Aug 05, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: May 02, 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated difference offered not judged with prescribed categories.

**2024-2: Feb 25, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation or Session respectively concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-3: General 2023** (BCO 18-6) — Annual reports of candidates not included.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Feb 26, 2022** (BCO 21-4) — No record of requiring a statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets not recording that we followed this requirement. At its November 14, 2023, Stated Meeting, the Highlands Presbytery took the following action: MSC: Amend the minutes of the Feb 26, 2022, meeting to include the following clause: “TE [name omitted] indicated he takes no stated differences with the Standards.”

**2023-2: Feb 26, 2022** (BCO 20-1) — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets not recording the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry. At its November 14, 2023, Stated Meeting, the Highlands Presbytery took the following action: MSC: Amend the minutes of the Feb 26, 2022, meeting to include the following clause: “Presbytery considers this work to be a valid Christian ministry because it involves the following pastoral services at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association: 1) Pastor-in-residence (PIR), 2) Seminar Emcee, 3) Guided Personal Spiritual Retreat instructor/counselor/facilitator. The candidate described these services as follows: “As PIR my duties are to counsel, pray with and serve seminar participants spiritual needs during agreed upon seminars. As Seminar Emcee my duties are to serve our Bible teacher, facilitate the flow of the seminar’s program, pray and point participants to the spiritual opportunities and resources offered during their stay at The Cove. As Guided Personal Spiritual Retreat Leader (GPSR) my role is lead four 3-day & 4-Day spiritual retreats as pastor/host providing Biblical instruction, personal counseling/coaching and setting the stage for people to connect with God.””

**2023-3: May 03, 2022** (BCO 23-10) — No record that the Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets not recording that the Congregation concurred with the dissolution of the

pastoral relations. At its November 14, 2023, Stated Meeting, the Highlands Presbytery took the following action: MSC: Amend the minutes of the May 3, 2022, meeting to include the following clause from the Shepherding Committee report at the same meeting: “At a properly called meeting on February 27, 2022, the congregation voted unanimously to accept the resignation.”

**2023-4: May 3, 2022; Nov 1, 2022 (RAO 16-3.e.1)** — Reasons for chair’s ruling on a point of order not given.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets not recording the reasons for chair’s ruling on a point of order. Due to the passage of time, we are unable to reconstruct the record to include the rationale. Presbytery will aim in the future to record the reasons given by the chair for his rulings on points of order.

28. That the Minutes of **Hills and Plains** Presbytery: 66-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 19, 2023; Dec 08, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **Oct 10, 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 11, 2023** (Standing Rules, 6-2.b; *RONR* [12th ed.] 23:6.(e); 25-10) — Rule protecting fundamental rights of absentees suspended (requirement of notice for amendment to standing rules).

**2024-2: Feb 11, 2023 (BCO 13-2)** — No action of Presbytery to receive ordinand candidate into membership.

**2024-3: Apr 17, 2023 (RAO 16-3c.6; BCO 13-4)** — No record of the delegates in attendance at the meeting.

**2024-4: May 02, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of endorsement by the Session nor of six month membership for the candidate.

**2024-5: Jun 30, 2023 (RAO 16-3c.6; BCO 13-4)** — No record of the delegates in attendance at the meeting.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Feb 13, 2021 (BCO 15-1; 21-5)** — No record of appointment of an ordination commission.

**Response:** In a severe oversight, no commission was ever established and Rev. [name omitted] never had an installation service. He has been in the service of the presbytery as chaplain and TE since 2020. He has recently been hired as a part-time assistant within the

presbytery (in addition to his current duties) and we will administer all the formalities at that installation service. Those records will be included in the 2022 minutes.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** Because of a significant oversight, this wasn't done until 2022. It has now been rectified. The establishment of the commission was recorded in the minutes of October 11, 2022

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 12-7; 40-1) — No evidence of review of Session records in 2022 or from outstanding sessional records from 2017 to present.

**Response:** This continues to be true for 2022, but is now rectified as of this response (see minutes of October 2023 for details). HPP formed a review of session record committee at the October 2022 presbytery meeting which completed a special mandate to complete the review 2017 through 2022 by the end of the 2023 calendar year. The 2023 minutes show that all outstanding review of session records have been performed.

**2023-2: Feb 25, 2022; May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 19-9) — All specific requirements of internship not recorded (inward call to the ministry of the Word).

**Response:** Feb 25, 2022: Mr. [name omitted] gave a statement of his inward call to the ministry of the Word. (*BCO* 19-9) May 10, 2022: Mr. [name omitted] gave a statement of his inward call to the ministry of the Word. (*BCO* 19-9).

**2023-3: Mar 5, 2022; Dec 10, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice not recorded).

**Response:** March 5, 2022: Notice of the special meeting was sent, February 24, 2022, ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to the Clerk of Session of every church. (*BCO* 13-12) Dec 10, 2022: Notice of the special meeting was sent, November 17, 2022, more than ten days in advance to each teaching elder and to the Clerk of Session of every church. (*BCO* 13-12)

**2023-4: Mar 5, 2022; May 10, 2022; Oct 11, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commissions not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Mar 5, 2022 re: [name omitted] : HPP Respectually disagrees. These minutes were submitted to RPR for 2021 and were approved by RPR without exception. May 10, 2022 re: Judicial Commission: These minutes will be included as part of the 2023 submission. Oct 11, 2022 re: [name omitted]: These minutes will be included as part of the 2023 submission.

**2023-5: May 10, 2022** (Standing Rules, 6-2.b; *RONR* [12th ed.] 23:6.(e); 25:10) — Rule protecting fundamental rights of absentees suspended (requirement of notice for amendment to standing rules).

**Response:** HPP sincerely apologizes. HPP was unaware that we could not suspend standing rule 6-2.b per 6-2.a in order to expedite changing standing rules. We will not continue this practice in the future.

**2023-6: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2; 18-3) — All specific requirements of coming under care not recorded (six-months membership; experiential religion and motives for seeking the ministry).

**Response:** Mr. [name omitted], having been a member of a PCA church in excess of 6 months, as recorded in his application, was examined by the Presbytery on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry. (*BCO* 18-3) Mr. [name omitted], having been a member of a PCA church in excess of 6 months, as recorded in his application, was examined by the Presbytery on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry. (*BCO* 18-3)

**2023-7: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of examinations of TEs transferring into Presbytery (views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government).

**Response:** TE [name omitted] was examined on Christian experience, and also touching his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. His examinations were approved. TE [name omitted] was examined on Christian experience, and also touching his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. His examinations were approved. (*BCO* 13-6).

**2023-8: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 21-1) — Unclear whether call had been finalized (“pending changes”) when approved by Presbytery.

**Response:** HPP respectfully disagrees. Pending changes for finalization of call and approval of call is clearly recorded under item

V. on [pg. 91 (pg. 2)] in the report of commission of ordination and installation, which was in accordance with the scope of the commission assigned for the ordination and installation.

**2023-9: Oct 11, 2022 (BCO 15-2)** — Membership and scope of authority for commission not recorded.

**Response:** The Moderator appointed a commission of TEs [names omitted], and REs [names omitted] to proceed with the installation of TE [name omitted] as assistant pastor of [church name omitted] on November 27, 2022, (BCO 15-2) with special instructions to also perform the ordination vows and laying on of hands that, in great error, has previously been neglected

**2023-10: Oct 11, 2022 (BCO 19-2; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded (inward call to preach the gospel).

**Response:** As part of his licensure examination, RE [name omitted] gave a statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel. (BCO 19-2).

**2023-11: Dec 10, 2022 (BCO 13-12)** — Business conducted that exceeded the scope of notice (appointment of temporary Session commission).

**Response:** RPR is correct. Furthermore, this action never should have been taken. See response to “Dec 10, 2022 [p. 157 (p. 2)] (Preliminary Principle 6)

**2023-12: Dec 10, 2022 (PP 6)** — Temporary Session appointed over a congregation without record of consent of congregation.

**Response:** RPR is correct that the presbytery erred. Special note is taken that this is out of order so that we never do so again. No actions were ever taken by the temporary session and the congregation has since properly elected and the presbytery has installed a pastor there such that the church once again has a properly established session.

29. That the Minutes of **Houston Metro** Presbytery: 59-0-1
- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 20, 2023; Mar 27, 2023; Aug 18, 2023; Nov 13, 2023**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
  - d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-1: General (BCO 13-9.b)** — No record of review of records of Session completed and approved by action of Presbytery.

**Response:** Our Review of Sessional Records Committee has reviewed records of Sessions, but has not brought a report in some time. We will include such a report in our next set of minutes and endeavor to be more diligent about reporting in the future

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery has corrected its actions (RAO 16-10.b.1) and provided a report. The Presbytery has been cited again this year for not reporting the status of its reviews.

**Response:** HMP reviewed records of Sessions at its April 11, 2022, meeting through its Review of Session Records Committee report. This is reflected in our April 11, 2022, minutes. HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future

**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1)** — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** HMP acknowledges this error in our minutes for 2022. While reports of the Review of Sessional Records Committee were not listed, the Committee's reports were approved by Presbytery at the April and November 2022 Stated Meetings but were not part of the Minutes for these respective meetings. HMP will amend our minutes to reflect this fact. HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future.

**2023-2: General 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future. HMP will include a report of TEs who labored out of bounds in 2023 in our 2024 minutes.

**2023-4: Jan 21, 2022; Aug 19, 2022 (BCO 21-1)** — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future. The January 21, 2022, minutes do indicate that a congregational meeting of [church name omitted] PCA was held on November 28, 2021, and those minutes were submitted to



presbytery. With respect to the minutes from August 19, 2022, the Session did concur with the dissolution of the pastoral relations and submitted its minutes to presbytery. We will amend our minutes to reflect that fact.

**2023-5: Jan 21, 2022; April 11, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1, *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future. Attached you will find the missing minutes.

**2023-6: Apr 11, 2022** (*BCO* 5-9.a.i) — Incomplete record of particularization service.

**Response:** HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future

**2023-7: Apr 11, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate or record of endorsement by candidate's session.

**Response:** A testimonial from the session of six-months membership was submitted to HMP. HMP apologizes for not including this in its minutes and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-3: Jan 21, 2022** (*BCO* 13-11; *RAO* 16-3.e.7) — Minutes of executive session not included.

**Response:** HMP apologizes for this oversight and will work diligently to make sure all reports are clearly and completely documented in the future. Attached you will find the missing minutes.

**Rationale:** Purported executive minutes were not attached.

30. That the Minutes of **Illiana** Presbytery: 60-0-0
- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 21, 2023; Apr 01, 2023; Oct 21, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
  - d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2021-1: Oct 17, 2020** (*BCO* 21-4) — Use of extraordinary clause for ordination candidate not explained, and 3/4 vote not recorded.

**Response:** Vote to approve extraordinary clause was unanimous.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The 3/4 vote was explained by an unrecorded unanimous vote, but not the reason for using the extraordinary clause (*BCO* 21-4.d).

**Response:** [name omitted] came to us being ordained in another denomination and he, upon examination by our C&C Committee and Illiana Presbytery proved to have extraordinary gifts and experience in the ministry, thus Presbytery ordained him under the extraordinary clause (*BCO* 13-6 & 21-4h)

**2021-2: Oct 17, 2020** (*BCO* 22-5; Preliminary Principle 6) — No record of Sessions' approval of men serving as Stated Supply.

**Response:** Clerk does not understand this exception. If the man is approved by Presbytery to serve as Stated Supply it is assumed the Session requests his ministry, what is additionally required to indicate their approval?

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). It cannot be assumed that the Session approves of the Stated Supply solely on the basis of the Presbytery's approval.

**Response:** Included are [church name omitted] Session minutes where it was discussed to finalize plans to approve TE [name omitted] as Stated Supply. This would have been voted on at the October Presbytery meeting. The clerk of session, brought a motion to the floor of Presbytery through Candidates & Credentials to appoint TE [name omitted] as Stated Supply of [church name omitted] at which time it was approved.

**2021-3: Jan 18, 2020** (*BCO* 13-9.c; 23-1) — No record of congregational meeting to consider pastoral resignation.

**Response:** The resignation and dissolution of the pastoral relationship came from the [church name omitted] Session to Presbytery. Congregational meeting details were not provided by C&C.

**Rationale:** Presbytery should ensure that the congregation's voice was heard in the dissolution of pastoral relationship (*BCO* 23-1).

**Response:** Attached are [church name omitted] Congregational meeting minutes from 2/20/20 and Session minutes from 3/28/20 show dissolution of pastoral relationship with TE [name omitted] resigned as a RE at [church name omitted] and withdrew his membership, so his request to suspend his Internship was denied since he was no longer a member of the PCA. I believe this business was finalized at our October 2021 meeting. Minutes from 10/13/21 where it was discussed that intern [name omitted] left the PCA and wanted to end his internship. Minutes from 1/6/22 indicate internship was formally ended.

**2022-2: General** (RAO 16-4.c.2) — Standing Rules not included.

**Response:** Clerk had intended and believed that Standing Rules were included with the Submission. They are part of the 2023 minutes.

**2022-3: General** (RAO 16-10.a) — No record in minutes of exceptions taken by GA, and no responses to the Assembly concerning disposition of an exception of substance.

**Response:** Responses to exceptions were accomplished by a Commission established by Illiana Presbytery to create, authorize, and submit said responses. Clerk will enter into minutes of the Spring Stated Meeting 2024 the report of RPR in order to accomplish these dispositions.

- e. **That responses shall be submitted to the following GA as no responses were received in 2024:**

**2023-1: General 2022** (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**2023-2: General 2022** (BCO 8-7) — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

31. That the Minutes of **Iowa** Presbytery: 56-4-3

- a. Be approved without exception: **Mar 18, 2023; Aug 24, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jul 08, 2023; General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Oct 09, 2023** (BCO 8-7) — No record that TE working out of bounds will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church.

**2024-2: Nov 11, 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; *BCO* 40-3) — Results of review of church session minutes not stated or recorded.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Jul 10, 2021** (*BCO* 42-1.e; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with prescribed categories.

**Response:** Brothers, as noted in the minutes cited, while the clerk was not present at the meeting, he did contact the man who had been examined to have from him a written recording of his own words regarding any exceptions he might have. The clerk sought to make clear to the presbytery (and to RPR) that we do recognize the importance of listing such differences and that the exception was included verbatim in the minutes. However, since the clerk could not be certain of the exact language shared at the presbytery meeting, it did not seem either truthful nor wise to put words into the mouth of the presbytery such as “merely semantic” or “more than semantic, but “not out of accord”. If you were to read minutes of previous years you would know that that has been and remains our normal recording of this part of examinations. Yet, not wanting to record an unusual event as if it were “normal” the minutes were recorded as they were. We cannot change what was recorded and remind RPR that we will seek to return to our “normal” method of recording such things just as we have sought faithfully to do since the beginning of this presbytery.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not reconsidered the stated differences in order to judge with prescribed categories.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and corrects its record to reflect the proper wording regarding our judgment. We will seek to be more careful in the future.

**2023-1: Feb 15, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has corrected the record to state that the called purpose was for the transfer of TE [name omitted] into the Iowa Presbytery from the Susquehanna Valley Presbytery of the PCA.

**2023-2: Feb 15, 2022** (*BCO* 13-4) — No record of three TEs and three REs calling meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and while unable to correct the record, we promise to be more careful in the future.

**2023-3: Feb 15, 2022; Mar 12, 2022; Jul 9, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** February 15, 2022 – The TE did not have a change in his views upon transferring into Iowa Presbytery from the Susquehanna Valley Presbytery. As such the stated differences posted in the minutes were not the subject of the examination and were likely added for sake of thoroughness, which added unintended confusion. Moving forward, we will not post stated differences when, during a transfer exam, no changes in previous views are recorded.

March 12, 2022 – The previous clerk noted “as per checklist” as a way of implying that the exam was completed as required by *BCO* 21-4 & *RAO* 16-3.e.5. We recognize that this is insufficient and presbytery agrees with the exception. We apologize and will work to be clearer in the future. For the record, the candidate was examined in all areas and his stated differences were deemed as exceptions neither striking at the vitals of our religion nor hostile to our system of doctrine.

July 9, 2022 – The candidate’s stated exceptions were examined at the previous meeting (*cf.* March 12, 2022). We regret including his stated differences a second time, thus creating the confusion.

**2023-4: Jul 09, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of exam in PCA History.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has corrected the record. The candidate, when examined in Church History, was also examined in PCA Church History. We regret the conflation of our records to make it appear as though this did not happen. We will strive to be more careful going forward.

**2023-5: Jul 09, 2022** (*BCO* 19-16) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has corrected the record. We regret forgetting to note this in our minutes. The candidate had over 20 years of ministry experience and the vote to waive the internship requirement was unanimous. We will seek be more careful going forward.

**2023-6: Jul 09, 2022** (*BCO* 19-1) — No record of licensure exam in body of the minutes.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has corrected the record. Regrettably, we did not clearly note the examination of candidate [name omitted] for licensure. Lines 37 & 38 of page 2 which read, “MSC to agree with committees’ recommendation that exceptions do not strike at core of reformed faith or our system of doctrine. (See Appendix E and F),” refers to our actions respecting candidate [name omitted]’s stated differences. We apologize for the oversight and will seek to avoid anything like this moving forward.

32. That the Minutes of **James River** Presbytery: 63-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jul 20, 2023; Oct 14, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 21, 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.c.6) — No record of the names of ruling elders in attendance.

**2024-2: Apr 15, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved.

**2024-3: Apr 15, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6, 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards for reception from another denomination.

**2024-4: Apr 15, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.d) — Incomplete record of the trial parts omitted for reception from another denomination.

**2024-5: Apr 15, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; *BCO* 21-4.i) — Incomplete record of extraordinary circumstances of the church or proven extraordinary gifts of the man when invoking the extraordinary provisions of *BCO* 21-4 for reception from another denomination.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Jan 15, 2022** (*BCO* 19-7; 19-16) — Internship less than one year, with no record of 3/4 affirmative vote.

**Response:** The JRP acknowledges and agrees with the Assembly's taken exception of substance, and expresses its commitment to comply with all of the *BCO*'s requirements for recording the steps in particularization of new churches in the future. While we followed what is written in *BCO* 19-7 and 19-16 by approving the internship

with more than a 3/4 vote, we acknowledge that we failed to record that in our minutes

**2023-2: Jan 15, 2022; April 9, 2022; July 21, 2022; October 8, 2022** (*BCO* 13-4) — Quorum declared but attendance sheet records no REs present.

**Response:** The JRP disagrees with this exception of substance. While names of attending ruling elders were not included in the minutes, the record shows on the listed pages that churches were either considered present or absent (noted by the "P" and the "U" next to the names of each church) by the presence of commissioned ruling elders. *BCO* 13-1 makes it clear that a Presbytery is comprised of TEs and her churches, not the specific ruling elders. We consider our record sufficient to satisfy *BCO* 13-4. With that said, we will endeavor to include our scanned attendance forms in future years' minutes.

**2023-3: Jul 21, 2022** (PP 6; *BCO* 16-2) — No record that members of temporary Session were approved by congregation.

**Response:** The JRP acknowledges and agrees with the Assembly's taken exception of substance, and expresses its commitment to comply with Preliminary Principle 6 and *BCO* 16-2. We created an oversight commission on a church in an emergency without explicit prior approval from the congregation. After the commission was made, the congregation gave verbal acquiescence to the temporary session. But this was a failure on our part and we will endeavor to more properly follow the *BCO* if this were to arise again.

33. That the Minutes of **Korean Capital** Presbytery: 63-0-1

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Apr 03, 2023** (*BCO* 13-10; Preliminary Principle 3) — No record of transfer or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church

**2024-3: Apr 03, 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; *BCO* 40-1) — Incomplete record of review of records of church Sessions.

**2024-4: Jun 04, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice and verbatim meeting call not recored in minutes).

**2024-5: Jul 20, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice and verbatim meeting call not recored in minutes).

**2024-6: Jul 20, 2023** (*BCO* 31-2; *BCO* 32-2; 32-3) — No record of a *BCO* 31-2 investigation that raised a “strong presumption of guilt” or a written charge made out against the accused TE before the Presbytery appointed a prosecutor to prepare the indictment and designated a commission to conduct the trial.

**2024-7: Jul 20, 2023** (*BCO* 32-5) — No record that Presbytery specified “the times, places and circumstances” for accused to make his defense” against the indictment.

**2024-8: Oct 02, 2023** (*BCO* 13-9b; *BCO* 40-1) — Results of review of records of church Sessions not stated.

**2024-9: Oct 02, 2023** (*BCO* 13-5; *BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work for a TE transferring from another denomination.

**2024-10: Dec 31, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice and verbatim meeting call not recored in minutes).

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-1: Oct 04, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of transfer exam not recorded.

**Response:** We apologize for not recording all the details fully. TE [name omitted] was ordained at the Evangelical Church Alliance. We will note the minutes accordingly.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not demonstrated that the specific requirements were fulfilled.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All two TE(minister) admission(transfer) candidates passed all the requirements of the minister admission exams which are the same as the ordination exam requirements in our presbytery. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2022-2: Apr 05, 2021** (*BCO* 13-11) — No Record of the February 26, 2021 Presbytery meeting.

**Response:** The “2/26/2021 meeting” mentioned in the middle of p. 5 is not referring to a regular presbytery meeting but an action commission meeting. Our bylaw allows the action commission to act on the matters of member resignation and other non-controversial



nature on behalf of the presbytery (note below), which calls for a timely decision. The action commission includes at least two teaching elders and two ruling elders so that it can act as a commission. Korean Capital Presbytery ByLaws 4.2.2 The Action Commission 4.2.2.1 It shall resolve on the petitions which was received from the stated clerk and the matters submitted by the Presbytery, and it shall submit them to the Presbytery for an approval. Especially, when a pastor who has to leave his field before the next stated presbytery meeting requests for a dissolution of the pastoral relations, the commission may, within its judgment, decide to take up and resolve on the petition.

**Rationale:** The Presbytery has not provided the commission's minutes for review.

**Response:** The Action Commission reported its action through a summary of its important actions in a summary form, which was attached in Appendix E.1 (page 24) of the Apr 5, 2021 stated presbytery meeting minutes. That summary reads: "Action Committee Report submitted on 4/4/2021; 2/26/2021 [Korean Text Omitted] Approved TE [name omitted] Out-of-bounds status change (from assistant pastor at [church name omitted] to without call) and the Transfer to Korean Southwest (O.C.) presbytery at 2/26/2021 meeting." In the above summary, "2/26/2021 meeting" refers to the Action Commission meeting, not a presbytery meeting. The name "Action Commission" was in place effective 4/5/2021 meeting after the bylaw amendment approved that day, but the Action Committee was already authorized to approve TE ministry status change before that amendment. We made sure that the committee could act as a commission with proper quorum of both TEs and REs. We attach the minutes with the appendices to this new response for the RPR's review.

**2023-1: Apr 4, 2022; Oct 3, 2022 (RAO 16-10.a) —** No record in minutes of exceptions taken by GA.

**Response:** We were unable to review the exceptions until the following year. The Action Commission on Mar 24, 2023 approved the responses before they were submitted to the RPR and that action was reported at the following presbytery meeting on Apr 3, 2023 as part of the Action Commission report. The Apr 3, 2023 Presbytery Stated Meeting Minutes reflects that report

**2023-2: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. Both candidates were examined all specific requirements of licensure exam on the floor (Christian experience and inward call to ministry, Theology, Bible content and *BCO*). We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response

**2023-3: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 19-16) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement not recorded.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. The required 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement was met on the floor. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response

**2023-4: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All three candidates passed all the requirements of the ordination exams. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-5: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All three ordination candidates had calls to a definite work and they were reviewed and approved by the presbytery. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-6: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All three ordination candidates had calls to a definite work and they were reviewed and approved by the presbytery. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-7: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — No record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All two candidates passed all the requirements of the ordination exams. Their ministry calls were also reviewed and approved. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-8: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All licensure, ordination, and TE transfer candidates were examined as to their stated differences to the Westminster Standards and their exceptions were judged according to the prescribed categories of *RAO* 16-3.e.5. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-9: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidates' Sessions.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. The session endorsements for all three candidates of the gospel ministry were reviewed by the presbytery. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-10: Oct 03, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. The candidate was not examined for the ordination but for transfer from another denomination. He passed all the requirements of the minister admission exams which are the same as the ordination exam requirements in our presbytery. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

**2023-11: Apr 4, 2022; Oct 3, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — No record that call was approved.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. All ordination, TE transfer and TE admission candidates had calls to a definite work and they were reviewed and approved by the presbytery. The minutes are revised to reflect that action.

**2023-12: Apr 04, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidates.

**Response:** We regret the oversight. The presbytery reviewed and confirmed that all candidates of the gospel ministry had at least six-month membership at the churches under the oversight of the endorsing sessions. We have revised the minutes accordingly and it is attached to this response.

34. That the Minutes of **Korean Central** Presbytery: *63-0-1*
- a. Be approved without exception: **Oct 10, 2022; Apr 19, 2023; Oct 10, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
- 2024-1: Oct 11, 2022** (*BCO* 24-1; 40-4; 11-4; Preliminary Principle 6) — Minutes contain several references to men being examined for the office of ruling elder. This appears to be the presbytery exercising oversight over the election of ruling elders.
- 2024-2: Oct 11, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
- 2024-3: Oct 11, 2022** (*BCO* 38-2; 38-3) — Demission/withdrawal requires more information according to *BCO* 38-2; 38-3.
- 2024-4: Oct 11, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — Incomplete examination for candidates for the gospel ministry
- 2024-5: Oct 11, 2023** (*BCO* 24-1; 40-4; 11-4; Preliminary Principle 6) — Minutes contain several references to men being examined for the office of ruling elder. This appears to be the presbytery exercising oversight over the election of ruling elders.
- 2024-6: Apr 18, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of examination for transfer from outside the PCA.
- 2024-7: Oct 11, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete exam for transfer from another presbytery within the PCA
- 2024-8: Oct 11, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of examination for transfer from outside the PCA. Portions of the exam may be omitted by a  $\frac{3}{4}$  vote of presbytery.
- 2024-10: Jan 10, 2023** - Minutes of Called Meeting 1/10/2023 missing/not received by RPR.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**
- 2022-2: Jul 13, 2021** (*BCO* 13-11) — Complaint sent to Presbytery not recorded in Presbytery’s minutes.
- Response:** Korean Central Presbytery respectfully disagrees with this exception. The original complaint was not included with the minutes for this called meeting due to our understanding of *BCO* 40-3: “Proceedings in judicial cases, however, shall not be dealt with under review and control when notice of appeal or complaint has been given the lower court.” At the time CRPR held its meeting in June 2021, this complaint was being adjudicated by the SJC. Now that the SJC has issued its final decision on this case, we have submitted the complaint to the 50th General Assembly for review.

**Rationale:** While the CRPR does not have any judicial authority in cases being adjudicated by a higher court such as the SJC, a full and accurate record of minutes (including all referenced appendices, etc.) has not yet been submitted for review. (see: *RAO* 16-3.e.8)

**Response:** [2023] KCP appreciates CRPR's clarification on this exception. The original Complaint in question will be submitted for review.

**2023-3: Exceptions: Oct 12-13, 2021** (*RAO* 16-4.c.1; *BCO* 40-4) — A number of TEs are named to be investigated but no record or explanation of their connection to the Korean Central Presbytery or the PCA can be found in the minutes or directory.

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. The motion to investigate failed to meet the majority vote threshold to carry. Since this meeting, four TEs mentioned in this failed motion have departed from our Presbytery, including: 1) TE [name omitted]: transferred to the Presbytery of Northern Illinois; 2) TE [name omitted]: transferred to another denomination; 3) TE [name omitted]: demitted the ministry; 4) TE [name omitted]: demitted the ministry

**2023-4: Oct 12-13, 2021** (*BCO* 8-7; 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — TEs laboring out of bounds with missing information as to how and where they are serving.

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery agrees with the exception. We will increase our efforts to gather reports from our members serving out of bounds per *BCO* 8-7 and include these documents when we submit our records.

**2023-5: Apr 5-6, 2022** (*BCO* 24-1, 40-4; Preliminary Principle 6) — Agenda item 10 indicates that the presbytery voted to add 2 new ruling elders to Vineyard Presbyterian Church. This is out of order and in conflict with the *BCO*. Each congregation decides how many ruling elders to elect.

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery agrees with the exception. The details from this Stated Meeting's records are admittedly vague. The church in question had sought the Presbytery's approval to add two REs to its Session, and the Presbytery simply acknowledged the request. In retrospect, this item should not have been on our meeting agenda since this matter is under the jurisdiction of the local

congregation per *BCO* 24-1. We apologize for the error, and we will be more careful in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2021-1: Oct 13-14, 2020** (*BCO* 31-2) — There is no record in the minutes as to how the Presbytery disposed of accusations against TE [Name Omitted], TE [Name Omitted], and TE [Name Omitted].

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery appreciates the Committee of Review of Presbytery Records attention to this matter but respectfully disagrees with this exception. The minutes from our October 2020 stated meeting specifically record our decision to form an ad-committee to investigate the accusations against these Teaching Elders and report their findings at the next stated meeting (see page 10 under agenda item 8).

**Rationale:** Presbytery misunderstands the nature of the exception. The accusations from the October 13-14 meeting list several ministers as accused, and while an ad interim committee is formed, the April 2021 meeting says that there was a “session of court” against only one of the TEs in question, but makes no mention of any of the other previously mentioned TEs. Presbytery records have no indication as to what happened to those members, nor are they listed in their directory.

**Response:** [2023] Korean Central Presbytery appreciates the CRPR’s clarification on this exception. The minutes of our 70<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting in April 2021 indicate that Presbytery decided to accept the recommendations of the Ad-Interim Committee (p. 11). Regarding the three TEs in question, the Ad-Interim Committee’s recommendation was to “admonish [them] to act in accordance to the guidelines provided by the *BCO* as a way of preserving and protecting the purity of the church” (pp. 5-6 of the Committee Report). Since this April 2021 Stated Meeting, one of the TEs in question has transferred his membership to another Presbytery in the PCA, another has demitted from the ministry, and the third remains on KCP’s roll as a TE without a call.

**Rationale:** Admonition and deposition are censures inflicted by church courts which ordinarily require process (*BCO* 30-1). If this is

a case without process, confession of guilt is required and should be noted in the minutes (*BCO* 38-1).

**2022-1: Apr 13-14, 2021** (*BCO* 13-11, 31-2, 32-2, 32-3, 32-4, 32-5, 36-1, 36-5, 37-3) — There is insufficient record in the minutes of actions taken by the Presbytery (as well as documents in support of those actions) pursuant to their handling of an ecclesiastical trial against TE [Name Omitted], such as, but not limited to the allegations against him, the recommendations from an ad interim committee appointed to consider these allegations, the indictment of the prosecutor, the imposition and removal of censure, and several additional motions related to this situation. These missing items need to be either recreated or collected and submitted to the 50th General Assembly.

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery agrees with this exception and humbly apologizes for our oversight in this matter. We are submitting the following documents to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in response to this request by CRPR: (1) the original allegations against the TE as submitted to the Presbytery; (2) the findings and recommendations of the ad-interim committee as summarized in their report as received by the Presbytery; and (3) the minutes from this stated meeting, which summarizes our actions on the committee's recommendations. In addition, some of the actions from this April 2021 were the subject of a complaint that was adjudicated by the Standing Judicial Commission in June 2022 (SJC Case 2021-11).

**Rationale:** While the SJC sustained the complaint against some of Presbytery's procedural errors in this matter, it also ruled that many of these defects were no longer correctable, including the absence of an indictment from the prosecutor.

**Response:** Though Presbytery acknowledges their error and has sent some documents, the report from the interim committee seems to be missing their respective and referenced appendices (see: *RAO* 16-3.e.8), in addition to a letter of confession from the confessing TE.

**Rationale:** Appendices have been received; confession letter has not been received.

**2023-1: Oct 12-13, 2021; Apr 5-6, 2022** (*BCO* 24-1, 40-4, 11-4; *BCO* Preliminary Principle 6) — Minutes contain several references to men having passed "the examination for ruling elders." This appears to be

the presbytery exercising oversight over who may be elected as a ruling elder.

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery (hereafter “KCP”) acknowledges CRPR’s concern about the possibility of the Presbytery exercising undue oversight over local congregations. But we also respectfully note that the churches in our Presbytery elect their own ruling elder candidates. KCP examines these nominees only at the request of these church Sessions who deem themselves unable to administer these examinations on their own. The churches then install the RE nominees after they successfully complete their examinations by presbytery. While this seems to be a common practice among some Korean-language Presbyteries in the PCA, KCP acknowledges it is not ideal. We hope to move in a direction where our local church Sessions can examine their own nominees for Ruling Elders per *BCO* 12-5.b and *BCO* 24-1.

**Rationale:** Presbytery did not respond according to *RAO* 16-10.b. Presbytery can either agree with the exception or respectfully disagree with the exception.

**2023-2: Oct 12-13, 2021; Apr 5-6, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the minister’s/candidates own words.

**Response:** Korean Central Presbytery agrees with the exception. At our October 2021 Stated Meeting, an ordination candidate, [name omitted] , noted the following stated difference:

*I have a different view of the “Sabbath” than WFC Chapter 21-8. I affirm with the Westminster statement that man needs to “observe a holy rest” on the Sabbath or Lord’s day. This means that man is to be separate from work, so that the Sabbath day looks different from other days. I affirm that man is not good at resting, there are many activities that one may consider resting that in fact is “profaning the day by idleness” (WLC 119). I believe that the specific definition of “holy rest” being that one should rest from “their works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations” goes too far in its prohibitions. The statement “spend the whole time in public and private exercises of worship” fails to allow for creational rest and refreshment that can include such recreational activities as running, walking, and other God-glorifying, family nurturing actives as WLC*



*121 affirms. To do Sabbath worship and duties “all the day” and “the whole time” would seem at tension with the great significance Scripture also teaches on rest.*

KCP adopted its Candidates and Credentials Committee’s recommendation to judge this stated difference to be “more than semantic but ‘not out of accord with any fundamental system of our doctrine.’”

At our April 2022 Stated Meeting, a licensure candidate, [name omitted], noted the following stated difference from WCF 21-8, WLC 117 and 119, and WSC 60-61:

*I have a scruple concerning the forbidding of worldly recreations on the Lord’s day. I believe that recreation, such as the playing of sports or games can be a lawful form of rest on the Lord’s day.*

KCP adopted its Candidates and Credentials Committee’s recommendation to judge this stated difference to be “more than semantic but ‘not out of accord with any fundamental system of our doctrine.’”

We apologize for not including these stated differences in our minutes, and we promise to be more careful in the future.

**Rationale:** Presbytery apologized and promises to be more careful in the future, but needs to amend the record and indicate as such in responses (RAO 16-10.b.1).

35. That the Minutes of **Korean Eastern** Presbytery: 65-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Sep 19, 2023** (BCO 8-7; BCO 20-1) — Presbytery approved an out-of-bounds call without assurance that the TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church (8-7), without record that the TE is engaged in preaching and teaching the Word (8-7), and without stating reasons why it considers the out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry (20-1).

**2024-2: Sep 12, 2023** (BCO 19-2.f) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards

**2024-3: Sep 12, 2023** (BCO 19-2) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**2024-4: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**2024-5: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery

**2024-6: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; *BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete record of exam for minister seeking admission from another denomination.

**2024-7: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *BCO* 13-6) — No record of requiring statements of differences with our Standards.

**2024-8: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; *BCO* 21-5) — A minister admitted from another denomination was not asked the questions put to candidates at their ordination.

**2024-9: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; *BCO* 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**2024-10: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**2024-11: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-6) — Annual reports of candidates not included.

**2024-12: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2019-1: Mar 18, 2018** (*BCO* 13-6) — Received as a member but no record of mechanism how it happened.

**Response:** The TE's membership status was discussed on the floor and the KEP approved to grant him a continual membership with the promise of attending stated meeting and pay membership fee as required by the presbytery.

**Rationale:** A teaching elder must have a call to a definite work or be received as Without Call (*BCO* 13-5; 20-1).

**Response:** [2023] The TE's membership status was discussed on the floor and the KEP approved to grant him a continual membership with the promise of attending stated meeting and pay membership fee as required by the presbytery.

**Rationale:** [2023] A teaching elder's membership status must be recorded in the Presbytery's minutes when he is received. A teaching elder must have a call to a definite work or be received as Without Call

(BCO 13-5; 20-1). Presbytery's response does not address the previous rationale.

**Response:** [2024] Thank you for the rational but this matter is heading toward wrong direction. The TE had a call and was a KEP member for many years. KEP discussed his membership status because he missed many stated meetings. Now the TE attends the meeting faithfully, so we sincerely ask to drop this exception before it causes more confusion.

**2021-1: Mar 10, 2020 (BCO 20-1)** — No record that teaching elder transferring into the presbytery has a call to a definite work.

**Response:** The presbytery admits the mistake. The minister served an independent church in Pittsburg, PA as senior pastor from September 2019. In March 2020, he requested to transfer his membership to PCA from the General Assembly of Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong). At the same stated meeting the independent church in Pittsburg (PKPC) made a request to join KEP. PKPC submitted congregational meeting result for joining KEP. KEP formed commission with 5 TEs and 3 REs (P.4 of March 10, 2020 minutes).

**2021-3: Mar 10, 2020 (BCO 13-8)** — No record of examination of elders for a church that has petitioned to join the PCA.

**Response:** The presbytery apologizes for not including commission report with the stated meeting minutes. The Commissioners for PKPC met on June 9, 2020 with 5 TEs and 4 REs. The commissioners met with PKPC ruling elders. The commissioners explained PCA doctrine and polity and made sure the elders understand. Stated clerk asked the elders of PKPC questions from BCO 24-6, and they answered affirmatively. After the vote, commissioners unanimously approved PKPC's joining KEP.

**2021-6: Sep 15, 2020; Mar 16, 2021 (BCO 20-1)** — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** The Presbytery admits the mistake for not recording the call for the TE. TE [name omitted] was called by [church name omitted] PA. The call letter can be found in the docket page 45 of the September 15, 2020 stated meeting.

**2021-7: Sep 15, 2020; Mar 16, 2021 (BCO 21-4)** — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** KEP apologizes the oversight of not recording the stated differences for licensure and ordination exam. Mr. [name omitted] , Mr. [name omitted] , and Mr. [name omitted] had no differences to the Westminster standards.

**2023-3: May 15, 2022; Sep 13, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2; 18-3) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session; no record of six-months membership for candidate; no record of charges administered to candidate.

**Response:** KEP apologizes for not including docket that has all the information of the candidates. All the under care candidates had 6 months membership and endorsed by their session. Each candidate took the vows found in *BCO* 18-3 and brief charge was given. The Presbytery will make sure to submit the docket materials in future minutes

**2023-4: May 15, 2022** (*BCO* 15-2) — Presbytery formed a commission to oversee a church with fewer than two teaching elders and two ruling elders.

**Response:** We believe this exception is for March 15, 2022. We do not meet on May. KEP admits that it has made a mistake to leave out some commissioners' name (a TE and a RE) in March 2022 minutes. KEP will be more cautious in the future to record accurately.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2021-2: Mar 10, 2020; Sep 15, 2020** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** The presbytery admits the mistake for not recording the commission report for those two churches this exception is referring to. We will be more careful in this matter and make sure to include commission reports

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not corrected its action by providing commission minutes to RPR to review.

**2021-4: Sep 15, 2020; Sep 14, 2021** (*BCO* 8-7; 20-1) — Teaching Elders approved to minister out of bounds but with no record of a call to a definite work where they will be “engaged in preaching and teaching the Word ... [and] will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church.”

**Response:** The presbytery apologizes for not recording the calls for 2 TE's approved out of bounds ministry. TE [name omitted] started mission church ([church name omitted]) in Chino, California and TE [name omitted] received a call from [church name omitted] CA. Both TEs are asked for approval of out of boundary until they transfer to PCA presbytery near their geographic boundaries.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not corrected the record by stating that it determined that these out-of-bounds TEs would "have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church" as required by *BCO* 8-7.

**2021-5: Sep 15, 2020** (*BCO* 13-6) — Details of transfer exam not recorded.

**Response:** TE [name omitted] was recommended by CEC for the floor exam. TE [name omitted] was a KEP member in good standing between 2010~2016 and he transferred to another PCA presbytery. So the KEP members agreed to examine him in the areas of ministry and theology. TE's answer was satisfactory with our standards. KEP approved the TE as a member after he took the vow found in *BCO* 13-7.

**Rationale:** Transfer exam is incomplete. According to *BCO* 13-6, TEs transferring from other Presbyteries in the PCA "shall be examined on Christian experience, and also touching their views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government."

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** The Presbytery and Record Examination Committee apologize for not actively requesting and reviewing session minutes. Only a couple churches turned in the minutes for review. REC will continue to request the session minutes for review and promise to record the result in stated meeting minutes

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its action. No review of Presbytery records have been recorded for the current or past year.

**2023-2: General 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Some of OB ministers submitted their ministry report with excuse absence request, and KEP kept the report in the docket of

stated meeting. KEP apologizes for submitting minutes without the docket material. The stated clerk will make sure to include OB ministers' report when submitting the meeting minutes.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record or its actions. No OB ministers' reports have been included for the current or prior year.

36. That the Minutes of **Korean Northeastern** Presbytery: *61-0-1*

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Mar 14, 2023; Jun 21, 2023; Dec 15, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Sep 12, 2023 (BCO 38-3)** — No record that presbytery made determinations required by BCO 38-3.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Mar 08, 2022 (BCO 8-7; 20-1)** — No record that Presbytery is assured that an out of bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church or why Presbytery considers the out of bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and apologizes for the lack of clarity in the minutes and will be more careful in the future. The freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church was assured per our standard denominational call package form and it was considered as a valid out-of-bounds work as it involved ministerial work as an assistant pastor.

37. That the Minutes of **Korean Northwest** Presbytery: *61-0-0*

- a. Be approved without exception: **Apr 10, 2024; Oct 09, 2024**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Apr 10, 2023; Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Oct 10-13, 2022 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam  
**2024-2: Oct 10-13, 2022 (BCO 13-6; BCO 21-4)** — Incomplete record of exam of TE transferring into presbytery  
**2024-3: Apr 10-12, 2023 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam

**2024-4: Apr 10-12, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; *BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete record of exam of TE transferring into presbytery

**2024-5: Oct 09-11, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g) — No record of action taken on TE written exception to *WCF*

**2024-6: Oct 09-11, 2023** (*BCO* 13-8; *BCO* 24-6) — No record of REs affirmation of officer vows.

**2024-7: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.c.6) — Names of REs in attendance not listed in minutes.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2016-2: General** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No response to the Assembly concerning disposition of any exceptions of substance.

**Response:** [2018]: We apologize for not responding on time. It is not the attitude of the presbytery and its members to rebel or disrespect. It was the fault of the clerk and he apologizes and asks for forgiveness.

**Rationale:** [2018]: Please provide responses to presbytery exceptions of substance for 2014, 2013, and 2011.

**Response:** [2023] Again, it has been too long to provide responses to presbytery exceptions. While apologizing about this issue, it can be assured that we will submit the proper exception of substance in the future.

**Rationale:** [2023]: Respectfully, *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible) and correct its actions (if possible). Please provide responses to previous exceptions.

**Response:** [2024]: Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2016-4: Apr 13, 2015** (*RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of exam not recorded.

**Response:** [2018]: Our examination committee keeps record of all the parts and details of the exam and just gives final report to the presbytery. We will do better job of recording requirements in our minutes in the future. We have revised our minutes to show required parts are approved and that the exam as a whole was approved.

**Rationale:** [2018]: Please provide a record of the revised minutes and the record of presbytery's revision including statement of differences in candidate's own words and presbytery's categorization of the differences.

**Response:** [2023]: It has been too long and I am not authorized to revise the minutes (especially as a newly elected stated clerk); as far as I know, once approved minutes cannot be revised. However, the presbytery addressed this issue and has been recording the all specific requirements of exam.

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO 16-10.b.1* notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). [*RONR* (12th ed.) 48:15 also allows a deliberative body to correct its minutes through a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted.] Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. There was no candidate to require statement of stated difference.

**Response:** [2024]: Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2018-1: Apr 24, 2017** (*BCO* 21-4) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** This issue has been addressed and now the Examination Committee has been recording all specific requirements of ordination exam and it has been recorded in the minutes.

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO 16-10.b.1* notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from this meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2018-4: Apr 24, 2017** (*BCO* 19-13) — Approval of internship for ordination not recorded.



**Response:** This issue has been noted will be addressed in the future minutes

**Rationale:** [2023]RAO 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from this meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2018-5: Oct 09, 2017 (BCO 13-6)** — Incomplete record of transfer exam – no indication of transferee’s previous denomination

**Response:** This issue has been noted will be addressed in the future minutes.

**Rationale:** [2023] RAO 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from this meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2018-7: Oct 09, 2017 (BCO 19-2)** — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The candidate was indeed examined in a. a statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel b. 1. basic knowledge of Biblical doctrine as outlined in the Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in America. 2. practical knowledge of Bible content. 3. basic knowledge of the government of the Presbyterian Church in America as defined in The Book of Church Order. c. Be examined orally before Presbytery for his views in the areas outlined in part b above. d. a sermon. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future

**2019-2: Apr 09, 2018** (*BCO* 21-4) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** This issue has been addressed and now the Examination Committee has been recording all specific requirements of ordination exam and it has been recorded in the minutes.

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from this meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2019-3: General 2019** (*BCO* 13-5) — TEs on roll without explanation. Apr 8, 2019 meeting listed 32 total TEs and Sep 30, 2019 meeting listed 36 total TEs.

**Response:** This issue has been addressed and the rolls has been specified in the presbytery minutes.

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). [*RONR* (12th ed.) 48:15 also allows a deliberative body to correct its minutes through a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted.] Please include record of ordination(s) and/or reception of transfer(s), if applicable.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The difference was due to mistakenly including inactive members to the roll. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2021-1: Apr 8, 2019; Sep 30, 2019; Oct 13, 2020** (*BCO* 20-1; 13-7) — No record of call to definite work for ministers transferring from another denomination.

**Response:** This issue has been noted and began to be addressed from the fall presbytery of 2022

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record

(if possible). [*RONR* (12th ed.) 48:15 also allows a deliberative body to correct its minutes through a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted.] Please correct the minutes from these meetings.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. These candidates were called to definite work as pastor at an out of boundary church [name omitted] , and associate pastor at [church name omitted] [name omitted] , and pastor at [church name omitted] [name omitted] stated the following difference to our doctrinal standards: “The exception that I took with regard to Westminster confession of faith 21.8, is the confession (in its wording or language) seems to limit the definition or limitations of holy rest to private devotions and public worship and acts of mercy. I believe that other activities like going for a walk with your family, enjoying God’s creation which reflects his glory can also be valid for other means of rest. But that should not supplant the centrality of public worship and honoring the Lord.” The Presbytery judged this difference as more than semantic, but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine (*BCO* 21-4)” (*RAO* 16.3–e.5). Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2021-8: Oct 11, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** This issue has been noted and began to be addressed from the fall presbytery of 2022.

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible).

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The candidate [name omitted] stated the following difference to our doctrinal standards: “The exception that I took with regard to Westminster confession of faith 21.8, is the confession (in its wording or language) seems to limit the definition or limitations of holy rest to private devotions and public worship and acts of mercy. I believe that other activities like going for a walk with your family, enjoying God’s creation which reflects his glory can also be valid for other means of

rest. But that should not supplant the centrality of public worship and honoring the Lord.” The Presbytery judged this difference as more than semantic, but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine (*BCO* 21-4)” (*RAO* 16.3–e.5). Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2021-9: Oct 13, 2020** (*BCO* 13-8) — No record of commission of Presbytery meeting with church ruling elders before receiving the church into its membership.

**Response:** This issue has been addressed and now the Examination Committee has been recording all specific requirements of ordination exams for the ministers transferring from another denomination and it has been recorded in the minutes.

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please submit the commission report for review.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-12) — Presbytery did not meet at least twice OR minutes not submitted (if Fall 2022 meeting happened).

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. The minutes for the Fall 2022 meeting are now submitted. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future

**2023-10: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 18-6) — No record of intern reports.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery regrets that it did not aware of the requirement for the annual reports of interns properly according to *BCO* 18-6. Presbytery will be more diligent to require all the interns to submit their annual reports in the future.

**2023-2: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — Incomplete record of exam for minister seeking admission from another denomination.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. The candidate seeking admission to the Presbytery was coming from The General Assembly of Presbyterian Church. The Presbytery accepted his seminary education in lieu of exams in Greek/Hebrew. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future

**2023-3: Apr 18, 2022 (BCO 21-4)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam. [No indication of candidate's previous denomination; missing knowledge of Greek/Hebrew for candidate Ha]

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. The candidate in question was indeed was examined in Bible content and PCA History. Furthermore, Presbytery accepted the candidate's seminary education in lieu of exams in Greek/Hebrew. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-4: Apr 18, 2022 (BCO 21-4)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam. [Greek/ Hebrew, Bible Content, PCA History for candidate Choe]

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. The candidate was indeed examined in PCA History, and Presbytery accepted the candidate's seminary education in lieu of exams in Greek/Hebrew. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-5: Apr 18, 2022 (BCO 12-5b)** — The church Session has power to examine, ordain, and install ruling elders.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. Presbytery made a decision to accept the consigned exam according to the request from the church session. The presbytery only supports the church session by having consigned examination. The church session ordains and installs the ruling elders. Presbytery will

be more diligent to indicate that this is the consigned examination for the future

**2023-6: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work for two ordination candidates and one transfer candidate.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. These candidates were called to definite work as assistant pastor at [church name omitted] [name omitted], assistant pastor at [church name omitted] [name omitted] , and pastor at [church name omitted] [name omitted]. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-7: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The candidate was indeed examined in a. a statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel b. 1. basic knowledge of Biblical doctrine as outlined in the Confession of Faith and Larger and Shorter Catechisms of the Presbyterian Church in America. 2. practical knowledge of Bible content. 3. basic knowledge of the government of the Presbyterian Church in America as defined in The Book of Church Order. c. Be examined orally before Presbytery for his views in the areas outlined in part b above. d. a sermon from Luke 16:1-13. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-8: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 24-1) — No record of complete RE exam for three candidates.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The candidate was indeed examined in - Acquaintance with experiential religion, bible content, history of the PCA and principles and rules of the government and discipline of the church Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2016-1: General** (*BCO* 40-1) — No record of review of session minutes.

**Response:** [2018]: We have a committee that reviews them each presbytery meeting. Many times, churches forget to bring them. We will be more diligent in this matter to ensure that sessional records are reviewed under *BCO* 40-1.

**Rationale:** [2018]: Please supply a record of presbytery action reviewing 2014 Session minutes.

**Response:** [2023] It has been too long to review of the 2014 Session minutes, while apologizing about this issue, the presbytery noted issue will record the review of the session minutes annually.

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its actions (if possible) and correct its record (if possible). Please review the 2014 session minutes, if possible. If this is no longer possible, please include the response from the sessions in the Presbytery's minutes.

**Response:** [2024]: Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has now finalized review of 2014 Session minutes. Presbytery will be more diligent in the future to make sure that Session records are reviewed in a timely manner.

**Rationale:** The minutes need to record the findings of the review of the 2014 minutes of each session. (*BCO* 40-3)

**2016-3: Apr 13, 2015** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of candidate meeting all qualifications for ordination.

**Rationale:** [2018]: Please provide a record of the revised minutes and the record of presbytery's revision including statement of stated differences in candidate's own words and presbytery's categorization of the differences.

**Response:** [2023]: It has been too long and I am not authorized to revise the minutes (especially as a newly elected stated clerk); as far as I know, once approved minutes cannot be revised. However, the presbytery addressed this issue and has been recording of candidates meeting all qualifications for ordination.

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible).

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. There was no candidate to require statement of stated difference. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** The background and educational qualifications of the candidate needs to be recorded if not already in the minutes (*BCO* 18-2,3,10; 21-4.a,b as applicable), and the minutes must record a) if the man has any stated differences, b) his statement of any differences, and c) how Presbytery judged those differences. If those statements cannot be recreated Presbytery could require the man to provide the statements now. (*BCO* 21-4.f,g)

**2016-5: Apr 13, 2015** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — No record of candidate's stated differences, if any.

**Response:** [2018]: We will keep clear record of statement of differences with standards in the future.

**Rationale:** [2018]: Please provide a record of the revised minutes and the record of presbytery's revision including statement of differences in candidate's own words and presbytery's categorization of the differences.

**Response:** [2023] It has been too long and I am not authorized to revise the minutes (especially as a newly elected stated clerk); as far as I know, once approved minutes cannot be revised. However, the presbytery addressed this issue and has been recording the candidate's stated difference according to their own wording.

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). [*RONR* (12th ed.) 48:15 also allows a deliberative body to correct its minutes through a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted.]

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. There was no candidate to require statement of stated difference. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something



Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** The minutes must record a) if the man has any stated differences, b) his statement of any differences, and c) how Presbytery judged those differences. If those statements cannot be recreated Presbytery could require the man to provide the statements now. (*BCO* 21-4.f,g)

**2018-2: Apr 24, 2017; Oct 9, 2017** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** This issue has been noted and to be addressed from the fall presbytery of 2022.

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). [*RONR* (12th ed.) 48:15 also allows a deliberative body to correct its minutes through a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted.] Please correct the minutes from these meetings.

**Response:** [2024]: Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. All the candidates stated that there is no difference to our doctrinal standards. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** The minutes must record a) if the man has any stated differences, b) his statement of any differences, and c) how Presbytery judged those differences. If those statements cannot be recreated Presbytery could require the man to provide the statements now. (*BCO* 21-4.f,g)

**2018-3: Apr 24, 2017** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** This issue has been noted will be addressed in the future minutes.

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from this meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** The nature of the man's call and Presbytery's action on that call must be recorded in the minutes. (*BCO* 8-6, 8-7, 21-1 as applicable)

**2018-6: Apr 24, 2017; Oct 9, 2017** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** This issue has been noted and to be addressed from the fall presbytery of 2022.

**Rationale:** [2023]: *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from these meetings.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. All the candidates stated that there is no difference to our doctrinal standards. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** The minutes must record a) if the man has any stated differences, b) his statement of any differences, and c) how Presbytery judged those differences. If those statements cannot be recreated Presbytery could require the man to provide the statements now. (*BCO* 21-4.f,g)

**2019-1: Apr 09, 2018** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** This issue has been noted will be addressed in the future minutes

**Rationale:** [2023] *RAO* 16-10.b.1 notes that when a Presbytery agrees with an exception of substance, it should also correct its record (if possible). Please correct the minutes from this meeting.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in

those minutes pointing to this response. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** The nature of the man's call and Presbytery's action on that call must be recorded in the minutes. (*BCO* 8-6, 8-7, 21-1 as applicable)

**2023-9: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 18-6) — Annual reports of candidates not included.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery does not have candidates. Presbytery will be more diligent to specially indicate the difference between candidates and interns in the future

**Response:** The response indicates that Presbytery examined ruling elder candidates in areas that are not consistent with *BCO* 24-1. Presbytery must respond to that error.

38. That the Minutes of **Korean Southeastern** Presbytery: *63-0-1*

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Feb 13, 2023.**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Apr 10-11, 2023; Jun 26, 2023; Oct 2-3, 2023** (*BCO* 12-3)  
— No record of Session approval of interim moderator.

**2024-2: Oct 2-3, 2023** (*BCO* 8-6) — Evangelist title granted to TE in area with sufficient REs.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Oct 04, 2021** (*BCO* 38-3.a, b) — No record of whether departing TEs were categorized according to *BCO* 38-3.a or b.

**Response:** KSEP apologizes for this error and agrees with CRPR. We have amended our minutes to reflect that the withdrawing TEs were members in good standing per *BCO* 38-3.a as follows: 3. Removal from Presbytery roll: The following members of KSEP in good standing have requested to withdraw from the PCA to affiliate with other denominations: [names omitted]

**Rationale:** The issue in *BCO* 38-3 is not the standing of the TEs in the Presbytery but the nature of the denomination with which they are affiliating.

**Response:** Presbytery apologizes for the misunderstanding of the original exception. Some of the TEs withdrew from the PCA to join

other NAPARC denominations while others withdrew from the PCA to join denominations that are deemed as not rightly maintaining the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity. Unfortunately, due to the passage of a number of years KSEP does not have up-to-date contact information to follow through with the provisions of *BCO* 38-3.b. In addition, a number of these TEs who withdrew from the PCA transferred to denominations in Korea. Presbytery is fully aware of its error and will work to comply with *BCO* 38-3 when TEs request approval to transfer to another denomination.

**2023-1: Standing Rules** (*BCO* 34-10) — The process outlined in the Standing Rules is at variance with the process outlined in *BCO* 34-10.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has amended our Standing Rules to comply with *BCO* 34-10 as follows: For any Teaching Elder who shall habitually fail to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions, Presbytery shall follow the procedures of *BCO* 34-10.

39. That the Minutes of **Korean Southern** Presbytery: 61-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Oct 17, 2022** (*BCO* 7-2) — Church appoints women officers with no response from presbytery.

**2024-2: Oct 17, 2022** (*BCO* 13-4) — No quorum competent to do business yet action is taken on business.

**2024-3: Apr 17, 2023** (*BCO* 10; *BCO* 5-2.c) — Failure to provide 60 day notice to congregants.

**2024-4: Apr 17, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of the reason why presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry

**2024-5: Apr 17, 2023** (*BCO* 13-10) — No record of transfer or dismissal of members from dissolving church.

**2024-6: Apr 17, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation. Note if mission church, approval of temporary system of government would be required.

**2024-7: Apr 17, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record of six month membership of candidate.

**2024-8: Apr 17, 2023** - No record of endorsement of candidates session.

**2024-9: Apr 17, 2023** - No record of the two questions being asked the candidate and affirmed.

**2024-10: Apr 17, 2023** (*BCO* 22-4) — No record that session concurred with the dissolution of pastoral relation.

**2024-11: General 2023** (*BCO* 40-1) — No record of review of records of church sessions

**2024-12: Apr 17, 2023** - No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**2024-13: Apr 17, 2023** - No record that interim or provisional session member was approved by congregation

**2024-14: Apr 17, 2023** - Actions referenced were approved at previous presbytery that did not have a quorum.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-2: Apr 19, 2021** (*BCO* 34-10) — Presbytery adopted a rule that ministers without call for three years are “automatically removed by the decision of the Presbytery,” contravening the process required by *BCO* 34-10, including the requirements for a 2/3 vote, an inquiry into the cause of his dereliction, notification following the initial vote, and a second vote at the subsequent stated meeting.

**Response:** We just put some limitations for the period of TE’s no call situations. Surely, the decision of the Presbytery should follow the *BCO* 34-10. Clearly, we referenced *BCO* 34-10 in the Article 2, Section 5 in Presbytery Standing Rules.

**Rationale:** While Presbytery’s diligence is commendable, the rule as presently worded is in conflict with the required process of *BCO* 34-10 in that it contains the phrase “shall be automatically removed.”

**Response:** Meeting Date: Apr 19, 2021 From now on, we will delete the Section 5 – 1 in Article 2, “A teaching elder who is without a call to a particular work shall be listed on the roll of non- attending members for three years and shall be automatically removed by the decision of the Presbytery from the membership roll if his status would not be recovered to a regular member by the time of three years from the listing time.”

**2023-1: Standing Rules** (*BCO* 34-10) — The provision of Article 2 Section 7 appears to have the effect of *BCO* 34-10, but without

process. It automatically cancels the membership of a supported TE laboring abroad who does not report for more than three years.

**Response:** The phrase, “If he does not report more than 3 years, his membership shall be canceled automatically.” in Article 2 Section 7, is changed to “He shall not continue laboring at the same status for more than 3 years. When the Presbytery cancels his membership, the cancellation shall be done according to *BCO* 34 - 10.”

**2023-2: Standing Rules** (*BCO* 24-1, Preliminary Principle 6) — The provision of Article 13 Section 54 appears to conflict with *BCO* 24-1. It states, “The elected ruling elder shall be guided by the Session to be examined by the Presbytery and be installed within one year after passing the Presbytery’s examination.”

**Response:** From now on, the Section 54 in Article 13, “The elected ruling elder shall be guided by the Session to be examined by the Presbytery and be installed within one year after passing the Presbytery’s examination.” will be deleted.

**2023-3: Jul 06, 2020** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in minutes.

**Response:** We attached to the minute the convocation notice of the called meeting which states the purpose of the meeting. And for your reference, the revised minute is attached to this response together with the original Korean convocation notice.

**2023-4: Oct 18-19, 2021** (*BCO* 13-4) — No record of quorum for meeting.

**Response:** Because the quorum was not met, no decisions or actions were made or taken at the gathering. Only some reports and suggestions were heard at that time. The concerned minute was approved at the immediate next Presbytery meeting in which the quorum was met.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2021-1: Oct 21, 2019** (*BCO* 13-9, 24-1) — Examination of RE is not under the purview of the presbytery’s jurisdiction, rather the local session.

**Response:** [2022]: Although the minute records the results of the RE tests in the “Report of Examination Committee” on page 10 at the

item# 20, the test areas were not recorded. We are very sorry for not recording in detail. But in the future, we will pay more attention for this matter. The RE installation was not administered by the local session.

**Rationale:** [2022]: It is unclear how this is a response to the exception. Why was this RE reviewed by Presbytery and the installation not administered by the local Session? [p. 4, Credential Committee]

**Response:** [2023] At that time, the church was a mission church which had not her own Session to test a ruling elder. According to Article 13, Section 49 in Presbytery Standing Rules, “Examinations for a ruling elder shall be done by the church’s petition”, the church requested to do that work on behalf of her. So Presbytery answered to the request.

**Rationale:** *BCO* 5-3 provides several forms for temporary government for mission church and a mission church must have a temporary government, and that government must examine ruling elders.

**Response:** Meeting Date: Oct 21, 2019; When a mission church installs a RE, the procedure is to be done according to *BCO* 24-1. A RE in the Session of a particular church is to be dispatched to make a temporary Session of the mission church which can do all the RE installation processes.

**Rationale:** *BCO* 5-3 list the options for the temporary system of Government for a mission church. 1 RE does not make a session. This temporary government should be appointed by presbytery and remain in place until either presbytery changes members or church is particularized. *BCO* 5-3 provides several forms for temporary government for mission church and a mission church must have a temporary government, and that government must examine ruling elders.

**2021-2: Oct 19, 2020** (*BCO* 21-6) — No congregation present at ordination/installation service of its pastor. No questions asked of the congregation.

**Response:** We ordained not a pastor but an assistant pastor of a local member church at the Presbytery Meeting not at the local church.

There was no congregation to give questions. Later, the assistant pastor started to work at that church.

**Rationale:** There remains no evidence that congregation or Session was asked the questions of *BCO* 21-6.

**Response:** Meeting Date: Oct. 19, 2020; Next time, we will include the part of asking to and answering from the congregation even at the installation of an assistant pastor, too.

**Rationale:** No record that presbytery corrected these actions.

**2021-3: Oct 19, 2020** (*BCO* 13-6) — All specific requirements of transfer exams not recorded. Meeting Date: Oct. 19, 2020

**Response:** For the omission of recording the requirements of transfer exams of TE [name omitted] and TE [name omitted] at the time of their becoming Presbytery members, we will correct the points indicated.

**Rationale:** No record that presbytery corrected it records *RAO* 16-10.b.1. Presbytery has not listed the specific requirements and trials for ordination.

**2022-1: Oct 19, 2020; Apr 19, 2021** (*BCO* 13-9.b, 40-3) — Results of review of records of church Sessions not stated.

**Response:** Although we strongly recommend member churches to make their Session Minutes be checked by the Presbytery, the results are not good yet. Because some churches submit their Session minutes annually, every Presbytery minute can not contain the record of the review results. Anyway, we will continue encouraging the member churches regarding this matter.

**Rationale:** Presbytery needs to approve its review of 2020-21 Session records and report its actions to the Assembly.

**Response:** Meeting Dates: Oct 19, 2020; Apr 19, 2021. For the churches which have a Session, their Session minutes for the years of 2020 and 2021 are to be checked during the Stated Presbytery Meeting period of October 16, 2023.

**Rationale:** No evidence provided that reviews ever took place.

**2023-5: Apr 18, 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** For the churches which have a Session, their Session minutes are to be checked during the Stated Presbytery Meeting period



of October 16, 2023. (This Presbytery has only one particular church, [church name omitted], which has a Session,)

**Rationale:** No evidence provided review ever took place. Missions Churches (temporary session, oversight session, oversight commission, and evangelists) are to maintain and provide its records to presbytery. Rolls do not indicate which churches are mission or particular however all must be reviewed.

40. That the Minutes of **Korean Southwest Presbytery:** 66-0-0
- a. **Should not be approved.**
  - b. **That all responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly be found unsatisfactory.**
  - c. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly empower the Moderator to appoint a commission of three (3) teaching elders and three (3) ruling elders:
    - 1. To review all outstanding exceptions of substance to Korean Southwest Presbytery's minutes, and to determine which exceptions Presbytery shall be required to respond to, being serious irregularities that require review and correction.
    - 2. To review the 2023 minutes of Korean Southwest Presbytery, determining which serious irregularities shall require review and correction.
    - 3. To report their findings to Korean Southwest Presbytery 30 days prior to Presbytery's autumn stated meeting.
    - 4. To report their findings to the 52nd General Assembly through the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records.
  - d. That the officers of the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records, in consultation with the Stated Clerk, appoint two representatives, one of whom shall have fluency in Korean and English (both written and spoken), to:
    - 1. Consult with the Stated Clerk of Korean Southwest Presbytery prior to their autumn 2024 and spring 2025 stated meetings on how best to observe the Constitution.
    - 2. Attend the autumn 2024 and spring 2025 stated meetings to advise the Stated Clerk and Presbytery as a whole on how best to observe the Constitution.

3. Advise the Stated Clerk and Presbytery as a whole on how best to respond to the outstanding exceptions to Presbytery's minutes requiring response.
  4. Advise the Stated Clerk on how to keep a full and accurate record of Presbytery's proceedings (*BCO* 13-11, *RAO* 16-3).
  5. Report to the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records at its 2025 meeting (date to be determined by the Administrative Committee) with a report on Korean Southwest Presbytery's progress and recommendation on whether their work needs to continue for another year.
  - e. That Korean Southwest Presbytery be cited to appear by representative before the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records at its 2025 meeting (date to be determined by the Administrative Committee) with responses to the 51st General Assembly and improved responses to previous General Assemblies.
41. That the Minutes of **Korean Southwest Orange County** Presbytery:
- 61-0-0*
- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance:
 

**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-10) — A member of the court in good standing cannot be prevented from serving on a presbytery committee.

**2024-2: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-3: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation or Session concurred with the dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-4: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 38-3) — No record that Presbytery made determinations required by *BCO* 38-3.

**2024-5: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the candidate's own words.

**2024-6: Mar 14, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-7: General 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**2024-8: Sep 12, 2023** (SR Article 13.1) — Presbytery allowed officers to appoint members of a commission.

**2024-9: General 2023** (BCO 8-7) — No record of annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**2024-10: Mar 14, 2023** (BCO 8-7) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**2024-11: Mar 14, 2023** (BCO 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2021-1: Mar 10, 2020** (BCO 13-11) — Complaint sent to Presbytery not recorded in minutes. ("full and accurate record" RAO 16.3.e.6).

**Response:** This complaint was deemed to be a private matter and it was not dealt with in the presbytery other than noting the complaint. Due to the sensitive nature of this private matter, it would be difficult to redress this issue and include the specifics in the minutes.

**Rationale:** The complaint and the response of the Presbytery must be included in the record of the Presbytery (BCO 43-3, 6) and submitted for review (BCO 40-1).

**Response:** We appreciate your diligence in addressing the matter raised in your Exception to our Minutes dated March 10, 2020, concerning the complaint sent to the Presbytery not being recorded. We acknowledge your assertion that both the complaint and the Presbytery's response should be documented in accordance with the *Book of Church Order* (BCO) regulations. However, we maintain that in exceptional cases involving confidential or private matters, discretion must be exercised to uphold the integrity of the process and protect the individuals involved (especially because there is no explicit requirement to print the Complaint in the Minutes in BCO 43). Due to the sensitive matter of the complaint, it was assigned to a Commission, which adjudicated it until it reached the final resolution which was recommended to depose the former teaching elder. At the Presbytery meeting of Sept 15, 2020, the resolution was presented in front of the presbytery to receive the Complaint and full report of the commission and accept the committee's recommendations.

**Rationale:** The complaint and the response of the Presbytery must be included in the record of the Presbytery (*BCO* 43-3, 6) and submitted for review (*BCO* 40-1) and include the minutes of the commission (*BCO* 15-3). If the complaint was dealt with in executive session by Presbytery, it may be submitted under *RAO* 16-3.e.7 so that RPR will treat it confidentially. Otherwise, the complaint must be submitted through normal channels.

**e. That responses shall be submitted to the following GA as no responses were received in 2024:**

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-2) — No evidence of annual reports from many of the TEs who are without call.

**2023-2: Mar 15, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7; 13-5; 20-1) — A TE has begun to minister out of bounds. No record that Presbytery followed the appropriate *BCO* provisions to approve that.

**2023-3: Mar 15, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; 13-8) — A commission must be appointed by Presbytery, not a committee.

**2023-4: Mar 15, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — No evidence that men transferring in from other denominations met the educational, original language, or paper requirements.

**2023-5: Mar 15, 2022; Sep 13, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2, 3) — No record of endorsement by candidates' Sessions, six-months membership for candidates, nor of charge given to candidates.

**2023-6: Mar 15, 2022; Sep 13, 2022** (*BCO* 46-6) — TEs are received from other PCA presbyteries but no evidence of action of other Presbyteries.

**2023-7: Mar 15, 2022** (*BCO* 19-7, 8, 9, 10) — Presbytery uses candidacy examination procedures for internship, so various steps are missing, including determination of the nature of the internship.

**2023-8: Mar. 15, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1; 8-7; 13-5) — No record of calls to a definite work.

**2023-9: Mar. 15, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2.d, e, f) — No sermon and no statement of differences with the Standards for one being licensed.

**2023-10: Mar. 15, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — No evidence of educational requirements, required papers, or sermon for one being ordained; and no evidence the man was asked to state differences with the Standards.

**2023-11: Mar. 15, 2022** (*BCO* 5-9) — Presbytery particularizes mission works with no evidence that all required procedures were

followed – specifically no evidence of congregational meeting or petition.

**2023-12: Mar. 15, 2022; Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7; 21-2; 23-1) — TEs are reported as resigning from or having left current calls from churches of Presbytery and/or are recorded as taking new calls, but no evidence that Presbytery dissolved pastoral relations, nor acted on the new calls, nor is there evidence that 8-7 and 21-1 were followed for out of bounds calls.

**2023-13: Mar. 15, 2022** (*BCO* 46-6) — The minutes record that a man has transferred to another Presbytery. No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations, that Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relation, nor that Presbytery voted to release the TE to a different Presbytery.

**2023-14: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1) — Minutes show that commissions met and who was present, but there are no reports showing what the commissions did.

**2023-15: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated difference not recorded in the candidate's own words.

**2023-16: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**2023-17: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work.

**2023-18: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam. Men are approved for ordination but no evidence of education requirements, required papers, or original languages.

**2023-19: Sept 13, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — No record of written credentials of dismissing Presbytery (not specified) for TE transfer.

**2023-20: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of three licensure exams not recorded. Further, those seeking licensure are not required to be examined in sacraments and church history.

**2023-21: Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 38-3) — Presbytery does not follow *BCO* 38-3 for men who have joined other denominations.

**2023-22: Sept. 12, 2022** (*BCO* 46-6) — The minutes record that 2 TEs have been removed from the roll because they joined another PCA Presbytery. No record that congregations concurred with dissolution

of pastoral relations, that Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relations, nor that Presbytery voted to release the TEs to the different Presbyteries.

**2023-23: Sept. 13, 2022** (PP 6; *BCO* 3-1; 16-2) — Presbytery appoints an interim pastor with no evidence of congregational request or concurrence.

42. That the Minutes of **Lowcountry** Presbytery: *60-0-0*

- a. Be approved without exception: **Jan 28, 2023; Nov 02, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Apr 25, 2023; Jul 22, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved.
  - 2024-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 19-2.f) — No record that licentiate was asked about differences to standards.
  - 2024-3: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-4.c.3; *RAO* 16-10.a) — No response to the Assembly concerning disposition of exceptions of substance.
  - 2024-4: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No record in minutes of responses to exceptions taken by GA.
- d. **That responses shall be submitted to the following GA as no responses were received in 2024:**
  - 2023-1: General 2022** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No record in minutes of exceptions taken by GA.
  - 2023-2: Feb 5, 2022; Jul 23, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation /Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2023-3: Jul 23, 2022; Nov 3, 2022** (*BCO* 22-2, 3) — No record of calls from the session/Congregation for Pastoral relations.

43. That the Minutes of **Metro Atlanta** Presbytery: *61-1-1*

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory; May 02, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1 General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; *BCO* 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.
  - 2024-2: Oct 03, 2023** (*BCO* 21-9; *BCO* 15-2) — No provision made for installation of candidate.

**2024-3: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 22-2)** — No record that congregation elected existing assistant pastor as an associate pastor on recommendation of the session.

**2024-4: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 22-5)** — No record that session requested stated supply.

**2024-5: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that the Congregation/(Session) concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-6: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 22-6; BCO 19-1)** — Stated supply approved without licensure.

**2024-7: Jan 24, 2023 (BCO 22-6; BCO 19-1)** — Stated supply approved without licensure.

**2024-8: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 38-1)** — Censure of indefinite suspension from office administered without full record of case without process.

**2024-9: Oct 03, 2023 (BCO 21-4.g)** — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that appears to be out of accord with the fundamentals of our doctrinal standards. It is not clear from the difference as stated if the candidate believes there are any forms of recreation that are proscribed by the commandment.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2021-1: Jan 28, 2020 (BCO 13-6)** — Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination (see also *BCO* 21-4).

**Response:** [2022]: It is unclear what RPR is taking an exception to here. “Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination.” We are attaching the full transcript below from the January 28th meeting: Transfer into MAP - [name omitted] – [church name omitted] TE [name omitted]: from The Presbytery of the East of the EPC to [church name omitted] MSP to accept Mr. [name omitted] as a transfer from The Presbytery of the East of the EPC upon confirmation of his release from said Presbytery. TE [name omitted] was examined by the Committee on his Christian experience and his views on theology, the Sacraments and church government and was recommended by them to the court. Presbytery had the opportunity to examine him in all the areas according to *BCO* 13-6. TE [name omitted] expressed differences with the *WCF* (documented in Appendix D) were judged by the Court as more than semantic but not out of accord. MSP MSP to find Mr. [name omitted]’s call to be in

order. The call was placed in Mr. [name omitted]'s hands and was accepted and received by him. (Copy of call in Appendix E) MSP to find Mr. [name omitted]'s transfer and request to be in order. Mr. [name omitted] signed the Metro Atlanta Presbytery Book of ministerial obligation. MSP to approve a commission to install Mr. [name omitted] on April 19, 2020, at [church name omitted]. The commission is to consist of: [TABLE OMITTED]. Perhaps RPR is alluding to *BCO* 21-4 "If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4 and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4. Presbyteries shall also require ordained ministers coming from other denominations to state the specific instances in which they may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4 (see *BCO* 21- 4.)" MAP believes that requirement was met with the Credentials Committee, his time on the floor and his installation. Please clarify.

**Rationale:** [2022]: Minutes do not indicate the transfer candidate was examined in both knowledge and views, as well as the areas of Greek and Hebrew languages, church history, and the history of the PCA, as required by *BCO* 21-4.

**Response:** [2023] Candidate was examined in knowledge and views by the Credential Committee and on the floor and MAP failed to record.

**Rationale:** [2023]: Minutes do not indicate that all areas of examination noted in the 2022 response rationale were completed. Presbytery response should indicate that these corrections have been taken and properly recorded in their minutes.

**Response:** [2024] The incomplete record of a transfer exam for a minister from another denomination has been corrected and recorded in the October 2, 2023 minutes to reflect that Presbytery had completed all of the *BCO* requirements per *BCO* 13-6 and 21-4. The record now reflects:



The Court examined Mr. [Name Omitted] in all the areas according to BCO 13-6 and 21-4.

*his acquaintance with experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management (based on the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7, and Titus 1:6-9), his inner sense of God's calling on his life to ministry,*

*Bible content,*

*theology,*

*the Sacraments,*

*church history and the history of the Presbyterian Church in America,*

*the principles and rules of the government and discipline of the church*

*approval of a theological thesis and an exegetical study that included the use of original languages*

*the examining committee heard a preached sermon and approved it unanimously*

*and, the Court accepted Mr. [Name Omitted]'s seminary degree in lieu of an oral exam in the original languages.*

**2023-1: Jan 25, 2022 (RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Presbytery minutes misstate licentiate's stated difference.

**Response:** the misstatement of the licentiate's differences was a clerical error. The error and correction were documented in the October 3, 2023 minutes. Mr. [name omitted]'s expressed differences with the WCF were judged by the Court as more than semantic but not out of accord. MSP to accept his stated differences.

**2023-2: Jan 25, 2022 (RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Stated differences not recorded in minister's/candidate's own words.

**Response:** Mr. [name omitted] had no differences with the WCF. The correction to the Jan 25, 2022, minutes are now recorded in the October 2, 2023 minutes.

**2023-4: May 3, 2022; Sep 20, 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record that TE laboring out of bounds will be allowed full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of the church.

**Response:** The records of TEs called and approved to labor out of bounds at the May 3, 2022, and Sept. 20, 2022 minutes were corrected and recorded with the following in the October 2, 2023 minutes: 1)

Mr. [name omitted] confirms that he has full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church and that he will report to Presbytery annually on his work; 2) Mr. [name omitted] confirms that he has full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church and that he will report to Presbytery annually on his work; 3) Mr. [name omitted] confirms that he has full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church and that he will report to Presbytery annually on his work.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-3: Jan 25, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that needs further clarity for proper review. While exceptions on the application of the 4<sup>th</sup> Commandment are common (e.g. recreation clause), it is quite another thing to say that the Sabbath has been fulfilled and is to be celebrated everyday instead of weekly. This would seem to be out of accord with our system of doctrine in that it appears to radically redefine one of the Ten Commandments in a way that is contrary to our confessional standards and God's creation ordinance.

**Response:** The transfer candidate was approached for clarity. He submitted the following clarification, and this was recorded in the Oct 2, 2023 minutes: "My position is that of John Calvin as he stated in (1) Institutes 2:8:30-34; (2) Geneva Catechism Questions 166-184; and (3) Calvin's Commentary Colossians 2:16-17."

**Rationale:** Candidates response is neither in his own words (*RAO* 16-3.e.5), and does not address the issue raised by the 50<sup>th</sup> Assembly. Candidates response must be in his own words, and must address the apparent abrogation of the 4<sup>th</sup> commandment implied by the Sabbath being fulfilled, and it being celebrated everyday instead of on the Lord's Day.

44. That the Minutes of **Metropolitan New York** Presbytery: 53-9-4
- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 10, 2023; Mar 14, 2023; May 09, 2023; Aug 08, 2023; Sep 19, 2023; Oct 16, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Mar 09, 2021 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5) —** Stated differences not recorded in the minister's own words.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with GA and has corrected the record to clearly record the stated differences which were stated but recorded incorrectly. The minutes have been amended to reflect this.

- a) The record of the March 9th, 2021, stated meeting recorded the candidates responses in the 3rd person.
- b) M/S/C to amend the March 9, 2021, minutes with this response from the candidates: TE [name omitted] states that 'I take an exception to recreation on the Sabbath.' TE [name omitted] states that 'I take an exception to recreation on the Sabbath.' TE [name omitted] states that 'I take an exception to WCF 21:8 regarding recreation on the Sabbath.' (Approved unanimously)
- c) M/S/C to approve TE [name omitted] , TE [name omitted] and TE [name omitted] exceptions to the Westminster Standards as more than semantic, but not out of accord with any fundamentals of our system of doctrine (approved unanimously)

**Rationale:** The stated exceptions do not give any information as to the specific nature or the biblical rationale for the exceptions (BCO 21-4.e).

**Response:** TE [name omitted] stated difference  
*I take exception to WCF 21.8 and the corresponding sections in the Catechisms: WLC Q.117 and WSC Q.60, specifically the prohibitions of worldly recreations on the sabbath. The 4th commandment is clear that the sabbath is a blessing for creation and that, for mankind, one day out of seven is given by God to rest from labors and to worship him. I do not see a prohibition of worldly recreations expressed in Scripture. I believe it is in the scope of worship to enjoy God's creation and the fruits of labor (Genesis 2:2-3). We can enjoy appropriate recreation with celebration and reflection of God as part of rest and worship and keeping the sabbath holy. (Nehemiah 8:9-10)*

**M/S/C** his exception(s) to the Westminster Standards as more than semantic, but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine. (Approved Unanimously)

**M/S/C** to amend the minutes of March 9th, 2021 to include the updated stated differences of [name omitted] stated differences

*I take exception to the Westminster Confession 21.8 and the corresponding Larger Catechism 117 and Shorter Catechism 60. The Confession states that, "This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe a holy rest all the day from their own works, words, and thoughts, about their worldly employments and recreations." I whole heartedly agree with this statement and that Scripture also talks about the importance of keeping the Sabbath day holy and the importance of resting as well (Gen. 2:2-3; Exod. 16:23-30; 20:8-11; 31:15; Deut. 5:12-15). However, I do think that the language about recreation is a bit too restrictive and that recreation can actually be a form of rest and delighting in God, that can produce robust fellowship, and most importantly a celebration of who God is (Neh 8:9-10, 1 Chron 15:29).*

**M/S/C** his exception(s) to the Westminster Standards as more than semantic, but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine. (Approved Unanimously)

**M/S/C** to amend the minutes of March 9th, 2021 to include the updated stated differences of [name omitted] to work within their bounds as stated supply (approved Unanimously) (Appendix 11)

**2023-5: Jan 11, 2022 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with GA that presbytery failed to note the candidate's endorsement by the session of [church name omitted]. The endorsement was received by the Leadership Development Committee and came before the presbytery. The record has been amended. **M/S/C** to amend the January 11th, 2022, minutes that candidate [name omitted] received his session's endorsement from [church name omitted] to serve as a candidate of MNYP (approved unanimously)

**2023-6: Sep 20, 2022 (BCO 21-4.f)** — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that needs further clarity for proper review (WLC #183).

**Response:** I take exception to the *WLC* Q 183 where it says ‘nor for those that are known to have sinned the sin unto death’ I believe only God knows who these people are and cannot understand how we would implement the Apostle John’s admonition TODAY. M/S/C to amend the September 20th, 2022, minutes to include TE [name omitted]’s updated stated differences with the WS. (approved unanimously) M/S/C to approve his exception to the Westminster Standards as more than semantic, but not out of accord with any fundamentals of our system of doctrine (approved unanimously)

**2023-7: Nov 08, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and has corrected its minutes. M/S/C to amend the November 8th, 2022, minutes to include the minutes of the commission (approved unanimously) (Appendix 10)

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-3: Sep 20, 2022** (*WCF* 21-5; *WLC* 158; *BCO* 4-4; 8-5; 40-5; 58-4) — Presbytery delinquent to redress a Session who admitted to unconstitutional proceedings of: (1) permitting a woman to expound the Scriptures during a worship service on the Lord’s Day; (2) holding many worship services without preaching; and (3) serving the Lord’s Supper at many services without a preceding sermon.

**Response:** The matters referenced in this exception were referred to the SJC by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly per *BCO* 40-5.

**Rationale:** This matter is connected to, and is answered in reference to, item (g), below.

- f. **Find that the following response regarding the Standing Judicial Commission, Case No. 2023-13, be found unsatisfactory and inadequate:**

1. Trinity’s response to the questions proposed to them by MNYP from the report of the SJC.

**Response to the Metropolitan New York Presbytery:**

The Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church finds that it erred in allowing a woman to deliver the message during the Sunday

worship service on October 31, 2021. because doing so is inconsistent with our constitutional standards (*BCO* 4-4; 8-5; *WCF* 21.5; *WLC* 156 and 158). The Session did not intend to act contrary to our constitution in this matter. When the Senior Pastor notified the Session that he intended to invite a woman as a guest to deliver a “message” on Reformation Sunday, he advised the Session of his understanding at that time that such an invitation would not conflict with the *BCO* because the *BCO* had been interpreted to mean that the regular preaching of the Word needed to be done by ordained ministers and did not prohibit non-ordained men and women from occasionally giving a “message” in PCA churches.

In response to the MNYP’s request that the Session examine its views regarding women preaching the Word of God in public worship services in light of the PCA Constitution, the Session has reviewed the Constitution as well as the MNYP’s position set forth in the minutes of its August 8, 2023, meeting. The Session (including its Senior Pastor) has concluded that the interpretation of the *BCO* formerly held and described by the Senior Pastor when the invitation was extended is incorrect and that the invitation should not have been extended.

In summary, the Session of Trinity Church (including the Senior Pastor) believed that it was within our constitutional bounds to have a woman deliver an occasional message in the place of a sermon by an ordained minister. Our views on this matter have changed, and we believe our earlier view was incorrect. We now consider having a woman deliver a message to be contrary to our constitutional standards. The Session and the Senior Pastor assure the Presbytery that they will not commit this error again.

Accordingly, the Session hereby takes the following actions:

1. Agrees with and adopts the MNYP’s position set forth in the minutes of its August 8, 2023, meeting as its own. Specifically, it is the position of Trinity Presbyterian Church that:

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- a. An “exposition of the Word” by a woman shall not take the place of the ordinary sermon in public worship services.
  - b. Only qualified men should preach to God’s people during public worship services. We do not believe that the principle that “a woman can do whatever an non-ordained man can do” is to be applied to the preaching in public worship services (*BCO* 4-4, 8-5; *WCF* 21.5; *WLC* 156, 158).
  - c. It is permissible for non-ordained and unlicensed men to occasionally preach (*BCO* 19-1), but not for a woman to do so.
2. Directs that this response to the MNYP be communicated to the membership of the church no later than May 31, 2024, most likely at its April 21 congregational meeting.

Finally, the Session expresses its remorse for its error and for the trouble that it has brought to the MNYP and the PCA, and it humbly requests their forgiveness.

Adopted by the Session

February 13, 2024

### **Presbytery’s approval of Trinity’s response**

M/S/C MNYP presbytery approve and receive Trinity Presbyterian’s response to the questions.

M/S/C that these minutes be forwarded to RPR as MNYP response to the SJC ruling.

### **Presbytery’s Further Action at its May 14, 2024 Stated Meeting**

M/S/C that Presbytery completes its work of dealing with TE [name omitted] and the Session of [church name omitted] with the confirmation that their response to the Metropolitan New York Presbytery was communicated to their church at their April 21st congregational meeting, and that we report the

results to the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records for the 51st General Assembly.

**Rationale:** The SJC opinion entered the following decision with respect to this citation:

The SJC remits this matter to Metropolitan New York Presbytery with the injunction that they take up and dispose of the matter in a constitutional manner. (*OMSJC* 15-6.c) Metropolitan New York Presbytery has addressed this matter as indicated in Minutes of August 8, 2023 and September 19, 2023. The Presbytery shall complete its work of dealing with TE [name omitted] and the Session of [church name omitted], and report the results of that work to the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records for the 51<sup>st</sup> GA.

Metro New York has not disposed of the matter in a constitutional manner. The report made it clear that TE [name omitted] was formerly of the view that it was acceptable for a woman to preach a Sunday morning sermon in a PCA church.

This response is an admission of serious theological error. It admits not only a violation of the PCA's constitution, but of clear Scripture (e.g. 1 Tim. 2:12). Not only did TE [name omitted] hold and practice a grossly erroneous view, he taught the Session, and at least by implication, the congregation, of [church name omitted], according to his erroneous view.

Having received this confession, which unquestionably raised a strong presumption of guilt, the Presbytery had a duty to institute process against TE [name omitted] (*BCO* 31-2), which it failed to do. Given that TE [name omitted] has confessed his error, the Presbytery, after having instituted process, "may deal with him according to its discretion." This requires an evaluation of the considerations set forth in *BCO* 34-5, 34-6, and 34-7. Presbytery might also have conceivably dealt with TE [name omitted] via a case without process pursuant to *BCO* 38-1. However, there is a substantial open question concerning TE [name omitted]'s view of scripture that has not been addressed. There is a significant question



regarding the credibility of TE [name omitted]'s statement given the clear language of Scripture.

2. **Therefore, that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly:**

- a. Find that the Presbytery's response to SJC Case No. 2023-13 indicates the Presbytery's persistence in an error pursuant to *RAO* 16-10.c.;
- b. Cite the Metropolitan New York Presbytery to appear, per *RAO* 16-10.c. and *BCO* 40-5, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission pursuant to the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15, at a time and date appointed by the SJC; and
- c. Direct the CRPR Officers to appoint one or more representatives of the GA and Report (*OMSJC* 15.2) to present this case to the SJC.

All members of the Standing Judicial Commission who are serving on CRPR abstained from discussion and all votes with regard to Metropolitan New York.

45. That the Minutes of the **Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley:** 61-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Mar 20, 2023; May 02, 2023; Nov 07, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Feb 07, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of 6-month church membership or 1 month prior filing of application for men coming under care.  
**2024-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7; *BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual reports for the majority of men serving out of bounds or without call.  
**2024-3: Aug 01, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.e) — No record that Presbytery followed *BCO* 21-4.e (as amended at the 50th GA) in conducting an ordination examination.  
**2024-4: Aug 01, 2023** (*RONR* 9:34) — Committee empowered to act as a commission makes decisions via e-mail which does not constitute a deliberative assembly.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Feb 2, 2021; May 4, 2021** (*RONR* 9:34) — A commission conducted business by email, which does not constitute a deliberative assembly.

**Response:** The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley expresses our thanks to RPR for their careful work and for correcting us in regard to the proper practice of commissions appointed to do the work of presbytery. We regret our error and reminded commissions and committees that are tasked with commission responsibilities that they are to be sure that such work is done in a deliberative assembly per *RONR* 9:34. Again, thank you. Presbytery should ratify actions taken outside the deliberative assembly. Once again PMV thanks the CRPR committee for their work and diligence. We have ratified all previous records that were approved outside of a deliberative assembly, (Nov 7 minutes). As previously stated, we have changed our practice of approving minutes.

**Rationale:** Presbytery should ratify actions taken outside the deliberative assembly.

**Response:** Once again PMV thanks the CRPR committee for their work and diligence. We have ratified all previous records that were approved outside of a deliberative assembly, (Nov 7 minutes). As previously stated, we have changed our practice of approving minutes.

46. That the Minutes of **Missouri** Presbytery: *60-0-1*
- a. Be approved without exception: **Feb 11, 2023; Jul 15, 2023; Oct 17, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance:
    - 2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Annual report of interns not included.
    - 2024-3: Jan 17, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
    - 2024-4: Jan 17, 2023** (*BCO* 19-16) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirements not recorded.
    - 2024-5: General 2023** (*BCO* 13.9.b; 40-1) — Incomplete record of review of records of church sessions.

**2024-6: General 2023** (*BCO* 46-6; 13-7) — No record reflecting when a man who was transferred to another presbytery was received by that presbytery.

**2024-7: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**2024-8: Directory** (*RAO* 16-4.c.1) — No record of change of status from licensed to senior pastor.

**2024-9: Oct 07, 2023** (*BCO* 20-3; 20-6; 22-2) — No record of vote from congregation calling pastor or record of 4/5 majority required

**2024-10: General 2023** (*BCO* 46-6) — No recording regarding the reception of a certificate of dismissal from transferring presbytery.

**2024-11: Apr 18, 2023** (*BCO* 13-11; PP II.8; *BCO* 40) — Allegations against a pastor(s) and session received by presbytery not recorded in the presbytery minutes.

**2024-12: Jan 17, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c.4; *BCO* 13-6) — 3/4 vote for extraordinary clause not recorded.

**2024-13: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record that presbytery is assured that out of bounds TE has full freedom to maintain/teach doctrine of PCA.

**2024-14: Jan 17, 2023** (*BCO* 46-6) — No record that TE released from call and transferring to a different denomination was removed from the rolls.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Oct 22, 2022** (*BCO* 23-2; 13-1) — A minister who is honorably retired was released to the care of a church session.

**Response:** The following resolution was adopted by Missouri Presbytery at its October 17, 2023 stated meeting. 2310-06 MSP to amend Resolution 2210-22 to read “2210-22 MSP to change the call of TE [name omitted] from Professor, Covenant Seminary, to Honorably Retired.” [MOP 2023 Minutes, page 2393.]

47. That the Minutes of **Nashville** Presbytery: 62-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; May 12, 2023; Jul 06, 2023; Sep 26, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Aug 08, 2023** (*BCO* 38-2) — Presbytery approved a 38-2 request without a record of a “full deliberation” and not the “next stated meeting” from when the request was submitted. It also appears that Presbytery dissolved a call that had been previously dissolved (per the request letter).

**2024-2: Nov 12, 2023** (*BCO* 14-9.b; *BCO* 40-1) — No record of Presbytery action on review of Session records.

**2024-3: Feb 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-3: Aug 08, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation/(Session) concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Feb 8, 2021; Aug 10, 2021** (*BCO* 18-7) — No reasons given for removing candidates from rolls.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. In each case our committee recommended removal for valid reasons, but this fact is not recorded in our minutes. We have since modified our practice to comply with the requirement.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not yet recorded the reasons for the removal of these candidates from its rolls (*BCO* 18-7).

**Response:** In every case, the candidate was removed from the roll of candidates at his own request. We have recorded the fact with the names of the men in the minutes of November 14, 2023 and added a notation to the 2021 minutes.

**2023-2: Feb 8, 2022; Apr 12, 2022; Jul 18, 2022** (*BCO* 19-16) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement not recorded.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. In each case the court took notice of the requirements of *BCO* 19-16 and the required procedure was followed. The error is in the recording of the action. We have adjusted our recording to bring our minutes into compliance

**2023-3: May 3, 2022; Jul 18, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order; no record of 10-day notice.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. Notice for the May 3 called meeting was sent and received on April 22. Notice for the July 18 meeting was sent and received on July 8. We have since modified

our practice to record the dates and the call for the meeting verbatim in the minutes for each called meeting.

**2023-4: Nov 08, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. The August 28, 2022 minutes of the congregational meeting were made available to the presbytery and the church spoke through her commissioners at the meeting. Nevertheless, the action of the congregation to dissolve the call—though presented to the presbytery—is not recorded in our minutes. We have since modified our recording to reflect specific action taken by the session or congregation.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1)** — No record of review of records of church sessions.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. We have since amended our standing rules to create a particular committee charged with annual review of all session minutes and have elected the members to serve on the committee. The committee has completed a thorough review of session records and will submit its report for action at our 116<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting (November 14, 2023).

**Rationale:** The Committee to review Session Records reported at the November 2023 stated meeting with a sampling of the types of exceptions the committee noted in the minutes of Sessions from 2022, but no recommendations were brought forth for the Presbytery to adopt. Only the Presbytery or a commission formed for that purpose can cite a lower court with an exception to their minutes.

48. That the Minutes of **New Jersey** Presbytery: 66-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Mar 18, 2023; May 20, 2023; Sep 16, 2023; Nov 18, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023 (BCO 5-3.c)** — TE [name omitted] was called in a meeting to serve as the church planter of [church name omitted],

but was not made a member of the commission acting as that church's session.

**d. No response to previous assemblies required.**

49. That the Minutes of **New River** Presbytery: 62-0-0

**a.** Be approved without exception: **Mar 04, 2023**

**b.** Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**

**c.** Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Aug 05, 2023** (BCO 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's session.

**2024-2: Aug 05, 2023** (BCO 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**2024-3: Nov 04, 2023** (BCO 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.

**2024-4: Nov 04, 2023** (BCO 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**2024-5: Nov 04, 2023** (BCO 19-2) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**2024-6: Dec 11, 2022** (BCO 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded).

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-1: General** (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** We apologize for the delays regarding our churches' minutes—both in reviewing and in approving them. We are in the process of reviewing the minutes for both 2021 and 2022

**Rationale:** No report on progress provided or included in minutes.

**Response:** We apologize for the lack of specificity. To repeat what we previously noted: we have made significant progress since your review of our presbytery's 2022 minutes. On August 5, 2023, at the 148th stated meeting of New River Presbytery (NRP), the chairman of our Administrative Committee reported on said committee's review of session minutes. On November 4, 2023, at the 149th stated meeting of NRP, the chairman of our Administrative Committee once again discussed session minutes. Both of these instances are outlined in 2023 minutes from the respective stated meetings. Furthermore, the

discussion and review of session minutes was brought up in our 150th Stated Meeting, held on March 2, 2024, and session minutes will continue to be discussed in some of our subsequent stated meetings.

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** We apologize for not recording the review of records of our sessions, and will try to do better in the future. We have, however, made significant progress since your review of our presbytery's 2022 minutes. On August 5, 2023, at the 148th stated meeting of New River Presbytery (NRP), the chairman of our Administrative Committee reported on said committee's review of session minutes. On November 4, 2023, at the 149th stated meeting of NRP, the chairman of our Administrative Committee once again discussed session minutes. Both of these instances are outlined in 2023 minutes from the respective stated meetings. Furthermore, the discussion and review of session minutes is ongoing, and will be discussed in our 150th stated meeting.

**2023-2: General 2022** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No record in minutes of exceptions taken by GA.

**Response:** We respectfully disagree with this exception. The summary of our responses to exceptions made by General Assembly is as follows: 1) Exceptions from the 49th General Assembly – These were exceptions of the 2021 minutes of NRP. On March 4, 2023, at our 147th stated meeting, we responded to these. Although the response did not occur within the same calendar year as the exceptions (i.e., the exceptions occurred in 2022, but the response occurred in 2023), and such a delay is not recommended or advised (according to *RAO* 16-10.a), this delay is not forbidden; 2) Exceptions from the 50th General Assembly – these are exceptions of the 2022 minutes of NRP. The response to these exceptions has been delayed until March 2024. We believe, therefore, that this exception is unwarranted.

**2023-3: General 2022** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No response to the Assembly concerning disposition of an exception of substance.

**Response:** We respectfully disagree with this exception for the same reasons outlined in the preceding response

**2023-4: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-11; 40-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.7) — Minutes to called meeting not included.

**Response:** We apologize for the omission of the minutes from this called meeting. On March 2, 2024, NRP approved said minutes, and the approval will be noted in the minutes of our March 2 Stated Meeting

**2023-5: General 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** We have two TEs serving out of bounds.

1) One of them, TE [name omitted] , did give an oral report at the 146th Stated Meeting of NRP, held on November 5, 2022. This report was recorded in the minutes and reads as follows (and is [italicized]): *Chaplain [name omitted] – TE [name omitted] opened in prayer. He then gave an update on his ministry. M/s/c to allow him 5 more minutes to speak. He then shared a couple prayer requests, and then closed in prayer.*

Our stated clerk did not, however, explicitly note that TE [name omitted] is laboring *out of bounds*, and we apologize for that omission.

2) The other TE laboring out of bounds is [name omitted] *was then questioned by the RE's and TE's present on the Bible, theology of the Westminster standards, and the BCO. A motion was made from the C&C Committee to grant [name omitted] 's exception, which is: "I have reservations with the wording on "recreations" for the Sabbath Day. The Sabbath differs from other days in that it was set aside and explicitly stated to be kept holy. I understand that restful recreation that is honoring to the Lord and not done in a capricious way to be acceptable under the commandment given in Scripture. If the understanding of the prohibition of "recreations" is meaning not to watch football on television with my son or a restaurant with my family as violating the Standards, then I believe that goes beyond the intent of the command given in Scripture. I believe that the Sabbath was made for man and not man for the Sabbath and that it is an issue of the heart for what is an honoring day for the Lord for keeping it holy." The presbytery agreed (via the C&C Committee) to grant this exception, concluding, in the words of BCO 19-2, that "the applicant's declared difference is not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine because the difference is neither hostile to the system nor strikes at the vitals of religion."*



The minutes state clearly that the applicant's exception (which was recorded in his own words [*cf.* RAO 16-3.e.5]) was granted by the presbytery. Furthermore, the minutes explicitly use the language (i.e., the prescribed category) taken from BCO 19-2, that "the applicant's declared difference is not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine because the difference is neither hostile to the system nor strikes at the vitals of religion."

**2023-10: Nov 05, 2022 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** There were four men who came under care of New River Presbytery at this stated meeting. It was recorded in the minutes from this stated meeting, in Appendix C, that three of these four men had been members of the respective churches for longer than the six-month requirement. Even though the fourth candidate met the six-month membership requirement, there was no record of it in the minutes. For that we apologize, and our presbytery will try to do better recording this in the future.

50. That the Minutes of **New York State** Presbytery: 60-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; May 20, 2023; Sep 15, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 21, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 8-4)** — No record of annual report by TEs called to "needful work."

**Response:** The Shepherding Committee has received and considered an exception reported to you by the PCA RPR Committee regarding the 2022 Presbytery Minutes of the New York State Presbytery. This exception pointed out our failure to require yearly reports from all TEs designated as ministering either 'without call' or 'out-of-bounds.' We apologize for this failure to follow the clearly indicated procedure, and we have determined that we will require such yearly reports from now on. Note that not all the members of this committee were aware of this requirement, and this has been corrected. At our stated meeting on September 15, 2023 we approved this response statement to RPR. We believe that we have taken the

steps necessary to prevent it happening again. The committee authorized and presented three of these reports at the recent (September 16, 2023) NYSP meeting; they will be included in the final minutes. We are now tracking down the other TEs who have not made reports recently and we are informing them of the deficiency. At the next meeting (January 2024), we expect we will have all outstanding reports completed and approved. Thank you for your patience and forbearance.

**2023-2: Feb 26, 2022 (BCO 13-12)** — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded).

**Response:** The notice of the called meeting was sent to the Presbytery on January 25, 2022. It was not recorded in the minutes in oversight. But more than 10-days' notice was given.

**2023-3: Feb 26, 2022 (BCO 34-10)** — 2/3 vote for divesture of office requirement not recorded.

**Response:** The vote for divesture was unanimous. It was an oversight not to record this fact.

**2023-4: Feb 26, 2022 (BCO 34-10)** — Notice for grounds for proceeding against TE not in order (not indicated/recorded).

**Response:** Minutes note: "Committee motion to remove TE [name omitted] from the rolls of New York State Presbytery due to non-attendance for over 20 years and inability to make contact – approved." Stated Clerk checked with the Administration Committee in Atlanta and received a reply that the Administration Committee also had no record of any contact with TE [name omitted] nor had any contact information. Since no one in the Presbytery has any knowledge of this TE nor any way to contact him, this action amounts to cleaning up the Presbytery rolls.

**2023-5: May 21, 2022 (BCO 13-10)** — No record of transfer or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church associated with 60-day notice.

**Response:** On March 6, 2022, the temporary session of [church name omitted] met with the members of [church name omitted] to discuss our intention to ask the presbytery to dissolve [church name omitted] at our May 21, 2022 meeting. On March 20, 2022, the temporary session of [church name omitted] provided email

notification of the same to the members of [church name omitted]. Members were encouraged to transfer their membership to other particular or mission churches. At the May 21, 2022 meeting of the presbytery, in addition to dissolving [church name omitted], the presbytery placed remaining members under the oversight of a commission acting as a temporary session until such time as either a new congregation could be formed or such persons were dismissed to membership in another church, per *BCO* 13-10.3. We will make every effort to be more complete in our reporting in the future

**2023-6: May 21, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**Response:** Since this is a military chaplaincy, and the Presbytery is aware of the Chaplain's Manual of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel Policy and Guidance Handbook Policies for All Endorsed Chaplains (pp. 19–20), it was deemed redundant to document this in the minutes of the May 21, 2022 meeting. Since we now understand that you would like this identified specifically for military chaplains, we shall include the point that all TEs from our Presbytery who are approved to serve as military chaplains will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church, as documented in the Chaplain's Manual of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel Policy and Guidance Handbook Policies for All Endorsed Chaplains.

**2023-7: Sep 16-17, 2022** (*BCO* 25-11) — No record that Presbytery confirmed that a 30-day notice was given by Session for congregational meeting to withdraw from the denomination.

**Response:** The information concerning the 30-day notice of the congregational meeting at [church name omitted] was obtained by the Stated Clerk of New York State Presbytery, but not recorded in the entry in the September 16-17, 2022 minutes due to oversight.

51. That the Minutes of **North Florida** Presbytery: *63-0-1*
- a. Be approved without exception: **May 11, 2023; Aug 10, 2023; Aug 26, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023; Feb 09, 2023**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Nov 09, 2023** (BCO 21-4.c.(1)(b) ) — Incomplete record of ordination exam. **2024-2: Nov 09, 2023** (BCO 8-7) — No record of annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds
- d. **No response to previous assemblies required.**
- e. That the General Assembly find the February 4, 2024, letter from [name omitted] et al. is not a report of an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings” (BCO 40-5).  
**Rationale:** Without expressing an opinion as to whether the actions alleged were improper, they do not rise to the heightened standard of 40-5.

*RE Jay Neikirk abstained from discussion and all votes with regard to North Florida.*

52. That the Minutes of **North Texas** Presbytery: 63-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Feb 3-4, 2023; Aug 11-12, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: May 5-6, 2023** (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the minister’s/candidate’s own words.  
**2024-2: Nov 3-4, 2023** (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the minister’s/candidate’s own words.  
**2024-3: Nov 3-4, 2023** (BCO 21-4) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Feb 18-19, 2022** (BCO 21-4.c; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** *Regarding Mr. [name omitted]’s papers* —NTP approved the following on February 3, 2024: NTP records in its minutes that [name omitted] was in fact examined in May 2021 and February 2022 and approved according to each of the BCO 21-4 requirements for ordination.

Candidate under care of presbytery  
 Testimonials pertaining to candidate’s internship  
 Internship approved  
 College diploma(s)

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Seminary diploma(s)  
Thesis on theological topic approved by presbytery  
Exegetical study approved by presbytery  
Sermon preached before Presbytery  
Sermon approved by Presbytery  
Written call or letter certifying a call from a congregation or appropriate body  
Christian Experience  
Knowledge of both Greek and Hebrew (Exam or Seminary degree)  
Bible Content  
Theology  
Sacraments  
Church History and History of the PCA  
Principles and Rules of Government and Discipline of PCA  
No Stated Differences with Westminster Confession, and Catechisms  
Examination Sustained as a Whole  
Received into Presbytery

*Regarding examination of Mr. [name omitted] 's views--Mr. [name omitted]'s views (No Stated Differences) were approved in May, 2021 and the NTP Theological Examining Committee Report in the February 18-19, 2022 Docket (2022 Minutes Page 25 reports regarding Mr. Miller that upon his final examinations for ordination by the Theological Examining Committee, Mr. Miller had not changed his views. "Please note that [name omitted] 's views were received at his licensure exams at the May 2021 Presbytery meeting. His views have not changed." NTP believes this statement of the Theological Examining Committee satisfies the requirement of BCO 21.4.b.*

Mr. [name omitted] 's sermon was preached and approved on November 7, 2020. See 2021 Minutes Page 4, item 2. "M/S/A to receive and accept the sermons of Messrs. [Names Omitted]."

**2023-2: Aug 12-13, 2022 (BCO 21-4.f)** — Presbytery judged a stated difference as "merely semantic." This decision needs further clarity. At a minimum the difference appears to be an exception.

**Response:** During the oral floor exam, TE [name omitted] was questioned about his stated difference and the dialogue with presbyters

brought greater clarity to the appearance of his written statements. We believe there is a real purpose to the oral exams in addition to the written statements because they afford Presbytery an opportunity to examine the stated differences from more angles than what a written statement allows. For example, in the phrase “not only impossible” TE [name omitted] was acknowledging the inability of fallen humans to perfectly fulfil the biblical command. We found TE [name omitted]’s stated difference in this to result more from his own conception of what the Standards require and Presbytery discussion with him brought clarity to his understanding and provided the basis for Presbytery’s decision. Further, we believe *RAO* 16.3.e(5) allows Presbytery to determine how to classify the stated differences and does not specify that Presbytery record its rationale along with the classification.

**2023-3: Aug 12-13, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of a transfer exam for a TE coming from a different Presbytery.

**Response:** The 2022 Minutes Page 285 includes the report of the NTP Theological Examining Committee which states, “The committee examined Rev. [name omitted] for transfer into the North Texas Presbytery, to serve as pastor at [church name omitted]. The committee examined [name omitted] in the areas of Christian character, calling, differences with the standards, theology, sacraments, and church government.”The 2022 Minutes Page 223 record the action of NTP that “TE [name omitted] was examined in Christian experience and views for transfer. See 149th NTPSM Docket Page 55. MSA that, for [name omitted] , the North Texas Presbytery sustain his examination in all areas and approve his transfer into the North Texas Presbytery. (*BCO* 21.4)”

**2023-4: Aug 12-13, 2022** (*BCO* 18-3) — No record of candidate exam recorded.

**Response:** In the 2022 Minutes page 225, the action of NTP approving the candidates is likewise recorded with reference to the requirements of *BCO* 18-3. While the reference to *BCO* 18-3 was intended to refer to the elements of *BCO* 18-3 but may be insufficiently explicit, NTP did in fact examine the candidates according to the specific *BCO* 18-3 requirements of “experiential religion and motives for seeking the ministry” in the Stated Meeting.

**MSA that [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (BCO 18-3).**

**MSA that [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (BCO 18-3).**

Since our reference to *BCO* 18-3 in the report of the Candidates Committee and Minutes of the Stated Meeting has not been received by RPR as sufficiently explicit as to the examinations conducted, we will in the future list them individually along with citation of *BCO* 18-3.

**2023-5: Sep 17, 2022 (BCO 13-4; RAO 16-3.c.1)** — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** The purpose of the called meeting was recorded verbatim in the 2022 Minutes Page 225 as follows:

MSA to receive the complaint from a [church omitted] member regarding the Session decision concerning a columbarium as in order and timely filed.

MSA to call a special meeting to hear the complaint received in the previous motion.

Per the Moderator's recommendation, a meeting to hear the complaint is called for September 17 2022 at 9:00am.

The 2022 Minutes Page 341 records that at the September 17, 2022 Called Meeting, "Moderator gave background on the proceeding and the notice of the meeting." This item in the September 17, 2022 Called Meeting cited the "notice of the meeting" which was included in the call for the meeting on August 19, 2022, "to hear the complaint."

So the purpose of the meeting was recorded verbatim in the minutes (2022 Minutes Page 225) and then that notice was cited in the September 17 meeting. We do not read *RAO* 16-3.c.1 to specify the sequence in which the purpose of the meeting must be recorded verbatim in the minutes of Presbytery.

In future minutes of Called Meetings, we will include a restatement of the purpose of the called meeting.

**2023-6: Sep 17, 2022 (BCO 43-10)** — Presbytery remanded a complaint to a lower court expressing its opinion rather than giving instructions for a new hearing.

**Response:** How does NTP bring a past Action into conformity with RPR? M/S/A that Presbytery refer the complaint back to the

lower court for a new hearing with expression of Presbytery's concerns about the controversial nature of the question and because of the Scriptural preference for burial.

**2023-7: Nov 4-5, 2022 (BCO 18-3)** — No record of candidate exams recorded.

**Response:** The 2022 Minutes Page 405 includes the report of the NTP Candidates Committee and states, "II.4. We examined Candidate and Intern Applicants (*BCO* 18-3)." The reference to (*BCO* 18-3) is the committee's way of indicating that he was examined in accord with the requirements of *BCO* 18-3 which include experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry.

For each Candidate, the committee reported that:

IV.1. That [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (*BCO* 18-3).

IV.3. That [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (*BCO* 18-3).

IV.6. That [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (*BCO* 18-3).

In the 2022 Minutes page 356, the action of NTP approving the candidates is likewise recorded with reference to the requirements of *BCO* 18-3. While the reference to *BCO* 18-3 was intended to refer to the elements of *BCO* 18-3 but may be insufficiently explicit, NTP did in fact examine the candidates according to the specific *BCO* 18-3 requirements of "experiential religion and motives for seeking the ministry" in the Stated Meeting. Minutes Page 356

**MSA as an omnibus:**

**That [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (*BCO* 18-3).**

**That [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (*BCO* 18-3).**

**That [name omitted] [church name omitted] be received as a Candidate (*BCO* 18-3).**

Since our reference to *BCO* 18-3 in the report of the Candidates Committee and Minutes of the Stated Meeting has not been received by RPR as sufficiently explicit as to the examinations conducted, we



will in the future list them individually along with citation of *BCO* 18-3.

53. That the Minutes of **Northern California** Presbytery: 62-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Oct 06, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: Feb 03, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved.
  - 2024-2: Feb 03, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2024-3: Apr 12, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12; *RONR* (12th ed.) 25:10) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded).
  - 2024-4: May 05, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2024-5: May 05, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2024-6: May 05, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2024-7: May 05, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.
  - 2024-8: May 05, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved.
  - 2024-9: Aug 02, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12; *RONR* (12th ed.) 25:10) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded).
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**
  - 2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b) — No record of Presbytery reviewing Session minutes.

**Response:** From the response to the 50th General Assembly, which was found acceptable: “In 2022, although we made progress in asking churches to exchange session minutes with another church and to review each other’s records, the presbytery did not review the results of those inter-church reviews. The 2022 presbytery minutes will not reflect a presbytery review of session records. At the February 2023 presbytery meeting, we have approved a plan with a timeline

each year for the interchurch review of session minutes, for the sessions to submit reports of the session minute reviews to presbytery, for the presbytery to review the reports and for the presbytery to vote on exceptions of substance. Our Recording Clerk is overseeing this process.” This process is in place and will be reflected in the Presbytery’s minutes for 2023.

**2023-2: Feb 04, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4, *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam. Approval of theses and sermon not recorded.

**Response:** The man in question was transferring from a sister denomination, with a PhD and many years of faithful service. The presbytery applied the extraordinary clause on the basis of his prior experience, in lieu of requiring theses from him, but we failed to record the vote of the presbytery. We will correct the record, and will be more diligent in the future.

**2023-3: Feb 04, 2022** (*BCO* 38-3) — No record of following *BCO* 38-3 for two ministers withdrawing to another denomination.

**Response:** *BCO* 38-3.a requires, “if at the time of the attempt to withdraw he is in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, his new membership acknowledged, and his name removed from the roll.” Both men were in good standing, and transferring to NAPARC denominations, which ‘irregularity’ was recorded for each in the minutes referenced (though the word “irregularity” was not used). Since the NAPARC Agreement on Transfer of Members, clause 1, governs these transfers, the Presbytery believes the record as presented in the minutes meets the Constitutional requirements.

**2023-4: Feb 4, 2022; May 6, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** The candidates in question had, at the time of their acceptance under care of the presbytery, each been members in good standing for the requisite period. This was verbally noted by the Chair of the Committee, but was not recorded in the minutes. We will amend the record and strive to be more complete in the future.

**2023-5: Feb 4, 2022; May 6, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Between these two meetings, there were six ministers requesting to resign, and none of the resignations were contested. For

four of the six, the congregation had already voted, but the word “uncontested” was omitted in the record. For the final two, the congregational vote was to take place very soon after the Presbytery meeting(s), but the RE delegates from the churches in question represented that they expected the votes to be unanimous, or nearly so (as indeed, they were). Nevertheless, we failed to make clear in the record that these were not contested: we will amend the record and will strive to be more complete in the future.

**2023-6: Oct 07, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**Response:** The minister in question is serving at an organization well-known to the Presbytery, and his call specifically included his full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. However, that freedom was not recorded separately in the minutes. We will correct the oversight and be more complete in the future

54. That the Minutes of **Northern Illinois** Presbytery: 64-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Nov 16, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual report of ministers without call.

**2024-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-4) — No record of annual report of minister appointed to a needful work.

**2024-3: Jan 14, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-4: Jan 14, 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**2024-5: Jan 14, 2023** (*BCO* 22-6) — No record that the Session requested the renewal of Stated Supply.

**2024-6: Feb 23, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-7: Feb 23, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved.

**2024-8: Feb 23, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-9: May 09, 2023** (*BCO* 18-7) — Candidates dismissed from roll without record of informing former candidates.

**2024-10: May 09, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-11: Jul 25, 2023** (*BCO* 38-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.8) — Record of Case without process not recorded in minutes.

**2024-12: Sep 09, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-13: Sep 09, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record of four-fifths (4/5) majority vote of congregation on petition to request that an associate pastor succeed the senior pastor.

**d. No response to previous assemblies required.**

55. That the Minutes of **Northern New England** Presbytery: 62-0-0

**a.** Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 21, 2023; May 20, 2023; Oct 21, 2023; Dec 09, 2023**

**b.** Be approved with exception of form: **Feb 04, 2023**

**c.** Be approved with exception of substance: **None**

**d. No response to previous assemblies required.**

56. That the Minutes of **Northwest Georgia** Presbytery: 65-0-1

**a.** Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 21, 2023; Jan 21, 2023; Jan 21, 2023**

**b.** Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**

**c.** Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Apr 04, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1) — No record commission submitted “complete minutes” of its meetings.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-2: Aug 20, 2022** (*BCO* 13-11) — Complaint sent to Presbytery not recorded in Presbytery’s minutes.

**Response:** The Northwest Georgia Presbytery agrees with the exception. The minutes of the August 20, 2022 Stated Meeting of the NWGP have been amended to include the Exhibits attached to the July

21, 2022 letter sent to the Presbytery. The letter and exhibits are also submitted to the CRPR as a separate PDF attachment titled “[name omitted] et al Complaint 07.21.22”. The Stated Clerk regrets this oversight and promises to be more careful in the future. [Exhibits 1, 2, and 3 of the letter on p. 25 need to be included for review.] Please see the additional pdf documents.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: Apr 13, 2021 (BCO 43-8)** — If a complaint is properly filed, it shall be heard by the Presbytery. A complaint may not be denied without a hearing except on narrow administrative grounds.

**Response:** At the April 13, 2021 meeting of Presbytery, there was an indication that the complainant intended to withdraw his complaint and that he would not pursue it any further nor elevate it to a higher court. The complainant communicated such in an email to Presbytery’s Stated Clerk on April 16, 2021. The Stated Clerk regrets the failure to record this in the minutes.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not rescinded the unconstitutional denial of the complaint.

**Response:** The Northwest Georgia Presbytery agrees with the exception. A complaint, timely filed and in order, must be given a hearing (*BCO* 43-8). The Presbytery therefore erred in denying the complaint without a hearing. However, it is not possible for the Presbytery to correct its error since the complaint has been withdrawn by the complainant. This action to withdraw the complaint was taken by the complainant on April 16, 2021 in a letter emailed to the Stated Clerk for circulation to the NWGP (and submitted to the CRPR as a separate PDF attachment titled “[name omitted] Withdrawal of Complainant”). There is therefore no complaint before the Presbytery to take up or otherwise correct. Nevertheless, the Presbytery regrets its error and promises to adjudicate all complaints it may receive in the future in strict adherence to the provisions of the *Book of Church Order*. (The Presbytery also adopted an apology to the complainants in the above cases and directed its Stated Clerk to deliver the apology

to them. The apology is submitted to the CRPR as a separate PDF attachment titled “NWGP Ltr to Complainants 1.24.24”)

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery serves as an example to others in the way it apologized to the Complainants for its incorrect actions, but Presbytery has not rescinded the unconstitutional denial of the complaint. Acknowledgement of abandonment or withdrawal should only come after the unconstitutional action has been rescinded because the alleged abandonment or withdrawal occurred after the unconstitutional dismissal by the Presbytery.

**2023-1: Apr 05, 2022** (*BCO* 43-8) — Timely and orderly complaints (3) denied without a hearing.

**Response:** The Northwest Georgia Presbytery agrees with the exception. A complaint, timely filed and in order, must be given a hearing (*BCO* 43-8). The Presbytery erred in adopting the decision of its judicial commission in the instant case because the judicial commission made its recommendation without holding a hearing. However, it is not possible for the Presbytery to correct this error since the case (one which consolidated three complaints) has already been appealed to and ruled upon by the SJC in two separate decisions (SJC 2022-16 [name omitted], et al. v. NWGP, & SJC 2022-05 [name omitted] et al. v. NWGP). Even if the Presbytery could rehear a case subsequently decided by the higher court, the complaint is now moot (as the SJC ruled in both above cases) since the underlying issue in the consolidated cases was resolved when the [church name omitted] Session dismissed all charges against the accused Ruling Elders and ended the judicial process. Nevertheless, the Presbytery regrets its error and promises to adjudicate all complaints it may receive in the future in strict adherence to the provisions of the *Book of Church Order*. (The Presbytery also adopted an apology to the complainants in the above cases and directed its Stated Clerk to deliver the apology to them. The apology is submitted to the CRPR as a separate PDF attachment titled “NWGP Ltr to Complainants 1.24.24”)

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery serves as an example to others in the way it apologized to the Complainants for its incorrect actions, but Presbytery has not rescinded the unconstitutional denial of the

complaints. Acknowledgement of judicial mootness should only come after the unconstitutional action has been rescinded because the action of the higher court occurred after the unconstitutional dismissal by the Presbytery.

- f. That the General Assembly** Find that the April 22, 2024, letter from [name omitted] is not a report” of an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings” (*BCO* 40-5).

**Rationale:** To the extent that unconstitutional actions may be alleged, they are being redressed through the constitutional process of review and control (*BCO* 40-3), particularly through CRPR’s recommendation that one of NWGA Presbytery’s responses to an exception of substance be found unsatisfactory (see [2022-1], above).”

*RE Jay Neikirk abstained from discussion and all votes with regard to Northwest Georgia.*

57. That the Minutes of **Ohio** Presbytery: 61-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Feb 04, 2023; May 06, 2023; Oct 07, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-6) — No annual report from candidates given.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Feb 05, 2022** (*BCO* 21-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — No record of Presbytery approving the call to a TE [name omitted] whose status was changed.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and has corrected its actions by approving the call to TE [name omitted] at the October 2023 Stated meeting of the Ohio Presbytery and appointing a commission to install him to that call. The Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future

**2023-2: May 07, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2.a, d) — Incomplete record of a licentiate examination.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception that we had an incomplete record of a licentiate examination. Since we have already ordained TE [name omitted], we cannot correct our mistake

with regard to his previous licensure. It has been our practice to consider under care examinations “on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry” (*BCO* 18-3) as sufficient to fulfill the licensure requirement of “statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel” (*BCO* 19-23.a.). However, we will heed the GA’s counsel going forward that “[t]hese examinations are not interchangeable, but require increasingly close examination of the character of the candidate” (Commissioner’s Handbook 50GA 4003). The Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future to not only fulfill all the requirements of the licentiate examination, but also make sure that our records adequately show that work.

**2023-3: Sep 30 - Oct 1, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4.c.4) — Incomplete record of ordination examination.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception that our records are incomplete with regard to the Ordination Examination of Candidate [name omitted]. The Ohio Presbytery took action on October 7, 2023, to approve his sermon. The Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future.

58. That the Minutes of **Ohio Valley Presbytery:** 59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 28, 2023; Apr 11, 2023; May 16, 2023; Oct 17, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Feb 15, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2.d) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. We call the Committee’s attention to Attachment 22-X of the Minutes of the meeting in question (15 February 2022 Special Meeting), the Report of the Candidates and Credentials Committee (C&C), p. ii, Item B.4. which says that the Committee voted to recommend that Presbytery “[a]pprove [the licensure candidate’s] sermon as meeting the requirements of licensure and ordination.” While the word “written” is absent from that recommendation, it is our practice for a candidate for licensure to “[p]rovide his written sermon on an assigned passage of Scripture embodying both explanation and application” to



C&C and to then to “present orally his sermon or exhortation before Presbytery” (citations from *BCO* 19-2.d.). The reference in Attachment 22-X demonstrates that a records of his providing the written sermon does exist, though we did not explicitly identify it in our Minutes as the written copy, which we will do in the future to avoid additional misunderstanding.

59. That the Minutes of **Pacific** Presbytery: 60-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Mar 09, 2023; May 02, 2023; Oct 03, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-3) — Incomplete record of review of records of church Sessions.  
**2024-2: Jan 28, 2023** (PP 6) — No record that members of tempory session were called by the congregation.  
**2024-3: Nov 29, 2023** (PP 6) — No record that members of tempory session were called by the congregation.
- d. **No response to previous assemblies required.**

60. That the Minutes of **Pacific Northwest** Presbytery: 63-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Oct 13, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Feb 02, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.  
**2024-2: Feb 02, 2023** (*BCO* 19-16) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requiremetns not recorded.  
**2024-3: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 43-8) — Timely and orderly complaint dismissed without a hearing.  
**2024-4: May 19, 2023** (PP 6) — No record that members of interim/provisional Session were called by congregation.  
**2024-5: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relation.  
**2024-6: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the candidate’s own words.

**2024-7: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 19-6) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirements not recorded.

**2024-8: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exams.

**2024-9: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.

**2024-10: May 19, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-11: Oct 12, 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record that Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of the church.

**2024-12: Oct 12, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-13: Oct 12, 2023** (*BCO* 13-2) — No record of TE laboring out of bounds with concurrence of Presbytery within whose bounds he labors.

**2024-14: Oct 12, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**2024-15: General 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-2: May 20-21, 2021** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer exam.

**Response:** Respectfully, Presbytery disagrees with the citation, and we regard the entry in our May 2021 Minutes (below) to be an adequate record of the transfer exam, which was the only such exam at the May 2021 meeting. However, in the future PCA transfer exams, we will record verbatim: "The transferring PCA minister was examined on Christian experience, and also touching his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government." Hopefully, that addresses the concern in the GA citation. Here is the excerpt from p. 43 of PNW's 2021 Records: "Transfer Exam: [name omitted] . Bio ... Mr. [name omitted] holds a BA from Covenant College and an MDiv from RTS Orlando. He is a member of New Jersey Presbytery and has served most recently as [call omitted]. Motion: to examine Rev. [name omitted] on his experience and views, per *BCO* 13-6. Adopted.

Motion: to arrest the exam. Adopted. Rev. [name omitted] expressed the following difference from the Westminster Standards: ... Recommendation: That Presbytery judge Mr. [name omitted]'s difference to be more than semantic but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine (because the difference is neither hostile to the system nor strikes at the vitals of religion). Adopted In accordance with Standing Rule 2.51, the Presbytery entered closed session for the completion of Rev. [name omitted]'s transfer exam. Recommendation: To approve the call of Rev. [name omitted] [to] [church name omitted]. Adopted, on the condition that the terms of call be changed to 4 weeks of vacation.

**Rationale:** All specific requirements of transfer exam have not been listed (*RAO* 16-3.e.5).

**Response:** PNW second response, to 51<sup>st</sup> GA: The transferring PCA minister was examined on Christian experience, and also touching his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. (*BCO* 13-6)”

**2023-1: May 19-20, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** PNW first response, to 51<sup>st</sup> GA: We disagree with this citation. Here is what the Minutes record: [Committee Recommendation] “That Presbytery approve the request of TE [name omitted] and dissolve his call as Associate Pastor at [church name omitted]. At a meeting on March 13, 2022, the congregation adopted a motion to notify Presbytery that it did not contest the request.” (Emphasis added.)

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: Feb 05, 2021** (*BCO* 20, 21) — No record that TE, whose call changed from Assistant to Associate, was installed as Associate Pastor.

**Response:** Presumably the citation refers to the excerpt below from PNW's 2021 Records Package (p. 30): "Recommendation: To approve TE [name omitted] change from Assistant to Associate Pastor at [church name omitted]. Adopted." TE [name omitted] was installed as Associate Pastor at [church name omitted] on Sunday morning, April 18, 2021. The Commission included TEs [name omitted] and

[name omitted], along with REs [name omitted] and [name omitted]. We have attached those Commission minutes to our October 2022 Minutes as well as to this Response.

**Rationale:** Response says that the Commission minutes were attached to their October 2022 Minutes and also attached to this report. Minutes were not included for review. (*RAO 16-10.b.1*)

**Response:** PNW second response, to 51st GA: Our Records indicate TE [name omitted] was properly installed as Associate Pastor at [church name omitted] in Bellevue Washington on April 18, 2021 by Presbytery's Commission of TE [name omitted], TE [name omitted], RE [name omitted] and RE [name omitted] .

**Rationale:** Minutes for a commission to install must be submitted for review. If the Commission minutes are missing, they need to be recreated.

61. That the Minutes of **Palmetto Presbytery:** *64-0-0*

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Feb 09, 2023; Nov 09, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: May 11, 2023 (BCO 20-8)** — No record commissioners appointed by the church presented and prosecuted the call of a TE before Presbytery.

**2024-2: Aug 10, 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record Presbytery cited the church to appear by its commissioners to show cause why the resignation of a TE should be accepted.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-2: May 13, 2021 (BCO 19-1)** — No record of licensure exam.

**Response:** Mr. [name omitted] was examined for licensure. Because he had been previously examined in Christian Experience and Call to the Ministry as part of his examination for candidate status, he was not reexamined in these two areas. His exam included Bible knowledge, theology, and church government. The minutes of May 13, 2021 of the Licensure exam of [name omitted] do show examination in the three areas of English Bible, Theology, and Church Government. See below: 1) 22-22. That [name omitted]'s examination in English Bible be sustained. MSC; 2) 22-25. That [name omitted]'s

examination in Theology be sustained. MSC; 3) 22-26. That [name omitted]'s examination in Church Government be sustained. MSC.; 4) 22-27. That [name omitted]'s written sermon be approved. MSC; 5) 22-28. That [name omitted]'s preached sermon be approved. MSC; 6) 22-29. That [name omitted]'s examination for licensure in all its parts and be sustained and he be granted licensure by Palmetto Presbytery and added to the roll of licentiates of the presbytery. MSC.

**Rationale:** The examination on Christian experience and inward call in *BCO* 19-2 is not the same as in *BCO* 18-3.

**Response:** For several years Palmetto Presbytery has understood the personal qualifications in *BCO* 18-3 and 19-2 to be synonymous and therefore did not require a re-examination in those areas in the later steps toward ordination. We submit to the interpretation of the RPR of the non-synonymous nature of 18-3 and 19-2 and have now made it our standard operating procedure to examine candidates with 3 different levels of scrutiny and expectation in the Christian experience area: (1) candidacy, (2) licensure, and (3) ordination and will make sure that our minutes reflect this difference. TE [name omitted] has transferred to another Presbytery so we cannot reexamine him.

**2022-3: May 13, 2021 (BCO 15-2)** — A commission to ordain and install must have a minimum of two TEs and two REs for a quorum.

**Response:** (In approving the installation commission for [name omitted]) Presbytery erred in approving the commission with only 1 ruling elder. We will make sure that each commission in the future has at least 2 ruling elders and 2 teaching elders

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery took any action to ratify the actions of an improperly constituted commission.

**Response:** Palmetto Presbytery recognizes its error (we are unsure if this was a typographical error or one of serious oversight) and requests that since Chaplain (CPT) [name omitted] has been serving as a PRCC-endorsed U.S. Army chaplain for two years since the ordination, that Presbytery be forgiven for the error and that his ordination not be invalidated.

**2022-4: May 13, 2021; Aug 12, 2021; Nov 11, 2021 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16- 3.e.5)** — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** It has not been the practice of reexamining those who have been licensed by this Presbytery in the specific areas already covered. When the licensure and ordination exams for each of these three men: [name omitted] , [name omitted] , and [name omitted] , are compared, our minutes demonstrate that each was examined and approved in Christian experience, Greek and Hebrew (by seminary transcript), Bible content, theology, sacraments, Church history and the history of the PCA, Church Government and Discipline, the writing of a theological thesis, the writing of an exegesis paper, a preached sermon, and their accord with the Westminster standards. We did not mention their undergraduate degrees which were presupposed by their seminary or graduate degrees. We mentioned [name omitted]'s successful completion of Greek at Hebrew in seminary but should have made it clear that he is a graduate of RTS. It was noted that each had successfully completed the internship requirements.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not demonstrated that each candidate for ordination was examined in experiential religion, with an emphasis on personal character and family management, as required by *BCO* 21-4.c (1) (a).

**Response:** All three men were examined regarding their personal character and family management by the Candidates and Credentials Committee and the Presbytery, though that fact was not noted in the Presbytery minutes. For several years Palmetto Presbytery has understood the personal qualifications in *BCO* 18.3 and 19.2 to be synonymous and therefore did not require a re-examination in those areas in the later steps toward ordination. We submit to the interpretation of the RPR of the non-synonymous nature of 18-3 and 19-2 and have now made it our standard operating procedure to examine candidates with 3 different levels of scrutiny and expectation in the Christian experience area: (1) candidacy, (2) licensure, and (3) ordination and will make sure that our minutes reflect this difference.

**2022-5: May 13, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record (or unclear record) of ordination exam.

**Response:** The Presbytery minutes state clearly that Mr. [name omitted] was examined in the three areas which are required for ordination after one has been licensed. 1) 22-30. That Mr. [name omitted]'s examination in Sacraments be sustained. MSC. 2) 22-31.

That Mr. [name omitted]’s examination in Rules of Discipline be sustained. MSC. 3) 22-32. That Mr. [name omitted]’s examination in Church History and the History of the PCA be sustained. MSC. 4) 22-36. That Mr. [name omitted]’s examination for ordination in all its parts and as a whole be sustained and he be instructed to sign the ministerial obligation forms and proceed to ordination. MSC. The RPR has not cited our Presbytery previously for assuming that the approval of an examination implies that he was examined in the particular area.

**Rationale:** Licensure requires a “statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel” (*BCO* 19-2.a). Ordination, requires “A careful examination as to...his acquaintance with experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management (Based on the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1–7, and Titus 1:6–9)” (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1).(a)). Thus, questions for ordination are different from questions for licensure, requiring a higher level of Presbytery’s scrutiny. Furthermore, “No Presbytery shall omit any of these parts of trial for ordination except in extraordinary cases, and then only with three-fourths (3/4) approval of Presbytery” (*BCO* 21-4.c).

**Response:** For several years Palmetto Presbytery has understood the personal qualifications in *BCO* 18-3 and 19-2 to be synonymous and therefore did not require a re-examination in those areas in the later steps toward ordination. We submit to the different interpretation of the RPR of the non-synonymous nature of 18-3 and 19-2 and have now made it our standard operating procedure to examine candidates with 3 different levels of expectation in the Christian experience area: (1) candidacy, (2) licensure, and (3) ordination and will make sure our minutes reflect this difference

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Palmetto Presbytery confesses that it has not been consistent in requiring reports from teaching elders laboring outside of bounds. The motion was moved, seconded, and carried in the meeting of Presbytery on November 9, 2023 that (1) those TE [name omitted] be reminded of their duty to report to Presbytery at least annually (*BCO*, 8-7) and (2) the Presbytery MTW Committee be reminded of its duty (Presbytery ByLaws, Article VII, J, 6) to oversee

men [name omitted] and that they be tasked to carry out this responsibility, at least in part, by obtaining reports from TE [name omitted] as required by the *BCO*, and report back to Presbytery (concerning both those TEs who have provided a report and those who have not) at each quarterly meeting, stating that these reports are on file.

**2023-2: May 12, 2022; Aug 11, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** The Presbytery confesses its error in these details. The motion was moved, seconded, and carried in the meeting of Presbytery on November 9, 2023 May 12, 2022, previously adopted, be amended so that 26-57 states, “That the pastoral relationship between TE [name omitted] , as Assistant Pastor, and [church name omitted] be dissolved by mutual consent, and that he remain on the rolls of Palmetto Presbytery without call effective June 4, 2022. The Presbytery has written notification that the session of [church name omitted] has approved the dissolution of the relationship of assistant pastor between T. E. [name omitted] and the church. MSC.” The motion was moved, seconded, and carried in the meeting of Presbytery on November 9, 2023 August 11, 2022, previously adopted, be amended so that 27-24 states, “That the relationship of associate pastor between TE [name omitted] and [church name omitted] be dissolved, by mutual request, and that he be released to Evangel Presbytery, pending his acceptance by that Presbytery. NOTE: Pastor [name omitted] of [church name omitted] affirmed that the dissolution of this call was by mutual consent of the congregation and TE [name omitted] , and the Presbytery has a copy of the minutes of the congregational meeting in which the vote was taken to approve the dissolution of the call of TE [name omitted] as associate pastor, which motion was passed.” MSC. It was moved, seconded, and carried in the meeting of Presbytery on November 9, 2023 that Presbytery confesses that in its minutes of August 11, 2022, previously adopted, in regard to 27-28 which states, “That the relationship of assistant pastor between TE [name omitted] , [church name omitted], be dissolved, by mutual request, effective 9/1/22. NOTE: Pastor [name omitted] of [church name omitted] affirmed that the dissolution of this call was by mutual consent between the Session and TE [name omitted] , MSC,” it did not request an official



confirmation from the session of [church name omitted] with a ruling elder present to represent the session. We will endeavor to do so in the case of all future examinations. It was moved, seconded, and passed at its meeting on November 9, 2023 that the Presbytery charge the Church and Ministerial Health Committee that when a resignation from a teaching elder is received from one of the churches, the church must have a commissioner present at Presbytery to verify of the congregation's or the session's approval of the resignation

**2023-3: Aug 11, 2022 (BCO 21-7)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam: no record of sermon preached to presbytery.

**Response:** It was moved, seconded, and carried in the meeting of Palmetto Presbytery on November 9, 2023 that under Motion 27-13, previously adopted, concerning the ordination examination of Mr. [name omitted], the Presbytery was accepting Mr. [name omitted]'s preached sermon which was approved by Presbytery as part of his licensure exam on May 12, 2022

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: Feb 21, 2021 (BCO 15-3; 31-10; 34; 36)** — Censure inflicted by a judicial commission without process being instituted or a judgment approved by the Presbytery.

**Response:** In the judicial case concerning T. E. [name omitted] he consented to the recommendation made by the Judicial Committee for definite suspension. He has pleaded neither guilty nor not guilty to the charges made; the Presbytery is waiting for the decision of the civil court before it deals decisively with this case. However, Presbytery should have made clearer in its minutes of the executive session that "MSC" means that the motion was made, seconded, and carried by Presbytery.

**Rationale:** Presbytery's response does not address the issue. A Presbytery may suspend a minister from office following the conclusion of judicial process; or, under 31-10, he may be suspended from his official functions while under process. Presbytery has not indicated that the minister is under process.

**Response:** The minister in question had already requested and been granted suspension from office by an act of Presbytery on

2/11/2021 Minutes, Attachment E) and remained under suspension from office, meaning that he could not rightly exercise any of the functions of an ordained teaching elder. The judicial process in our Presbytery had begun with this suspension and was intensified when further evidence surfaced of his offenses; the Presbytery deemed it wise not to further the process until the teaching elder's case had been adjudicated in the civil court. The civil case took an unusual amount of time for the adjudication to take place, and in the end the teaching elder took an Alford plea which is allowed in civil cases by the Supreme Court of the U.S. but not in our church courts. At the specific request of and with the approval of the teaching elder, the church trial was postponed until after the civil case had been settled. The civil case was concluded and the Presbytery in its meeting of May 11, 2023, resumed process against this teaching elder. Arraignment was set for the August 10, 2023 meeting of Presbytery. The teaching elder did not appear, and a motion was made empowering the Stated Clerk to appoint a Judicial Commission to bring the matter to a conclusion and report back to the Presbytery. Furthermore, it was moved, seconded, and carried in the meeting of Palmetto Presbytery on November 9, 2023 that this action of the presbytery on 11/9/23 be added to this response to GA/RPR by March 15, 2024.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not adequately shown that the TE was suspended under one of only two methods prescribed in the *BCO*: (1) as a censure or (2) as an administrative act toward a teaching elder already under process (*BCO* 31–10). The *BCO* does not permit a presbytery to suspend a teaching elder because he requests to be suspended, nor as the first act of process.

62. That the Minutes of **Pee Dee** Presbytery:

59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Apr 22, 2023; Jul 27, 2023; Oct 26, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Sep 26, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Jan 26, 2023** (*BCO* 31-2; *BCO* 12-5.a) — In adopting recommendation No 1 of the commission, the presbytery constituted an investigative commission under *BCO* 31-2 to investigate several matters, including “to investigate matters surrounding a scandalous

incident involving an officer and two other members of Surfside PCA.” Absent accepting a reference from the session, the presbytery has no authority to conduct a 31-2 investigation into anyone other than a TE.

**d. No response to previous assemblies required.**

63. That the Minutes of **Philadelphia** Presbytery: 63-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Feb 07, 2023; Sep 16, 2023; Nov 09, 2023; Dec 05, 2023; Dec 19, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 20, 2023; May 20, 2023; Aug 24, 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Mar 18, 2023** (BCO 43-3) — Complaint from lower court (church Session) not included in regular meeting minutes or executive session minutes.

**2024-2: General 2023** (BCO 13.9.b; BCO 40-1) — No record of review of records of church sessions.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Mar 20, 2021** (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5) — Licensure candidate stated that he disagrees with the “strictness” of the Westminster Standards’ view of the Sabbath but is not clear on what his stated difference is. WCF 21.8, WLC 117, 119 WSC 60, 61 “I take exception to WCF 21.8 in that I don’t think that Scripture requires as strict of an observance of the Sabbath as the confessions seem to portray. Taking Matthew 12 as exegetical support, Jesus healed, and told the healed to pick up and go home. Also, to carry the spirit of Mark 2:27, Sabbath should be focused on spiritual rest and corporate worship, not mere outward action. But of course the two affect each other. I take exception to the strictness of the confessions.”

**Response:** The Philadelphia Presbytery, in considering the entirety of the candidate’s fully enumerated exception provided above, deemed his differences with the Westminster Standards as exceptions of substance that nonetheless do not strike at the vitals of religion, nor are out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (RAO 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not clarified what the candidate means by

“I take exception to the strictness of the confessions.” (*WCF* 21.8, *WLC* 117, 119 *WSC* 60, 61.)

**Response:** Presbytery will inquire of licentiate [name omitted] , who gave this reply, to further clarify in writing what is meant by “strict.” Presbytery will then reconsider his response as it fits within the *BCO*’s definition of exceptions. Once received, the Stated Clerk will include his response in Presbytery’s response to RPR. Presbytery received the following, and with this clarification, is an exception similar to what we have received as a Presbytery in prior cases, as an exception of substance but not hostile to nor striking at the vitals of the Christian religion: “Looked over my answer and it does seem vague so I think the request for clarification is good. Here is my previous response in the questionnaire and the bold portion is the addition. Please let me know if you think I need to elaborate further before you present this to presbytery. I was thinking about adding that I try and encourage not spending money on the Sabbath, but didn't since that's more of an addition rather than an exception. *WCF* 4.1, *WLC* 15, *WSC* 9 - My affirmation of the Framework view affirms that the account in Genesis 1 is not necessarily sequential ("in the space of six days") but literarily topical. The account of Genesis 2:5 of ordinary means of vegetation (Light, Day 1, Luminaries, Day 4). Also, accounting the interpretive possibilities for 'yom' (Ps 90), the account in Genesis 1 seems to be literarily topical. I do acknowledge that the weakness of the views have been to potentially think creation as non-historical, but creation is historical. I believe Adam was a historical man, and creation happened in the history of creation, and this historicity does not conflict with my affirmation of the framework view of creation. I affirm Framework's strengths to be teaching covenant, image of God, and Sabbath. *WCF* 21.8, *WLC* 117, 119 *WSC* 60, 61 – I take exception to *WCF* 21.8 in that I don't think that Scripture requires as strict of an observance of the Sabbath as the confessions seem to portray. Taking Matthew 12 as exegetical support, Jesus healed, and told the healed to pick up and go home. Also, to carry the spirit of Mark 2:27, Sabbath should be focused on spiritual rest and corporate worship, not mere outward action. But of course the two affect each other. By ‘strict of an observance,’ what is intended was the allowance of recreation with spiritual community as a means

of spiritual rest and a pointing towards resting in our Lord away from our labors.

**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** The Philadelphia Presbytery is currently contacting all TEs laboring out of bounds. We have done this over the years, but have not made explicit mention in our minutes. Presbytery's Shepherd Team will provide such updates beginning with the January 2024 Minutes.

**2023-2: Standing Rules (BCO 10-3)** — *BCO* only allows for moderator of Presbytery to be elected for a period of up to one year.

**Response:** The Philadelphia Presbytery will change its Standing Rules at some point in 2024 to correct this

**2023-6: Sep 17, 2022 (BCO 20-1)** — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** Teaching Elder [name omitted] continues to be an active member, both online and when possible, in-person, with the Philadelphia Presbytery. He has asked that he remain under the oversight of our Presbytery while he serves in this out-of-bounds church ministry, as we would similar to a chaplain or missionary work. His call is to co-pastor a very small, non-PCA church in rural Minnesota.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-3: Jan 15, 2022 (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1)** — Presbytery did not fulfill its constitutional duty to review session records when it declined to review 2019 and 2020 minutes.

**Response:** The Philadelphia Presbytery has been reviewing past Session Records, and will approve a new process at the January 2024 meeting that will ensure Session Records are reviewed in an expedited manner.

**Rationale:** No evidence the Presbytery has been reviewing these minutes.

**2023-4: Mar 19, 2022 (BCO 19-2; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** The licentiate in question did in fact preach at Presbytery that day and had his sermon approved at the March 2022 Stated Meeting. The final minutes omitted what Presbytery actually did that day.

**Rationale:** The minutes for this March 2022 meeting need to be corrected to include all of the specific requirements.

**2023-5: May 21, 2022; Sep 17, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** Presbytery examined all candidates in all areas prescribed by the *BCO*, but these were omitted from the minutes. We apologize for any confusion.

**Rationale:** The minutes for these two meetings in May and September 2022 need to be corrected to include all of the specific requirements.

64. That the Minutes of **Philadelphia Metro West Presbytery:** 66-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Feb 25, 2023; May 06, 2023; Sep 16, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — Incomplete record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** With two exceptions, all of the churches in Philadelphia Metro West Presbytery have submitted to the Presbytery for its review, and the Presbytery has reviewed, their session meeting minutes and congregation meeting minutes for calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022. One church has been unable to submit its session meeting minutes for calendar year 2021 because the disruptions created by the Covid pandemic resulted in the session (which was composed of one teaching elder [who left the church at the end of 2021] and one ruling elder) not having regular meetings with minutes in 2021 and not being able to provide to the Presbytery session meeting minutes for 2021. Because of the disruptions, the church also is not able to provide to the Presbytery congregation meeting minutes for calendar year 2021. A second church, which in 2023 the Presbytery approved for dissolution, has submitted its session meeting minutes

for calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022, and minutes for some, but not all, of its congregation meetings for calendar years 2020, 2021 and 2022. The Presbytery has requested that a search be made for the missing congregation meeting minutes, but as yet they have not been submitted to the Presbytery.

65. That the Minutes of **Piedmont Triad** Presbytery: 56-0-3

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Mar 09, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **Nov 11, 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 11, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-2: May 13, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-3: Aug 12, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-4: Feb 11, 2023** (*RAO* 15-2) — Presbytery allowed the same RE to serve on Overtures Committee for more than two consecutive assemblies without two-thirds vote of Presbytery.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: May 14, 2022** (*BCO* 13-10.3) — No indication 60-days notice was given before dissolution of Grace Asheboro; minutes also do not indicate a commission was formed to care for the members who were received into the care of the presbytery as required by *BCO* 13-10.

**Response:** Please forgive us for the lack of clarity on this matter. On 3/3/2022, the [church name omitted] session voted to dissolve the church. A congregational meeting was called on 3/13/2022 to make the announcement. The last worship service and congregational meeting were held on 4/17/2022. It was not the presbytery that “determined to dissolve” the church (*BCO* 13-10). Rather, the church requested the presbytery dissolve it during a congregational meeting, which requires 30-days notice (*BCO* 25-2). Before they proceeded with any of the aforementioned plans, the pastor of [church name omitted] sought counsel from the PCA Stated Clerk, who confirmed that the timeline and procedures for closing the church were correct. We are also sorry for not being clear about the care of [church name

omitted]’s members. It was determined that our presbytery’s Shepherd Team would make sure members were cared for, but we did not establish them as a commission as required. We will do our best to correct our practice in the future.

**2023-2: Nov 12, 2022** (*BCO* 13-10) — No indication 60-days notice was given before dissolution of mission church.

**Response:** The attempt to form a temporary session failed, and therefore a mission church was never formally established. This was agreed upon by all of the parties involved and noted in the minutes.

66. That the Minutes of **Pittsburgh** Presbytery: 60-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2.e-f.; *RAO* 16-3.e.5(a-d)) — No record of if candidates states any differences to the Westminster Standards, and if any, presbytery’s judgment of these (*RAO* 16-3.e.5(a-d) ).

**2024-2: Jan 28, 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Incomplete review of interns’ updates.

**2024-3: Apr 01, 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Incomplete review of interns’ updates.

**2024-4: Jul 22, 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Incomplete review of interns’ updates.

**2024-5: Oct 21, 2023** (*BCO* 19-12) — Incomplete review of interns’ updates.

- d. **No response to previous assemblies required.**

67. That the Minutes of **Platte Valley** Presbytery: 59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Feb 04, 2023; Apr 29, 2023; Aug 12, 2023; Nov 30, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — Incomplete Record of review of records of church Sessions.



**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has now completed reviews of the records of church Session for both 2021 as well as 2022, with the exception of three churches for 2022, which are currently still under review and which Presbytery will, Lord willing, act upon at its next stated meeting in early February of 2024. Presbytery will be more careful in the future to review all the previous year's records of church Sessions every year, as well as to record the results of those reviews

**2023-2: Feb 05, 2022 (BCO 19-9)** — Specific requirements of internship exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception and regrets the error. The intern in question was indeed examined on his inward call to the ministry of the Word. Presbytery will be more careful in the future to record all specific requirements of internship examinations

68. That the Minutes of **Potomac** Presbytery: 61-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 24, 2023; Mar 18, 2023; Jun 06, 2023; Aug 08, 2023; Sep 19, 2023; Nov 18, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2023-1: Jan 25, 2022; Sep 20, 2022 (BCO 21-6)** — No installation commission appointed for associate pastor.

**Response:** We thank RPR for their diligent work. We agree with the exception and as follow-up on the two instances we note that there was an original Presbytery commission appointed on 09/16/18 in the first instance and 09/24/17 in the second instance where the same minister was ordained at the same church congregation. Additionally in follow-up with the two churches involved there was a ceremonial transition involving the congregation where a clear distinction was made between Assistant and Associate Pastors. We promise to be mindful of these transitions in the future.

**2023-2: Jun 07, 2022 (BCO 13-6)** — Minister from another denomination (EPC) was examined as if he were a transfer from within the PCA rather than as one who was coming from outside the denomination.

**Response:** We thank RPR for their diligent work. We agree with the exception and have reviewed our process for this particular transfer. The committee conducting the examination orally presented this as an extraordinary exception in line with *BCO* 21-4.d but this was not recorded in our minutes. We promise to be more careful in the future when handling transfers from other Christian denominations.

**2023-3: Jun 07, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of transfer or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church.

**Response:** We thank RPR for their diligent work. We agree with the exception having followed up with the members on the roll at the time of the dissolution but failing to record our previous action. There were no members listed on the roll of the church at that time and therefore no further corrective action may be taken. We promise to be more careful in recording our actions and hope the dissolution of churches continues to be a rare event.

69. That the Minutes of **Providence** Presbytery:

63-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; May 02, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 07, 2023** (*BCO* 13-11) — Executive session not included and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-2: Aug 01, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-3: Aug 01, 2023** (*BCO* 13-11; *RAO* 16-3.e.7) — Executive session not included and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-4: Nov 07, 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.c.8) — No record that previous minutes were approved.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Feb 01, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. No record that out-of-bounds TE is engaged in preaching and teaching the Word.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and notes that the TE in question transitioned from being a Church Planter to creating his own 501c3 ministry while serving in the same area. This

new ministry has a board of directors comprised of REs and TEs from within our Presbytery. This TE continues to preach and teach in our Presbytery and through this ministry with the full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. We erred in not recording these details, in accordance with *BCO* 8-7 and promise to be more careful in the future

**2023-2: Feb 01, 2022** (*BCO* 19-1, 13-6; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure views exam not recorded for TE from another Presbytery being licensed.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. The specific requirements of the licensure views exam were fulfilled, but not properly recorded with specificity to each item. This response serves to update our records to reflect what was done during these candidates exams and we are endeavoring to keep diligent and faithful records in the future to specify all *BCO* requirements have been met

**2023-7: Nov 01, 2022** (*BCO* 46-8) — No record of Presbytery assigning deposed minister to membership of some particular church.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. The deposed minister was assigned to [church name omitted] in Madison, AL and this was known by the Presbytery via the aforementioned full statement of the case and the judgment by Judicial Commission

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-3: May 3, 2022; Nov 1, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. The Minutes of the Commission were received by the Presbytery, included in the Docket for the Presbytery's, but were not included in the Minutes as required. They are attached to the Minutes from the Presbytery meeting [Nov 7, 2023] that this response to RPR is approved

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). [The response says that the minutes of the commission are

“attached” to the end of the 7 November 2023 minutes, but they are not.]

**2023-4: May 03, 2022** (*BCO* 34-7; 30-3) — No record of trial or case without process prior to suspending member from sacraments.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. On the basis of a signed confession and the desire to protect the peace and purity of the Church, we suspended the now deposed member from the Sacraments. It was a misapplication of *BCO* 34-7 that led us to that action, as we also instituted a definite suspension from ministry at the same time. A later Judicial Commission led to a final judgment of the former TE being deposed from ministry and indefinite suspension from the Sacraments.

**Rationale:** Report from Judicial Commission not entered into the record.

**2023-5: Nov 01, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. Should this Candidate come forward for Ordination, as anticipated, we will examine him in these areas and those required for Ordination.

**Rationale:** Presbytery’s response does not correct the error, as it is not clear that the Presbytery has actually conducted the licensure exam.

**2023-6: Nov 01, 2022** (*BCO* 15-3) — No record of full statement of the case and the judgment rendered by Judicial Commission.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. The full statement of the case and the judgment rendered by Judicial Commission were properly before the Court, but not properly recorded in the Minutes. These will be appended to the Minutes in which this response is approved to correct the previous failure to include that statement in the Minutes.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1)

70. That the Minutes of **Rio Grande** Presbytery:

61-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **None**

- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: Jan 23, 2023 - Jan 24, 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.e.5).a-d.) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.
  - 2024-2: Jan 23, 2023 - Jan 24, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.a.) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-3: Jan 23, 2023 - Jan 24, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(g)) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-4: Jan 23, 2023 - Jan 24, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(g)) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-5: Jan 23, 2023 - Jan 24, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(g)) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-6: Apr 24-25, 2023** - Incomplete record of ordination exam.
  - 2024-7: Apr 24-25, 2023** (*BCO* 15-2) — Non-members of the Presbytery listed among the quorum for the ordination commission.
  - 2024-8: Apr 24-25, 2023** (*BCO* 21-6) — Ordination questions to the congregation wrongly asked of a congregation of which the TEs are not ministers.
  - 2024-9: May 21, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12) — No record of required 10-day notice for scheduling a called meeting.
  - 2024-10: May 21, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1, 7, 8; 21-1) — Called meeting is out of order.
  - 2024-11: Sep 25-26, 2023** (*BCO* 18-7) — Required items for dismissal of a candidate not recorded.
  - 2024-12: Sep 25-26, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1, 7, 8; 21-1) — Presbytery is not allowed to ordain a minister prior to taking action on an in order call from a congregation.
  - 2024-13: Sep 25-26, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record presbytery cited church to appear at presbytery to agree or challenge TE's resignation.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**
  - 2021-1: Jan 27-28, 2020** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not properly recorded.

**Response:** The text read: Mr. [name omitted]'s one exception to the Westminster Confession of Faith Sabbath day observance was noted as more than semantic but not striking to the vitals the faith. His verbatim statement is recorded in the Sept minutes of his licensure examination. The Court approved his exception. The text has been

changed to: Mr. [name omitted]'s one exception to the Westminster Confession of Faith Sabbath day observance. The court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine” (*BCO* 21-4) His verbatim statement is recorded in the September 2019 minutes of his licensure examination. The Court approved his exception.

**2021-2: General 2023** (Standing Rules) — No provision in the standing rules for conducting a meeting in this manner. The meeting may be invalid.

**Response:** Presbytery voted at the January 2023 Stated Meeting to amend our Standing Rules to include virtual meetings and to adopt all actions at the September 2020 meeting. Please see the minutes in the January 2023 Stated Meeting.

**2021-3: Apr 29-30, 2019** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — Incomplete record of transfer exam of TE transferring into presbytery.

**Response:** The original text reads: “3. Transfer examination for TE [name omitted] to the PRG from North Texas Presbytery to Associate Pastor of [church name omitted], NM as a PCA TE in good standing. The Call was received, approved by the Court, and recorded (Attachment 10). During the Ordination Committee presentation of TE [name omitted] to the court, they noted TE [name omitted]’s *BCO* 20-9 Exception to Recreation on the Sabbath (cited verbatim below) as more than semantic but not striking to the vital tenants of the faith. TE [name omitted] was recommended with no reservations by the Ordination Committee. TE [name omitted] gave testimony of walk with the Lord and call to the ministry and christian experience, as well as questions to determine if there have been any changes in his views per *BCO*-21-4 since his ordination. During the examination, the court propounded a question on his view of the Sabbath. TE [name omitted] stated that he had an unquestioned high view of the sabbath day as the Lord’s Day but stated verbatim: “ I take exception to *WCF* 20-8, specifically, the clause which prohibits “...thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations...” on the Lord’s Day. It is my conviction that the 4th commandment does not preclude one from having thoughts of worldly employments and from engaging in recreational activity.” The Court approved a motion from the floor to arrest examination as a whole. An omnibus Motion was made by the

committee to approve: the exam, statement of experiential religion, and the exemption to the Westminster Confession of Faith. The motion was approved.” The text has been changed to read: “3. Transfer examination for TE [name omitted] to the PRG from South Texas Presbytery to Associate Pastor of [church name omitted], NM as a PCA TE in good standing. TE [name omitted] was examined on Christian experience, and also touched on views concerning theology, the Sacraments, and church government (*BCO* 13-6. The Call was received, approved by the Court, and recorded (Attachment 10). During the Ordination Committee presentation of TE [name omitted] to the court, they noted TE [name omitted]’s *BCO* 20-9 Exception to Recreation on the Sabbath (cited verbatim below) as more than semantic but not striking to the vital tenants of the faith. TE [name omitted] was recommended with no reservations by the Ordination Committee. TE [name omitted] gave testimony of walk with the Lord and call to the ministry and Christian experience, as well as questions to determine if there have been any changes in his views per *BCO*-21-4 since his ordination. During the examination, the court propounded a question on his view of the Sabbath. TE [name omitted] stated that he had an unquestioned high view of the sabbath day as the Lord’s Day but stated verbatim: “I take exception to *WCF* 20-8, specifically, the clause which prohibits “...thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations...” on the Lord’s Day. It is my conviction that the 4th commandment does not preclude one from having thoughts of worldly employments and from engaging in recreational activity.” The Court approved a motion from the floor to arrest examination as a whole. An omnibus Motion was made by the committee to approve: the exam, statement of experiential religion, and the exemption to the Westminster Confession of Faith. The motion was approved.”

**2021-4: Sep 23-24, 2019** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer for minister. Type of transfer from a Korean language presbytery or another denomination not specified.

**Response:** The Ordination Committee presented TE [name omitted] to the Court for transfer from the Korean Presbytery per *BCO* 21. The text has been changed to read: “The Ordination Committee

presented TE [name omitted] to the Court for transfer from the Korean Southwest Presbytery per *BCO* 21” (see attached file)

**2021-5: Sep 23-24, 2019** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record of requiring a statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** The text read: “TE [name omitted] was examined per *BCO* 21-4 for Ordination in the PCA in all areas.” The text has been changed to read: “TE [name omitted] was Christian experience, and also touched on views concerning theology, the Sacraments, and church government (*BCO* 13-6). TE [name omitted] was also examined concerning his differences with the Standards, which he had None

**2021-6: Sep 23-24, 2019** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer for minister from another presbytery.

**Response:** The text read: “The Ordination Committee presented TE [name omitted] for transfer in good standing from the Tennessee Valley Presbytery with a Call to SERGE Ministries (Call at Attachment 15). The court examined TE [name omitted] on his views.” The text has been changed to read: “The Ordination Committee presented TE [name omitted] for transfer in good standing from the Tennessee Valley Presbytery with a Call to SERGE Ministries. (Call at Attachment 15). TE [name omitted] was examined on Christian experience, and also touched on views concerning theology, the Sacraments, and church government (*BCO* 13-6). TE [name omitted] was also examined concerning his differences with the Standards, which he had None” (See pdf)

**2021-7: Sep 23-24, 2019** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination.

**Response:** The text read: “Ordination Examination for TE [name omitted] [RPCNA Pastor/currently under a call as an Army Chaplain] per *BCO*-21-4 with full examination in all *BCO* areas and acceptance of Ministerial Credentials and previous ordination vows. The Ordination Committee presented TE [name omitted] to the Court for transfer into the PCA from the RPCNA [per *BCO* 21, Letter of Good Standing at Attachment 12]. TE [name omitted] presented a testimony of his Christian experience and call to the ministry; and path of the call: TE [name omitted] was examined by the court on all areas of *BCO* 21-4.” The text has been changed to read: “Ordination



Examination for TE [name omitted] [RPCNA Pastor/currently under a call as an Army Chaplain] per *BCO*-21-4 with full examination in all *BCO* areas and acceptance of Ministerial Credentials and previous ordination vows. The Ordination Committee presented TE [name omitted] to the Court for transfer into the PCA from the RPCNA [per *BCO* 21, Letter of Good Standing at Attachment 12]. TE [name omitted] presented a testimony of his Christian experience and call to the ministry; and path of the call: TE [name omitted] was examined on Christian experience, and also touched on views concerning theology, the Sacraments, and church government (*BCO* 13-6)."

**2022-1: Apr 26-27, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Exception not properly recorded.

**Response:** The text read: (M/S/C) Receive exceptions as not striking at the vitals, see Attachment 5. The text has been changed to: Mr. [name omitted] has three exceptions to the Westminster Confession of Faith as noted in Attachment 5. The court judged the stated difference(s) to be more than semantic, but "not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine" (*BCO* 21-4).

**2022-3: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-19) — No record of candidate coming under care, licensure or ordination exams, or internship.

**Response:** The previous records are from the April 2021 Stated Presbytery meeting concerning Mr. [name omitted] . [name omitted] was licensed and ordained at the April 26-27, 2021 Presbytery meeting.

**2023-1: Jan 31, 2022; Apr 25-26, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** In reviewing the minutes, we do accept that an error was made. Mr. [name omitted] was not a member for six months. We will promise to be more diligent in the future.

**2023-2: Sep 26-27, 2022** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No response to the Assembly concerning disposition of exceptions of substance approved in Presbytery's minutes.

**Response:** We will be submitting responses to all of the exceptions of substance this year.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Notice and purpose and those calling the called meeting not recorded.

**Response:** The previous stated clerk forgot to attach the call to the minutes. The following is the call: “Dear Brothers, Please see the attached docket and documents for the called Presbytery meeting on May 21, 2021 in Las Cruces. This meeting addresses TE [name omitted] being called as pastor to [church name omitted], [name omitted] being called as intern by [church name omitted] and changes in the affiliation of [church name omitted] and [name omitted. [church name omitted] has decided to withdraw from the PCA and join the Bible Presbyterian Church. While I am sad to see them leave and will miss seeing leaders from [church name omitted] at Presbytery, I honor their decision. At this time, TE [name omitted] wishes to remain as Honorably Retired in our Presbytery. The call letter to [name omitted] will be sent to you when I receive it. Yours in Christ, [name omitted] , Temporary Clerk”

**Rationale:** No reference as to whether PRG has corrected its minutes. PRG must resubmit corrected minutes

**2022-4: General** (*BCO* 13-9.b) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** Noted in the minutes that I do have record that Presbytery reviewed the minutes of the sessions

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery approved review of session minutes (April 25-26, 2022).

**2023-3: Sep 26-27, 2022** (*BCO* 13-5, 23-2) — Presbytery adopted a policy requiring honorably retired ministers to transfer their membership upon relocation to another Presbytery. [*BCO* 13-5 specifically excludes honorably retired ministers from the expectation that they must become members of the Presbytery in the area they reside.]

**Response:** In correspondence with the Stated Clerk’s office, we adopted a policy that stated it is up to the will of the Presbytery body to determine if a candidate should remain in our Presbytery, even if honorably retired. In this case, we had a retired minister who lived 2,000 miles away, making repeated requests of Presbytery even though he had no involvement in our body. We are willing to modify our language or rescind the policy if it violates the will of RPR.

**Rationale:** *BCO* 13-5 does not apply to an honorably retired TE.

71. That the Minutes of **Rocky Mountain** Presbytery: 63-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Nov 27, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 26, 2023** (Preliminary Principle 6) — No record that members of interim Session were called by the congregation.

**2024-2: Jan 26, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4; *BCO* 15-3) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-3: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-7) — No record that candidate was notified of the reasons that he was removed from the roll.

**2024-4: Apr 27, 2023** (*BCO* 34-10) — No record of advance notice to minister or of 2/3 vote to divest him of his office without censure.

**2024-5: Oct 05, 2023** (*BCO* 22-5) — No record that session requested stated supply.

**2024-6: Oct 05, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation or Session concurred with dissolutions of pastoral relations.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2019-1: Feb 1, 2018; Apr 26, 2018; Oct 4, 2018** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record of congregational concurrence in dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exception and will correct our record (if possible), will correct our action (if possible), and promises to be more careful in the future

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery should act to include appropriate documentation in its record.

**Response:** [2023] Rocky Mountain Presbytery apologizes for failing to correct our minutes as required and will make **CORRECTIONS** to our minutes as indicated below: From 1) Feb. 1, 2018; Moved and carried to approve the dissolution of TE [name omitted] as associate pastor of [church name omitted] and to change his status to without call. The congregation of [church name omitted], MT voted January 24, 2018 to concur with this action. 2) From Apr. 26, 2018; Approval of dissolution of the pastoral relationship of [name

omitted] at [church name omitted] in Billings and approve his call to minister out of bounds at Westminster Theological Seminary, Philadelphia, PA as of July 1, 2018. The congregation of [church name omitted] in Billings, MT voted March 18, 2018 to concur with this action.; 3) From Oct. 4, 2018 Moved and carried the dismissal of TE [name omitted] to OPC presbytery of Southern California; to approve the pastoral dissolution of TE [name omitted] and [church name omitted] and to change his status to without call; the dismissal of TE [name omitted] to Pacific Presbytery pending their reception of him; to change the terms of call of TE [name omitted] from assistant pastor to associate pastor of [church name omitted]; to dismiss TE [name omitted] to Savannah River Presbytery, pending their reception of him. “The congregation of [church name omitted] in Wheat Ridge, CO voted to concur with the dissolution of their relationship with TE [name omitted]. The congregation of [church name omitted] voted to concur with dissolution of their relationship with Associate Pastor TE [name omitted]. TEs [name omitted] was an Assistant Pastor, and TE [name omitted] is Honorably Retired.”

**2021-1: Jan 24, 2019** (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(g)) — All specific requirements of ordination examination not recorded. (No record of examination in history of PCA.)

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exceptions and corrects its record (if possible), corrects its action (if possible), and promises to be more careful in the future. (*RAO* 16-10, b, 1)

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery should act to include appropriate documentation in its record.

**Response:** [2023] Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception, apologizes for the error, and promises to be more careful in the future. RMP also apologizes for not correcting its minutes earlier, and the following CORRECTION will be made to the minutes of the 2019 Winter Stated Meeting of Rocky Mountain Presbytery: “Candidate for ordination [name omitted] was examined in the area of PCA History and his examination was sustained.”

**2021-3: Oct 03, 2019** (*BCO* 21-4.d) — Apparent use of 3/4 clause during transfer exam of minister from the OPC not explicitly demonstrated in the minutes.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exceptions and corrects its record (if possible), corrects its action (if possible), and promises to be more careful in the future. (*RAO* 16-10, b, 1)

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery should act to include appropriate documentation in its record.

**Response:** [2023]After reviewing and researching the actions taken at the original meeting on Oct 3, 2019, Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the original exception. As required in *BCO* 13-6, all areas specified by *BCO* 21-4 for examination were done and the 3/4 clause was not used. We regret that the minutes of Oct 3, 2019 did not reflect this. The following CORRECTION will be added to minutes of Oct 3, 2019: “TE [name omitted]’s examination included all areas specified by *BCO* 13-6 and *BCO* 21-4, (1), a – h.” (Correction does not list each category [a through h] because of the limited space available to insert the correction into the minutes of Oct 3, 2019.)

**2022-1: Apr 25, 2019; Apr 22, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(g)) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded. (Apr 25, 2019 - No record of written sermon; Apr 22, 2021 - No record of approval of sermon)

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exceptions and corrects its record (if possible), corrects its action (if possible), and promises to be more careful in the future. (*RAO* 16-10, b, 1)

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery should act to include appropriate documentation in its record.

**Response:** 2023 RESPONSE: RE: April 25, 2019 [p. 57] Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully disagrees with this exception. The minutes recorded on p. 57 of the 2019 Rocky Mountain Presbytery Minutes state the candidate’s (Mr. [name omitted]) sermon was approved. RE: April 22, 2021 [p. 34, 37] Rocky Mountain Presbytery

agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. Four candidates were examined for ordination on that date; minutes record approval of sermon for two of them ([Names Omitted]). The other two candidates examined for ordination on that date (p. 34 – [name omitted] and p. 37 – [name omitted] ) will have the following CORRECTION inserted into the minutes of April 22, 2021: “Moved and carried to sustain the candidate’s sermon.)

**2022-2: Apr 22, 2021** (*BCO* 13-6) — No record of Transfer being examined on views touching sacraments or church government.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exceptions and corrects its record (if possible), corrects its action (if possible), and promises to be more careful in the future. (*RAO* 16-10, b, 1)

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery should act to include appropriate documentation in its record.

**Response:** [2023] Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception, apologizes for its oversight, and promises to be more careful in the future. The four candidates for transfer into RMP were examined in their views touching sacraments and church government. CORRECTION will be made to the minutes for transfer candidates TE [name omitted], TE [name omitted], TE [name omitted], TE [name omitted] to state the following: “The candidate was examined regarding his views in the area of Sacraments. Moved and carried to arrest this portion of the examination.” and “The candidate was examined regarding his views in the area of Church Government. Moved and carried to arrest this portion of the examination.”

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exception and will encourage the RMP Shepherding Committee to secure annual reports from TEs laboring outside the bounds of Rocky Mountain Presbytery in all years, with special attention paid to doing so in 2024.

**2023-2: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully disagrees with this exception on the grounds Session record reviews were

recorded as follows: 1) Minutes of 2022 Winter Stated Meeting (pg. 16) record review of Session minutes; 2) Minutes of 2022 Spring Stated Meeting (pg. 37) record review of Session minutes; 3) Minutes of 2022 Fall Stated Meeting (pg. 68) record review of Session minutes. **2023-3: Jan 27, 2022; April 21, 2022; Oct 6, 2022 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of endorsement by candidate's session or six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. Endorsement by a candidate's session and six-month membership are part of the normal process carried out by the RMP Christian Education Committee, but recording these things in the minutes of Presbytery did not happen. CORRECTION will be made to the minutes of Jan 27, 2022; April 21, 2022; and Oct 6, 2022 to state: "The candidate was endorsed by his session and meets the six-month membership requirement."

**2023-5: Jan 27, 2022 (PP 6)** — No record that members of interim/provisional Session were called by the congregation.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully disagrees with this exception on the grounds that as a Mission Church no congregation exists. The temporary session was formed to provide oversight for the church planter.

**2023-6: Jan 27, 2022 (BCO 18-3)** — No record of examination of candidates in experiential religion and motives for seeking the ministry.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully disagrees with this exception on the grounds the following statement was a part of record on pg. 14, "TE [name omitted] presented five men to come under care of the Rocky Mountain Presbytery. Each shared their testimony and call to ministry." RMP will be careful in the future to make the record of candidate exams more clearly identified.

**2023-7: Jan 27, 2022 (BCO 8-6)** — Presbytery acted to move TE from Evangelist to Church Planter with temporary Session, then acted to renew terms as Evangelist.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception and apologizes for its error. Action will be taken at the 2023 Fall Stated Meeting on October 5, 2023 to clarify the status of TE [name omitted]. (Presbytery did not take action on this matter at the Oct 5, 2023

meeting but did take action at the 2024 Winter Stated Meeting on Jan 25, 2024.) TE [name omitted] is provided oversight by the temporary Session and did not have his Evangelist status renewed. CORRECTION: The minutes of Jan 27, 2022 will be corrected to state: “TE [name omitted] did not have his status as an Evangelist renewed.”

**2023-8: Jan 27, 2022; Apr 21, 2022; Oct 6, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into presbytery.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees the minutes of Jan 27, 2022 and April 21, 2022 do not record examinations in Sacraments and Church Government for those two transfer candidates. Those examinations were done but were not recorded. CORRECTIONS will be made to those minutes that state “The candidate was also examined in the areas of the Sacraments and Church Government.” Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception for the Oct 6, 2022 meeting. Transfer candidate [name omitted] was examined in the Sacraments and Church Government as noted on pg. 65 “Moved and Carried to sustain the candidate’s examinations in Testimony, Calling, Bible, Sacraments, Church Government, and *BCO*.”

**2023-9: Jan 27, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2,3,4, *RAO* 16.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception, especially noting the absence of any reference to the candidate’s sermon. Minutes indicate all other requirements were recorded. CORRECTION will be made to the minutes of Jan 27, 2022 to state “The candidate’s sermon was approved.”

**2023-10: Jan 27, 2022** (*BCO* 19-3, 19-4) — No record of licensure questions, response, prayer, or declaration.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception and apologizes for failure to record in our minutes these important elements of the licensure process. CORRECTIONS will be made to our Jan 27, 2022 minutes to state for each candidate: “Licensure questions from *BCO* 19-3 were asked and answered in the affirmative, prayer for the candidate was offered, and the declarations of *BCO* 19-4 were made.”



**2023-11: Apr 21, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6, 21-4) — Incomplete record of exam for minister seeking admission from another denomination.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception in that there appears to be no record in our minutes regarding transfer from another denomination candidate [name omitted]’s demonstrating knowledge of Greek and Hebrew. **CORRECTION** will be made to the Apr 21, 2022 minutes to state: Candidate’s seminary degree from Covenant Theological Seminary shows evidence he has knowledge of Greek and Hebrew.” Rocky Mountain Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future.

**2023-12: Apr 21, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4, *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception and promises to be more careful in the future. We will also make **CORRECTION** to our Apr 21, 2022 minutes to state: “Candidate [name omitted] was examined in the area of Bible Knowledge during his licensure exam on Jan 27, 2022 (recorded in the minutes of 2022 on pg. 12). Candidate [name omitted] exegetical paper was approved by the Credentials Committee, and his seminary degree from Covenant Theological Seminary gives evidence to his knowledge of Greek and Hebrew.

- e. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2021-2: General** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — Incomplete record of review of records of church Sessions. (Received and reviewed 7 churches. At Spring Stated Meeting, Session record of churches north of Denver are reviewed. (SR1.072) No report of reviewed records at Fall Stated Meeting. At Fall Stated Meeting, Session records of churches in and south of Denver are reviewed. (SR 1.072)

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with the exception and will correct our record (if possible), will correct our action (if possible), and promises to be more careful in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). The Presbytery should act to include appropriate documentation in its record.

**Response:** [2023] Rocky Mountain Presbytery respectfully asks for clarification to what year these exceptions took place so corrections can be made appropriately.

**Rationale:** This 2022 General exception regards the RMP minutes of 2021 (7 of 35 churches reviewed, pp. 42, 70).

**2023-4: Jan 27, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1, *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Rocky Mountain Presbytery agrees with this exception, will make CORRECTIONS to our minutes of Jan 27, 2022 by adding “Commission reports as Appendices F, G, H, and I.” RMP promises to be more careful in the future. [4 commission reports:[name omitted] Commission, [name omitted] Commission, [name omitted] Commission, and [church name omitted] Denver Commission]

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the record for review. [4 commission reports:[name omitted] commission, [name omitted] commission, [name omitted] commission, and [church name omitted] commission].

72. That the Minutes of **Savannah River** Presbytery: 59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Jan 20, 2023; Apr 18, 2023; Jul 15, 2023; Oct 17, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Oct 17, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record of congregational meeting dissolving pastoral relation or presbytery approval of dissolution.

**Response:** The SRP concurs with the exception; however, the dissolution of the pastoral relations between TE [name omitted] and [church name omitted] occurred in a congregational meeting on October 2, 2022, and was received by the Candidates and Credentials Committee. Since TE [name omitted] was a member of Presbytery and the transfer was within the bounds of the Presbytery, the unanimous approval of the call and transfer was de facto approval of the dissolution of the pastoral relations with IPC. The October 2022

minutes will be revised to reflect the date of the Congregational Meeting dissolving the pastoral relation and the Presbytery approval of the dissolution..

**2023-2: Oct 17, 2022** (*BCO* 25-11) — No record that Presbytery confirmed that a 30-day notice was given by Session for congregational meeting to withdraw from the denomination.

**Response:** The SRP concurs with the exception; however, a letter received from the Stated Clerk of [church name omitted] dated October 5, 2022 and included in the October 2022 Docket attachments documented the Congregational Meeting was called with a 30-day notice. The minutes will be revised to document Presbytery confirmation of the 30-day notice. Please see pdf of October 2022 Minutes.

73. That the Minutes of **Siouxlands** Presbytery: 53-0-1

a. Be approved without exception: **Apr 07, 2023; Jul 14, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No response to the Assembly concerning the disposition of the exception of substance to which the response to the 50th GA was found to be unsatisfactory.

**2024-2: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.c.6) — The minutes do not list the names of teaching and ruling elders who are present at any given meeting. The latter is particularly important should there be a complaint, protest, etc.

**2024-3: Jan 27, 2023** (*BCO* 19-7; 19-10) — Presbytery establishes an internship for a man but there is no record of how that internship will fulfill *BCO* 19-7, para 3, or that the steps in *BCO* 19-10 were taken.

**2024-4: Jan 27, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g) — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that appears to be out of accord with the fundamentals of our doctrinal standards. This statement seems to say we can make “images” that picture the incarnate second person of the Trinity, even “placing them in a worship space,” so long as they are not made an object of worship.

**2024-5: Jan 27, 2023** (*BCO* 21-1) — A commission, acting as the session of a mission church, votes to call a man as their pastor. They then offer him employment as directory of ministry until he can

complete his ordination examination. There is no evidence that Presbytery ever granted the man permission to move onto the field prior to his examination.

**2024-6: Jan 27, 2023** (*BCO* 46-6) — No record regarding the reception of a certificate of dismissal from transferring presbytery.

**2024-7: Apr 27, 2023** (*BCO* 18-7) — Apparent improper removal of candidates from the roll.

**2024-8: Apr 27, 2023** (*BCO* 19) — Improper approval of internship requirement.

**2024-9: Apr 27, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — Presbytery transferred a TE with no record of first dissolving his call or citing his church to appear.

**2024-10: Apr 27, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1) — Presbytery receives an oral report from a commission, but no report of the commission is included in the minutes.

**2024-11: Sep 28, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month church membership for candidate or that his application was filed one month in advance.

**2024-12: Sep 28, 2023** (*BCO* 18-7) — No record of proper process for candidate being received from another presbytery.

**2024-13: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7; *BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual reports from men without call or from some men serving out of bounds. Further, the reports that are received come only to a committee with no record that they are shared with Presbytery, even in summary form.

**2024-14: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-6) — No record of annual reports from most candidates, and the one report that is received appears to have been shared only with a committee. There is no record of Presbytery having heard the report.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-1: Jan 22, 2021**, (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16.3.e.5) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery had previously examined the candidate on two separate occasions, once for licensure (Sept 2019) and once to complete the portions of the ordination exams not recorded on Jan 22, 2021 meetings minutes (the 120th meeting of Siouxlands Presbytery). We acknowledge the lack of clarification in our meeting minutes and

have amended them by adding the following information to the minutes of January 22, 2021:

At the 117th Meeting in September 2019, the candidate was examined and sustained in the following areas for licensure: Christian experience, English Bible, theology, *BCO* church government, any stated exceptions to our Constitution, and a sermon preached by the candidate before the presbytery.

At the 119th Meeting in September 2020, the licentiate was examined and sustained in the following areas as a partial exam for ordination: theological paper and sacraments

**Rationale:** The relationship between the examinations at the September 2019 and September 2020 meetings remains unclear, and there is no evidence of examination in church history, PCA church history, or exegetical paper.

**Response:** At the 117th Meeting in September 2019, the candidate was examined and sustained in the following areas for licensure: Christian experience, English Bible, theology, *BCO* church government, any stated exceptions to our Constitution, and a sermon preached by the candidate before the presbytery. At the 119th Meeting in September 2020, the licentiate was examined and sustained in the following areas as a partial exam for ordination: theological paper and sacraments. At 120th meeting in January 2021, the licentiate was examined in the areas of church history, PCA church history, and exegetical paper; the ordination exam was sustained as a whole.

The confusion was due to the fact that licensure and ordination examinations were conducted over three meetings spanning different calendar years. Please see the copies of our 120th meeting minutes attached (see minutes 120-27 through 120-34).

**2023-2: Jan 28-29, 2022; Sep 22-23, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6, 19-2) — TE was examined for licensure when it appears it was a transfer from another PCA Presbytery.

**Response:** We believe that the TE from another PCA Presbytery was correctly examined for licensure rather than for transfer in January 2022.

**2023-3: Sep 22-23, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the candidate's own words.

**Response:** The applicant for transfer, an ordained TE from another PCA Presbytery, submitted a three-page document listing out stated differences. The document was attached to our minutes in the Appendix section, as part of the Candidates and Credentials Committee report. However, the stated differences were not listed separately in the minutes of the Presbytery meeting, and they do not appear in the portion of the minutes where the applicant was examined on the floor. We will be more careful in the future to list the official stated differences in a more prominent place in the minutes, and not buried in the Appendix section.

**2023-4: Sep 22-23, 2022 (BCO 19-16)** — 3/4 vote for waiving internship not recorded.

**Response:** We acknowledge our error in failing to record the required supermajority vote threshold for taking the action to waive internship requirements in lieu of previous experiences in comparable ministry. The Presbytery did follow the specific voting requirement. This action was taken with an over 3/4 approval (per *BCO* 19-16). We have amended our minutes to include this fact, and we will be careful to record the detail in the future.

**2023-5: Sep 22-23, 2022 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** The six-month membership was noted during the committee exam on Sept 16, 2022 (appendix – C&C One), was confirmed in the session endorsement letter noted as an attachment in our minutes, and was orally reported on the floor of the Presbytery. However, the information was not specifically noted in our records. We have amended our minutes to include this fact, and we will be careful to document this requirement in our future record-keeping going forward.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-1: Jan 28-29, 2022 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Stated differences not recorded in the candidate's own words.

**Response:** The incoming applicant for licensure, an ordained PCA TE from another Presbytery, was seeking to serve as a stated supply for a particular church within the Presbytery and was therefore

examined for licensure (per *BCO* 19-1, 19-2). He did not submit stated differences. However, in the course of his licensure examination, both in the committee and on the floor, touching upon his views in theology, it became clear in the judgment of the Presbytery that his view of the acceptability of liturgical dance in worship did not conform to the teaching of *WCF* 21. In response to extra-confessional views orally expressed by the applicant on the floor, the Presbytery took action to restrict his teaching concerning the elements acceptable in worship, so that it conforms to *WCF* 21.3-5 as long as he's engaged in the ministry of the word within the bounds of our Presbytery. While the Presbytery did examine and probe the applicant's views beyond written materials provided, and while the Presbytery did take measures to seek to guard the confessional integrity of the teaching within her bounds, we do acknowledge our failure to record any differences orally expressed in the applicant's own words. We will be more diligent to document any differences discovered during exams, and we will be careful to record such matters more thoroughly.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the candidate's stated differences in his own words for review.

74. That the Minutes of **South Coast** Presbytery: 59-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-10.a) — No record in minutes of exceptions taken by GA.
  - 2024-2: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-11) — Documents are consistently “approved” by Presbytery but they are not included in the minutes.
  - 2024-3: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-2; 18-3; 19-7; 19-9; 19-10) — No record of candidate applications being submitted one month in advance; of the provisions of *BCO* 18-3 being carried out for men coming under care; or of the provisions of *BCO* 19-7,9,10 being carried out in the establishment of internships.
  - 2024-4: General 2023** (*BCO* 21-4.g; 13-6) — Presbytery consistently either fails to state whether a man has stated differences or fails to record the content of those stated differences. This is at least the 3rd

year for this exception. Recommend that the Assembly refer the matter to the Standing Judicial Commission per *RAO* 16-10.c;

**2024-5: Jan 24-25, 2023** (*BCO* 31-2) — Presbytery treats a *BCO* 31-2 report as a motion and defeats the motion to begin an investigation. *BCO* 31-2 requires at least some investigation and that Presbytery demand satisfactory explanations from the one against whom the report is made. There is no record that this happened.

**2024-6: General 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; 10-5; 13-11; *RAO* 16-3; *RONR* 9:30-36) — The Administration Commission minutes do not conform to the requirements of the *BCO* and *RAO*. Further, the Administration Commission takes actions (approving and dissolving calls, establishing commissions, etc) via “electronic correspondence.” This does not constitute a deliberative assembly. Further, there is no evidence that SCP’s ByLaws allow electronic meetings, that quorums were present when those decisions were made, or that such actions were ever appropriately ratified.

**2024-7: Apr 26, 2023** (*BCO* 13-4) — Presbytery conducts a meeting without a quorum. Only 2 REs were present.

**2024-8: Apr 26, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6; *BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete record of examination for minister seeking admission from another denomination.

**2024-9: Apr 26, 2023** (*BCO* 46-6) — No records of certificates of dismission for TEs transferring in from other PCA presbyteries or other denominations.

**2024-10: General 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.b; *BCO* 13-11) — The minutes often reference documents that are required to be part of the minutes as being available in a dropbox. That cannot provide the permanent record required for the minutes.

**2024-11: Jul 17, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order. (10-day notice not evident/recorded).

**2024-12: Jul 17, 2023** (*RAO* 16-3.e.7; *BCO* 13-11) — Executive session not included and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-13: Sep 26, 2023 - Sep 27, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1) — Commission report not attached to the minutes.

**2024-14: Sep 26-27, 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — Presbytery, on motion, dissolves a man’s call to an out-of-bounds work without the concurrence of the man or the calling body, or even evidence of



communication with the calling body, and with no evidence of formal process.

**2024-15: Sep 26, 2023 - Sep 27, 2023 (BCO 21-4.e)** — No record that Presbytery followed *BCO* 21-4.e (as amended in 2023) in conducting an ordination examination.

**2024-16: General 2023 (BCO 20-1)** — Men are examined for transfer or ordination, but their calls are referred to the Administrative Commission that processes them at some point after the meeting.

**2024-17: General 2023 (BCO 18-6)** — No record of annual reports from candidates.

**2024-18: General 2023 (BCO 19-12)** — No record of reports on interns at each stated meeting.

**2024-19: General 2023 (BCO 8-7; BCO 13-2)** — No record of annual reports on most men who are serving out of bounds or who are without call.

**2024-20: General 2023 (BCO 40-1)** — No record of any review of the records of sessions.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2022-2: General (BCO 13-9.b, 40-1)** — Incomplete record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** Our Administrative Commission, is working to get this back in order. We apologize and will work to correct this.

**2022-4: Apr 24, 2021 (BCO 23-1)** — No record of the congregation having approved the dissolution of the call of the former pastor.

**Response:** Per *BCO* 34-9, the Presbytery dissolved the pastoral relationship, the congregation was informed in the case of the two former ministers deposed at this meeting (two different congregations, both deposed for cases of public scandal). In the future, we will include the communication from the congregation approving the dissolution of the pastoral relations.

**2023-4: Mar 12, 2022 (BCO 13-12; RAO 16-3.c.1)** — Purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** The purpose of the called meeting is listed on page 1818 line numbers 11-13. The presbytery will do better to list the purpose verbatim in the minutes in the future.

**2023-8: Sep 27, 2022 (BCO 5-9.B.g, h, i)** — No record of members of the mission church petitioning Presbytery to proceed to

organization. No record of Presbytery appointing an organizing commission. No record of an organizing commission or that the service of organization included the necessary elements.

**Response:** We apologize for this oversight, and the records are included in this years Administrative Commission minutes

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: General** (*RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Commission minutes not provided.

**Response:** Commission minutes will be provided in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2022-3: Apr 24, 2021** (*BCO* 34-4) — A minister was found contumacious, but Presbytery did not make “record... of the fact and of the charges under which he was arraigned.”

**Response:** We apologize for this error, the record of charges will be included in the future. This meeting had two depositions, and this pastor was also deposed at a later meeting. We will ensure this is carried out properly in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the required records for review

**2022-5: Aug 14, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** We apologize again, and will include the stated differences of ministers in the prescribed categories in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the candidate’s stated difference in his own words for review.

**2022-6: Aug 14, 2021** (*BCO* 13-6) — All specific requirements of transfer exam not recorded.

**Response:** We apologize for not including all the specific requirements of the transfer exam in the minutes, however, the Ordination Team does follow the requirements in the *BCO* for transfer exams, this will be noted in the minutes in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not amended the minutes of the meeting or submitted the required records for review.

**2023-1: Jan 25, 2022; Apr 26, 2022; Sep 27, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the minister's/candidate's own words.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes for not recording the stated differences of minister's/candidates in their own words in the minutes of the meeting for 1/25/22, 4/26/22, and 9/27/22. We will adjust our process to include all stated differences with the Confessional Standards

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the candidates' stated differences in their own words for review.

**2023-2: Jan 25, 2022** (*BCO* 19-16) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement not recorded.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes for failing to note the 3/4 vote, but this motion was adopted with the appropriate vote count and the Presbytery simply failed to note the count.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1) by amending the minutes of the meeting where the requirement was not recorded.

**2023-3: Jan 25 2022; Mar 12, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** These minutes were received by our administrative commission and reported to the presbytery, but we failed to enter them into the minutes. We will revise our processes to include them in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-5: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** We apologize again, and will include the stated differences of ministers in the prescribed categories in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not judged the candidate's stated differences in the prescribed categories.

**2023-6: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** Calls are referred to the Administrative Commission for approval, we will include the Administrative Commission minutes in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the required record for review.

**2023-7: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** We apologize for this, and will include commission minutes in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-9: Sep 27, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes for not recording the stated differences of minister's/candidates in their own words

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the candidate's stated difference in his own words for review.

**2023-10: Sep 27, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2, 18-3, 19-9, 19-10) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session. No record of six-months membership for candidate. No record of charge given to candidate. No record of Examination for internship. No declaration of Internship by Moderator recorded.

**Response:** These were received, reviewed, and approved by the Ordination Team. However, we apologize for not including them in the minutes, we will correct this in the future to ensure they are recorded in the minutes.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the required records for review.

- f. **That responses shall be submitted to the following GA as no responses were received in 2024:**

**2021-1: Jan 26, 2019; May 4, 2019; Sep 24, 2019** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.2.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** [2022]: These minutes were received by our administrative commission and reported to the presbytery, but we failed to enter them into the minutes. We will revise our processes to include them in the future.

**Rationale:** [2022]: When GA takes exception to a Presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary.

**2021-2: Jan 25, 2020** (*BCO* 19-2.a) — No exam/statement of Christian experience and inward call.

**Response:** [2022]: Our ordination team has historically received a statement of Christian experience and inward call when candidates come under care in the presbytery. In the future, we will make sure this is added to licensure candidates as well.

**Rationale:** [2022]: When GA takes exception to a Presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary.

**2021-3: Jan 25, 2020** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — Incomplete transfer exam (no theology, Bible content or Sacraments).

**Response:** [2022]: Our ordination team recognizes and agrees with this error and will remedy it in future transfer exams.

**Rationale:** [2022]: When GA takes exception to a Presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary.

**2021-4: Jul 23, 2019** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer exam (no record of questions on views of sacraments or church government).

**Response:** [2022]: Our ordination team recognizes and agrees with this oversight and will work to conduct a complete transfer exam in the future.

**Rationale:** [2022]: When GA takes exception to a Presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary.

**2021-5: Jan 25, 2020** (*BCO* 19-7) — No indication of Mr. [name omitted] having completed his presbytery internship prior to ordination.

**Response:** [2022]: Our ordination team agrees with this oversight and will work to insure it is completed in the future.

**Rationale:** [2022]: When GA takes exception to a Presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary.

**2021-6: Jan 25, 2020** (*BCO* 21-4) — No record that theological thesis or exegetical papers submitted.

**Response:** [2022]: Our ordination team agrees with this oversight and will work to insure it is completed in the future.

**Rationale:** [2022]: When GA takes exception to a Presbytery's minutes for failure to record or take a required action, and Presbytery agrees with the exception, a satisfactory response should indicate that they have taken the required action, if possible, and properly recorded the same in their minutes, amending and resubmitting relevant portions of past minutes if necessary.

**g. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly:**

1. Find that South Coast Presbytery has, for at least three years, consistently failed to record whether men have stated differences or has failed to record the content of those stated differences as

required by *BCO* 13-6; 19-2.e,f; 21-4.f,g (as amended by the 50th GA); and *RAO* 16-3.e.5.

2. Find that South Coast Presbytery has for three years failed to provide, in violation of *RAO* 16-4.e, acceptable responses to exceptions of substance taken to their minutes in 2021.
3. Find that South Coast Presbytery has for at least two years failed to provide commission minutes.
4. Cite South Coast Presbytery to appear, per *RAO* 16-4.e and 16-10.c, and *BCO* 40- 5, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission which the 51st GA constitutes its commission to adjudicate this matter, by representative or in writing, at the SJC's fall stated meeting, to "show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the matters in question," following the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15.
5. Direct the CRPR Officers to appoint one or more representatives of the General Assembly to represent the Report (*OMSJC* 15.2) and thereby present this case to the SJC.

75. That the Minutes of **South Florida** Presbytery:

63-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 08, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.

**2024-2: Feb 08, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-3: Nov 14, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.

**2024-4: Nov 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3-e-5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-5: Feb 08, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-6: Feb 08, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-7: Feb 08, 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-8: May 13, 2023** (*BCO* 38-1) — Full confession for a 38-2 case without process not recorded in the minutes.

**2024-9: Aug 08, 2023** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery. No exam of views touching on theology, the Sacraments, or church government.

**2024-10: Aug 08, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded. No record of written sermon.

**2024-11: Nov 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam, specifically: educational requirements, knowledges of Greek and Hebrew languages, and exegetical papers. Additionally, no record of completion and approval of an internship.

**2024-12: Nov 14, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.6) — Specific arrangements of call not shown to have been approved.

**2024-13: Nov 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete record of ordination exam, specifically: theological and exegetical papers.

**2024-14: Nov 14, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded. No written sermon.

**2024-15: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2018-1: May 9, 2017; Aug 8, 2017** (*BCO* 18-2; 21-4) — Stated difference not recorded in the minister’s/candidate’s own words (*RAO* 16-3.e5).

**Response:** [2021]: Actually, it was. If the candidate says he is taking the “Continental Exception to the Sabbath per 21-8” then that is what he said in his own words.

**Rationale:** [2021]: Candidate must state “specific instances in which he” (*BCO* 19-2.e) differs from *WCF*, *LC*, *SC*; not simply name a view.

**Response:** [2022] Agreed; candidate’s actual words now being recorded.

**Rationale:** [2022]: The candidate’s own words must be recorded and entered in the minutes and submitted for review.



**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Lamentably, it was common practice of the Presbytery at that time that many of our candidates simply stated their views (orally, not written down) and did not cite the specific instances of our doctrinal standards where their views differed. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Also lamentable is that with the time lapse it is difficult to know exactly what was said on the floor and many of the candidates listed have moved out of the Presbytery. Attached are written statements of two current TEs that were originally given to the Credentialing Committee (though not read before Presbytery). Presbytery apologizes for this past oversight and has been more diligent in this area since that time.

**2019-1: Feb 13, 2018; May 8, 2018** (*BCO* 21-4, *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Differences of three candidates not judged to prescribed categories.

**Response:** [2022]: Agreed. Categories now being used for all determinations of exceptions to the standards.

**Rationale:** [2022]: Presbytery's judgment of stated differences using the prescribed categories need to be submitted for review.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Candidates' stated differences with the confessional standards were implicitly judged as "more than semantic but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine" by passing the candidate. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Lamentably, at that time Presbytery was not using the prescribed categories but simply passing or denying candidates' differences. Presbytery apologizes for this past oversight and has been more diligent in this area since that time.

**2019-2: Feb 13, 2018; May 8, 2018** (*BCO* 21-4, *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Differences not stated in candidates' own words.

**Response:** [2022]: Agreed. Candidate's words now being recorded in the minutes.

**Rationale:** [2022]: The candidate's own words must be recorded and entered in the minutes and submitted for review.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Lamentably, it was common practice of the Presbytery at that time that many of our candidates simply stated their views (orally, not written down) and did not cite the specific instances of our doctrinal standards where their views differed. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Attached are written statements of TEs that were originally given to the Credentialing Committee (though not read before Presbytery). Presbytery apologizes for this past oversight and has been more diligent in this area since that time.

**2021-7: Feb 11, 2020; Aug 11, 2020** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Each element of ordination exams was conducted by the Credentialing Committee, but each element was not recorded in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2021-8: Nov 10, 2020** (*BCO* 15-1) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted to append the minutes to the November, 10, 2020 stated meeting (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2021-9: Nov 10, 2020** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — Unclear record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. In regard to TE [name omitted] 's ordination examinations, given the language barrier (Chinese), the ordination exams were determined to have been performed by a panel of TEs from the PCA and OPC. Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2022-8: Directory** (*BCO* 15-1, 21; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — No record of ordination for a man who is listed in the 5/18/21 and 8/17/21 minutes as licensed, but in 11/9/21 minutes as ordained.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. TE [name omitted] was approved by Presbytery to be ordained at its August 11, 2020 stated meeting. The directory was not updated until November 2021. Presbytery will be more diligent to keep its rolls properly updated in the future.

**2022-9: Feb 9, 2021; Nov 9, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in minister's own words.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Lamentably, it was common practice of the Presbytery at that time that many of our candidates simply stated their views (orally, not written down) and did not cite the specific instances of our doctrinal standards where their views differed. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Attached are written statements of TEs that were originally given to the Credentialing Committee (though not read before Presbytery). Presbytery apologizes for this past oversight and has been more diligent in this area since that time.

**2022-10: Feb 09, 2021** (*BCO* 19-5) — No record that the examination for transfer of licensure was completed.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. TE [name omitted] was not “transferring” his licensure but seeking to be licensed in a second presbytery concurrently (Gulfstream and South Florida) because of his ministry in both. He was approved for stated supply in Gulfstream Presbytery, and he was already ordained as an RE in South Florida Presbytery, where he is also a seminary professor. Dr. [name omitted] had just been examined in Gulfstream and so our Presbytery did not repeat the examinations. Nevertheless, Dr. [name omitted] was still examined concerning his Christian experience, his call to preach the Gospel, and his views in theology. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery

apologizes and will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2022-11: Feb 09, 2021** (*BCO* 13-6) — No record of transfer exam from another Presbytery.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The minutes record that TE [name omitted] was examined on his Christian experience and his call to preach the Gospel. He was also examined on his views in theology, Sacraments, and church government by the Credentialing Committee, who then recommended him to Presbytery. The TE also answered questions on the floor of Presbytery, but this was not recorded in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). The Presbytery apologizes for this oversight in recordkeeping, and we will document this fully in the future.

**2022-12: Feb 9, 2021; May 18, 2021; Aug 17, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. Each element of ordination exams was conducted by the Credentialing Committee, but each element was not recorded in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2022-13: May 18, 2021** (*BCO* 18-5; 22-5) — Student supply approved without licensure.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The need for student supply was in a difficult mission field some distance from the rest of Presbytery (Puerto Rico); the student was in the final stages of his training, overseen by other TEs, and was soon ordained on August 17, 2021 (ninety days later). Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery apologizes and will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2022-14: May 18, 2021** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of transfer exam from another Presbytery.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The minutes record that the applicants for transfer were examined on their Christian experience and their call to preach the Gospel. They were also examined on their views in theology, Sacraments, and church government by the Credentialing Committee, who then recommended them to Presbytery. The TEs also answered questions on the floor of Presbytery, but this was not recorded in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). The Presbytery apologizes for this oversight in recordkeeping, and we will document this fully in the future.

**2022-15: May 18, 2021** (*BCO* 13-6; 21-4) — Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The minutes record that Mr. [name omitted] was examined on his Christian experience and his call to preach the Gospel, and his views in theology. According to the Credentialing Committee, the candidate was examined and approved as detailed in *BCO* 21-4, but each element of the exam was not appropriately listed in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). The Presbytery apologizes for this oversight in recordkeeping, and we will document this fully in the future.

**2022-16: Aug 17, 2021** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes from commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets this mistake of not including the minutes of the installation commission. An oral report was given to the Presbytery on the installation. The commission minutes are on file and Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted to append the minutes to the August 17, 2021 stated meeting (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-1: Feb 08, 2022** (*BCO* 13-6) — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The TE transferring into the Presbytery was indeed examined on his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government by the Credentialing Committee, who then recommended him to Presbytery. The TE answered questions on the floor of Presbytery, but this was not recorded in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). The Presbytery apologizes for this oversight in recordkeeping, and we will document this fully in the future

**2023-2: Feb 08, 2022** (*BCO* 13-11) — Motions not fully recorded.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets this mistake in recordkeeping. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future

**2023-3: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5.) — Stated differences not judged with prescribed categories.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The stated differences of each of the candidates listed were judged to be more than semantic but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine. This was not rightly recorded, so Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future

**2023-5: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5.) — No record of ordination exam.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The Presbytery appealed to *BCO* 13-6 where it states, “Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4.” Because this applicant had originally been ordained in South Florida Presbytery before transferring to the EPC, it was

deemed an exceptional case. Nevertheless, the applicant was examined on Christian experience and his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. This was done by the Credentialing Committee, who recommended the applicant to Presbytery. The applicant then answered questions on the floor of Presbytery about his views, especially with regard to women in ministry. This was not rightly recorded, so Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future

**2023-6: May 10, 2022; Aug 8, 2022 (BCO 38-1) — BCO 38-1** Confession for a case without process not recorded in minutes.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error of not including the full minutes of the Judicial Commission. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted to append the minutes to the May 10, 2022 and August 8, 2022 stated meetings (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-7: May 10, 2022 (BCO 15-1; RAO 16-3.e.4.) — Minutes of** commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets this mistake of not including the minutes of the installation commission. An oral report was given to the Presbytery on the installation. The commission minutes are on file and Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted to append the minutes to the May 10, 2022 stated meeting (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-8: May 10, 2022; Nov 8, 2022 (BCO 18-2) — No record of** endorsement by candidates' Session.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets this mistake in recordkeeping. The Session endorsements of these candidates are on file. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). We will be more diligent to record this in the minutes in the future.

**2023-9: May 10, 2022; Nov 8, 2022 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-months membership for candidates.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets this mistake in recordkeeping. Each of these candidates have been members of a PCA church for six months in keeping with *BCO* 18-2. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). We will be more diligent to record this in the future.

**2023-10: May 10, 2022; Nov 8, 2022 (BCO 13-11)** — Presbytery failed to provide a full and accurate record of judicial cases.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The complaints and minutes of the judicial commission are on file, and Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted to append the complaints and judicial commission minutes to the November 8, 2022 stated meetings (attached). Presbytery will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**2023-11: Aug 08, 2022 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. TE [name omitted] was licensed by Presbytery at the May 10, 2022 stated meeting where he preached a sermon before a committee of Presbytery and the minutes record his examination in Bible, theology, and *BCO*. TE [name omitted] has requisite seminary training, study in the original languages, and produced an exegetical paper. These are all on file. Presbytery has corrected the record by a motion to Amend Something Previously Adopted and has made a marginal notation in those minutes pointing to this response (attached). The Presbytery regrets this error of recordkeeping and will be more diligent in including these things in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-7: General (BCO 13-9.b; 40-1)** — No record of review of Session minutes.



**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception and regrets the error. The Presbytery has created an ad-hoc committee to review Session minutes. We will be more diligent to handle this issue correctly in the future.

**Rationale:** No record of review of any Session records from the period cited.

**2023-4: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 24-4.f.) — Presbytery implicitly granted a doctrinal exception that needs further clarity for proper review. Mr. [name omitted] appears to advocate for paedocommunion (*WLC* 177).

**Response:** Presbytery regrets this lack of clarity in full recordkeeping. It is correct that Mr. [name omitted] gave a stated difference with the Westminster Standards in line with what is called “paedocommunion” (though Mr. [name omitted] did not use this term). The Presbytery questioned him thoroughly about this view, especially as it touched other doctrines in our confessional system and “Federal Vision theology.” The Presbytery was satisfied with his answers, especially his commitment not to promote this view or practice it. Since the Presbytery has allowed for this exception in the past, it was deemed acceptable still. We will strive to record the full extent of the Presbytery’s examination of its candidates’ stated differences with the Standards.

**Rationale:** Presbytery needs to demonstrate how his views are not hostile to our system of doctrine.

76. That the Minutes of **South Texas** Presbytery: 63-0-1

a. Be approved without exception: **Oct 27-28, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 27-28, 2023** (*BCO* 19-2; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**2024-2: Jan 27-28, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-3: Apr 28-29, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exam.

**2024-4: Apr 28-29, 2023** (*BCO* 13-1; 13-3) — Meeting attendance roll list church with less than 350 members with three or more ruling elder commissioners present with no record of which two are voting.

**2024-5: Aug 11-12, 2023** (*BCO* 15-2; *BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — The Ministerial Relations Committee acted as a commission without a quorum.

**2024-6: General 2023** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-7: General 2023** (*BCO* 19-12; 18-6) — No record of annual reports received on every intern and on candidates.

**2024-8: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-4; 8-7) — No record of receiving reports from teaching elders working outside the bounds, and no record of Presbytery approval of TE laboring outside bounds.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-2: Jan 28-29, 2022; Aug 12-13, 2022; Oct 28-29, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session, and/or no record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its failure. The Candidates and Credentials Committee maintains records of candidates' membership qualifications Session endorsement prior to recommending the candidate for floor examination. Candidates in both cited instances met the *BCO* requirements. The Presbytery will be more diligent to include recitations of candidates meeting the requirements in future minute keeping.

**2023-9: Apr 29-30, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its incomplete minutes. The Ministerial Relations Committee reported in the Chairman's report that the Congregation and Session concurred with the dissolution of the relationship with TE [name omitted] was examined in the areas above, but the wording of our minutes inadequately reflected these elements. The Presbytery will be more diligent to ensure that a recitation of all items of the trials for licensure or ordination meetings be noted in our minutes.

**2023-16: Oct 28-29, 2022 (BCO 15-1)** — Committee cannot deliberate and conclude the business referred to it. It can only examine, and make recommendations in its report to the Presbytery.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. The extension of “without call” status will be only upon the vote of Presbytery in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2022-1: Apr 23-24, 2021 (BCO 20-1)** — No record of call to a definite work.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its omission. As reported by the Candidates Committee, there was a call to a definite work, however the Clerk neglected to record it. The Presbytery will ensure recitation of the calls be included in future minutes.

**Rationale:** The minutes need to include appropriate correction  
**2022-2: Apr 23-24, 2021; Aug 13-14, 2021 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. All examination requirements of *BCO* 21-4 were met, however, the Clerk failed to record each detail of examination. The Presbytery will be more diligent in its record keeping for trials of examination in its minutes.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 15-1; RAO 16-3.e.4)** — No minutes of any committee empowered as commissions submitted for GA review.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets this omission. the Stated Clerk has called for all Commission reports to be turned in to him to be included in the minutes. Commission minutes will be included with the 2023 minutes.

**Rationale:** Minutes of past commissions need to be properly attached to the appropriate minutes and submitted for review.

**2023-3: Jan 28-29, 2022 (BCO 40-2.1)** — Minutes state that the presbytery voted to receive the commission report to ordain and install [name omitted] , but referenced Attachment speaks only of a report to

Commission to Ordain/Install a Mr. [name omitted] . Minutes make no mention of Mr. [name omitted] .

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets the oversight. The minutes should have reflected receipt of the report of the Commission to ordain and install Rev. [name omitted]. The Presbytery regrets this scrivener's error.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-4: Apr 29-30, 2022; Oct 28-29, 2022 (BCO 15-1)** — It appears committees are empowered to act as if they were commissions.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets the oversight. RE [name omitted]'s report included only one Committee item which needed Presbytery approval, and because there was no quorum, a motion and second was required. Our minutes were unclear on that point. Our Standing Rules empowers the Ministerial Relations Committee to act as a commission to dissolve the pastoral relations of a minister in cases "where the minister and congregation formally concur in such dissolution and when pastoral problems are not involved." The Chairman of the committee should have asked for Presbytery ratification of the committee/commission's actions. As for the report of the Administrative Committee on the complaint against TE [name omitted], the Standing Rules grant the Committee authority for initial investigation to determine if the complaint was in order. This is what happened. The Presbytery regrets the ambiguity of its minutes. In the case of TE [name omitted]'s theology and exegetical papers, the Stated Clerk failed to memorialize the motion of the Candidates and Credentials Committee's motion to approve those actions. The Presbytery regrets this oversight and will endeavor to be more complete in future records keeping.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the relevant minutes have been corrected.

**2023-5: Apr 29-30, 2022 (RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Minutes do not indicate which areas transfer candidates were examined in.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets the oversight. All transfer candidates are examined in their views covered in BCO 13-6 both by the Candidates Committee and on the floor of Presbytery. The Presbytery regrets that our minutes did not

include those areas of examination and will endeavor to include them in future minutes.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-6: Apr 23, 2022; Aug 20, 2022 (BCO 13-6)** — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its oversight. Transferring TEs are examined in their views of theology in accordance with *BCO* 13-6 both in committee and on the floor of presbytery. This examination occurred by the minutes failed to memorialize the event. The Presbytery will endeavor to be more diligent in recording topics of views examination in its minutes.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-7: Apr 29-30, 2022 (BCO 13-1)** — Minutes indicate honorably retired TE is a member of a church.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its mischaracterization. The minutes should have reflected TE [name omitted] attends [church name omitted], not that he was a member. The Presbytery will take care to use more precise vocabulary in the future.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-8: Apr 29-30, 2022 (BCO 8-7; 20-1)** — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry. No record that the Presbytery has full assurance that the TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its oversight. TE additionally reported to our MTW and Candidates committees that he would have freedom to teach the doctrines of the Confession of Faith. His work is with the United Church of Bogota. The United Church of Bogota is over 100 years old. He is the new senior pastor of the church, following two other PCA pastors in that role. The Presbytery will be more diligent to record these details in future minutes.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-11: Apr 29-30, 2022 (BCO 13-6)** — Incomplete record of examination of TE transferring into Presbytery.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. TE [name omitted] was examined in each of the areas noted, but the details of those examinations were inadvertently left out of the minutes for the Presbytery.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-12: Apr 29-30, 2022; Aug 12-13, 2022; Oct 28-29, 2022 (BCO 46-6)** — No record of dismissal from original presbytery.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets the errors. All TEs were dismissed from their previous presbyteries in good standing; the Clerk failed to note those details in the minutes. The Presbytery will be diligent to include this information in the minutes in the future.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-13: Aug 12-13, 2022; Oct 28-29, 2022 (BCO 15-3; 36-7; 38-1; 40-2; RAO 16-3.e.4)** — Minutes provide an incomplete record of cases of discipline, and complaints received. Minutes indicate commission received confession of a TE and imposed censures of deposition from office and indefinite suspension from the sacraments. This may have been a *BCO* 38-1 case without process but there is no indication; it appears from the AC report that this commission was retroactively authorized and therefore had no authority to conduct the case or impose censure; also no indication procedures in *BCO* 36-7 were followed; also not clear if accused was a church officer; confession is not in minutes.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. This was a case without process. The Presbytery erred in its initial handling the case and these errors were reported by the Administrative Committee to the floor of Presbytery. The Presbytery chose to ratify the actions of the judicial commission and the case continued to the deposition of Mr. [name omitted] , but the Clerk failed to note that in the minutes of the Presbytery. Mr. [name

omitted] then chose to associate with another branch of the Church, severing his relationship with the PCA. The Presbytery will endeavor to avoid such irregularities in exercising discipline in the future.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the relevant minutes have been corrected or that the appropriate documents related to the 38-1 matter have been attached to the minutes.

**2023-14: Aug 12-13, 2022 (BCO 21-2)** — Presbytery did not find extraordinary circumstance or record super-majority vote to waive six-month requirement to be taken under care.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. The statement concerning the waiver of the six-month requirement included in the minutes was inadequate and conclusory. The vote to take Mr. [name omitted] under care was unanimous, but the Clerk failed to record that fact. The Presbytery will endeavor to be more precise in its record keeping in the future.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-15: Oct 28-29, 2022 (BCO 21-1)** — No record that transfer candidate received a call or that the presbytery approved the call.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. The Candidates Committee recited the call, its sufficiency and TE [name omitted] 's acceptance of his call, however, the Clerk failed to record that information in the minutes. The Presbytery will endeavor to be more complete in its recordation of calls and acceptance in future minutes.

**Rationale:** There is no record that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-17: Oct. 28-29, 2022 (BCO 21-1)** — No record that candidate received a call or that the presbytery approved the call.

**Response:** South Texas Presbytery concurs with the Exception and regrets its error. TE [name omitted] did receive a call as reported by the Candidates Committee and the Presbytery did approve the call. The Stated Clerk failed to record this information and will be more diligent in recording the actions of the floor in the future.

**Rationale:** The minutes need to include appropriate correction.

77. That the Minutes of **Southeast Alabama** Presbytery: 63-0-1

- a. Be approved without exception: **Aug 22, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **General 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:
  - 2024-1: Jan 24, 2023 (BCO 19-2)** — Presbytery did not make record of the trial parts omitted in an extraordinary case of licensure.
  - 2024-2: Mar 07, 2023 (RAO 16-3.c.1)** — The portion of the call for the meeting stating the purpose of the meeting is not recorded verbatim in the minutes of the meeting.
  - 2024-3: Dec 14, 2023 (RAO 16-3.c.1)** — The portion of the call for the meeting stating the purpose of the meeting is not recorded verbatim in the minutes of the meeting.
  - 2024-4: Jan 24, 2023 (BCO 13-10)** — No record of 60 days notice of dissolution.
  - 2024-5: Apr 25, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of endorsement by candidate's Session.
  - 2024-6: Apr 25, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-month membership for candidate.
  - 2024-7: Aug 25, 2023 (BCO 15-1)** — No record of commission proceedings/minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.
  - 2024-8: Oct 24, 2023 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Stated differences not recorded in the minister's/candidate's own words.
  - 2024-9: Oct 24, 2023 (BCO 21-4)** — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.
  - 2024-10: Oct 24, 2023 (BCO 19-2.f)** — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.
  - 2024-11: Oct 24, 2023 (BCO 21-4)** — No record of requiring statement of differences with our Standards.
  - 2024-12: Dec 14, 2023 (BCO 13-12)** — Business conducted that was not stated in the purpose of the called meeting.
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**
  - 2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 8-4)** — No record of annual reports received from TEs doing work needful to the Church.

**Response:** We are not sure to which TE this exception refers. If the TE in question is TE [name omitted] TE [name omitted] reported



to presbytery on his work with CURE Montgomery on January 25, 2022

**2023-2: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-2) — No record of annual reports received from TEs without call.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. TE [name omitted] submitted his annual report in July 2022, but we failed to include this report in presbytery's minutes for August 2022.

**2023-3: Jan 25, 2022** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation (/Session) concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** In its report, the Shepherding Committee did confirm that all Congregations (/Sessions) listed in 22-01-07.B.1.i-iii. concurred with the dissolution of pastoral relations. We did not list these details in our minutes.

**2023-6: Mar 31, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12; *RAO* 16-3.c.1) — Notice for called meeting not in order and purpose of called meeting not recorded verbatim in the minutes.

**Response:** We agree with this exception and will correct our actions in the future.

**2023-7: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 19-1, 22-6) — Stated supply is not listed in directory or minutes as an elder or licentiate.

**Response:** We agree with this citation. The man in question has been Stated Supply at that particular church for close to 30 years. We were renewing his license to preach but failed to list him on our roll as such. We will correct that error.

**2023-8: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Incomplete record of ordination exams.

**Response:** Because there were multiple examinations at this meeting of Presbytery, we are unclear as to which examinations were cited as incomplete. Please see answers to Exceptions 9-12, which might provide clarification on this exception.

**2023-9: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. The committee judged Mr. [name omitted]'s differences to be "more than semantic, but not out accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine." This was an oversight on the Committee's part, which the Presbytery failed to catch. We will correct our actions in the future.

**2023-10: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4, *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Candidate's stated difference appears to be incompletely recorded.

**Response:** The language as received by Presbytery from the Committee is recorded in the minutes. It does not represent an incomplete record of the candidate's differences.

**2023-11: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — No record of requiring statement of differences with our standards.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. The candidate had no stated differences, but we failed to record this in our minutes.

**2023-12: Apr 26, 2022** (*BCO* 21-5, 10-4) — Incomplete record of ordination and installation.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. We did follow the requirements set forth in *BCO* 21-5 but failed to record this in our minutes.

**2023-13: Oct 25, 2022** (*BCO* 13-10) — No record of transfer or dismissal of members upon dissolving a church.

**Response:** We agree with this exception. The members of [church name omitted] were transferred to [church name omitted], which was reported at Presbytery, but which we failed to record in our minutes.

**2023-14: Oct 25, 2022** (*BCO* 13-10) — At least 60-day notice to presbytery to dissolve a church not in order. (Not indicated/recorded).

**Response:** We agree to this exception. This action was taken in response to a request received from [church name omitted] on October 24, 2022. We took final action at our next stated meeting, and the property and members were transferred to the care of the session of [church name omitted]. We failed to include this communication in our minutes/records. We will correct our actions in the future.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-4: Jan 25, 2022; Apr 26, 2022; Aug 23, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate.

**Response:** We agree with the exception. In the future, we will add the following language to our minutes, "[This candidate], having met the requirements of *BCO* 18-2 and having been examined/questioned in accord with *BCO* 18-3 was received under care of SEAL Presbytery, as moved by the Committee and approved by Presbytery."

**Rationale:** Presbytery must report that the minutes have been corrected.

**2023-5: Jan 25, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of examinations (Under Care / Internship).

**Response:** We agree with the exception. In the future, we will add the following language to our minutes, “[This candidate], having met the requirements of *BCO* 18-2 and having been examined/questioned in accord with *BCO* 18-3 was received under care of SEAL Presbytery, as moved by the Committee and approved by Presbytery.”

**Rationale:** Presbytery must report that the minutes have been corrected.

78. That the Minutes of **Southern Louisiana** Presbytery: 64-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **None**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Jan 21, 2023; Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Apr 22, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership or endorsement by candidate’s Session.

**2024-2: Oct 28, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership or endorsement by candidate’s Session.

**2024-3: Oct 28, 2023** (*BCO* 20-1) — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**2024-4: General 2023** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1; 40-3) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**2024-5: General 2023** (*BCO* 8-7) — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**2024-6: General 2023** (*BCO* 18-6) — Annual reports of candidates not included.

**2024-7: Oct 28, 2023** (*BCO* 21-5) — No record of the ordination questions being given to a candidate during his ordination service.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-4: Apr 23, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete record of ordination exam: experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management; history of the PCA.

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for failing to include this information in the the Minutes. It was simply an

oversight on his behalf. The Presbytery did examine him both in the committee and on the floor on these topics. We will make every effort to include this information in the minutes in the future.

**2023-5: Apr 23, 2022 (BCO 15-1)** — Commission minutes not recorded in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for failing to put the minutes in our record. Please see the minutes attached to this report.

**2023-6: Jun 18, 2022 (BCO 21-5, 6, 7)** — Incorrect ordination procedure.

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for failing to include this information in our minutes. Please see the attached minutes with the correction. See pdf.

**2023-8: Aug 02, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for not including this information in our report to RPR. Please see the attached minutes from the Congregational meeting held by [church name omitted] to dissolve the pastoral tie. See pdf.

**2023-9: Aug 02, 2022 (BCO 21-4; RAO 16-3.e.5)** — Stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories. [TE Davison’s difference with WCF 4.1 on Creation]

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for not including the Presbytery’s judgment of TE [name omitted]’s views regarding the Sabbath. The Presbytery, in agreement with our Candidates Committee, found that his view was “more than semantic but not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of our doctrine”. (Please see attached minutes from Candidates Committee who recommended that we receive his stated difference in this manner). See pdf.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** SOLA Presbytery apologizes for not including annual reports from our TE’s laboring out of bounds in our Minutes. It is our

practice to hear reports from our ministers and churches at the end of our meetings. At that designated time our ministers laboring out of bounds give a report before presbytery. We will make an effort to make note of the reports when they are delivered by our Ministers laboring out of bounds going forward.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record or actions. Presbytery has not recorded its receipt of reports from out of bounds ministers.

**2023-2: General 2022** (*BCO* 13-9.b; 40-1) — No record of review of records of church Sessions.

**Response:** SOLA Presbytery apologies for failing to note the work of our Shepherding Committee who handles the Review of Sessional Records on behalf of SOLA Presbytery. It is our usual practice for the Shepherding Committee to take up the records at our Stated January meeting, review the records, and then, hand the records back at our Stated April Meeting. Last year the Committee was able to take up all records and redistribute them from January to April. It was a simple oversight on the Clerk's part to not make note of this in our minutes. We will attempt to do better in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record or actions. Presbytery has not recorded its review of Session records for 2022. Presbytery is required to review the records of lower courts annually and record in its own minutes whether it approves, disapproves or corrects the records in any particular (*BCO* 40-1, 40-3).

**2023-3: Jan 22, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2) — Incomplete record of licensure exam: no statement of Christian experience and inward call.

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for failing to include this information in the Minutes. This is always the first part of the floor examination that we approve and I simply left it out. We will make every effort to include this information in the minutes in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record. Presbytery has not recorded the receipt of a statement of Christian experience and inward call from the licensee.

**2023-7: Aug 02, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — Presbytery did not act to dissolve a TE's call and place him on the rolls without call after his church left the denomination and he left the field.

**Response:** The Clerk of SOLA Presbytery apologizes for failing to include this action in our minutes. It was an oversight on the clerk's part. We will make every effort to include all actions of the Presbytery in our minutes in the future.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record. Presbytery has not recorded the dissolution of the TE's call.

**2023-10: Oct 22, 2022 (BCO 5-9)** — Presbytery organized a church that had not elected ruling elders or called a pastor. [attached Dec. 19, 2022 commission minutes]

**Response:** The commission minutes unfortunately were incomplete and we apologize for not completing them prior to filing our RPR report last year. Five men were duly elected and installed as Ruling Elders and three men were duly elected and installed as Deacons by the church. Please forgive our failure to include that information. We will make every effort to correct this failure in the future.

**Rationale:** Presbytery's response does not record the names of officer candidates and all necessary steps for officer election and examination.

**2023-11: Oct 22, 2022 (BCO 21-9)** — Presbytery installed a pastor without having received or approved a call.

**Response:** The commission failed to note that the TE did receive a call and it was placed in his hands. Please forgive this failure on our part. We will make every effort to include this information going forward.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (RAO 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not approved the terms of call for the TE.

79. That the Minutes of **Southern New England Presbytery:** 66-0-0
- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 21, 2023; Mar 04, 2023; Apr 28-29, 2023; Oct 21, 2023; Dec 16, 2023**
  - b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
  - c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Sep 16, 2023** (BCO 38-3.a.) — TE improperly permitted to withdraw from membership and removed from roll even though he was not (1) affiliated with another branch of the church and (2) a member in good standing.

**d. No response to previous assemblies required.**

80. That the Minutes of **Southwest Florida** Presbytery: 60-0-1

**a. Be approved without exception: Feb 11, 2023; Nov 14, 2023**

**b. Be approved with exception of form: General 2023**

**c. Be approved with exception of substance:**

**2024-1: May 09, 2023** (BCO 8-7) — No record that the presbytery is assured that an out of bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our church.

**2024-2: May 09, 2023** (BCO 8-7) — No record that out of bounds TE is engaged in preaching and teaching the Word.

**2024-3: May 09, 2023** (BCO 20-1) — No record of the reason why presbytery considers an out of bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**2024-4: Sep 09, 2023** (BCO 21-6) — Installation questions for assistant pastor addressed to congregation instead of session.

**d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: Sep 10, 2022** (BCO 23-1) — No record that Congregation/Session concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the Exception of Substance. The Presbytery should have received communication from the Congregation—and not merely the Session—requesting the Presbytery dissolve the pastoral relation between the church and the Teaching Elder. Since the Teaching Elder has already left the church and the Presbytery has already dissolved the pastoral relation, there is no way to remedy the error. However, the Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future to obtain the correct communication from the church requesting a pastoral dissolution.

81. That the Minutes of **Suncoast Florida** Presbytery: 61-0-0

**a. Be approved without exception: General 2023; Jan 04, 2023; Feb 04, 2023; May 09, 2023; Sep 12, 2023.**

**b. Be approved with exception of form: None**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Feb 14, 2023** (*BCO* 21-4) — Candidate’s stated difference(s) not recorded

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: Feb 08, 2022** (*BCO* 8-4; 20-1) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** When the Presbytery approved this new calling, it came from the same calling body that had previously been approved, so there was no debate regarding whether there would be “full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.” Additionally, the Presbytery has full confidence in the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission on Chaplains and Military Personnel. A note has been added to the minutes of Feb. 8, 2022, to read: “Presbytery is fully satisfied that the ‘TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church,’ and that this is ‘a valid Christian ministry.’”

**2023-2: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 13-9a; 46-6) — No record of vote to dismiss TEs called to other Presbyteries. Further, there is no evidence that the men were received by these other presbyteries.

**Response:** The Presbytery regrets not noting that the transfer had been completed. A Note was added to the minutes of May 10, 2022, to read: “TE was received into South Texas Presbytery on 6/9/2022.”

**2023-3: May 10, 2022; Sept. 13, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1) — Report of Commission established at the May Stated Meeting to install 2 TEs is not noted or included in subsequent minutes.

**Response:** The Presbytery regrets the error of not including the minutes of this Commission to install 2 TEs. Those minutes were received by the Presbytery at its September 12, 2023 Stated meeting and are part of the record of that meeting.

**2023-5: May 10, 2022** (*BCO* 46-6) — TE is received from another PCA presbytery but no evidence of action of other Presbytery.

**Response:** The Presbytery regrets not noting that the transfer had been completed. A Note was added to the minutes of May 10, 2022, to read: “TE was received into Pacific Northwest Presbytery on 10/18/2022.”



**2023-6: Nov 09, 2022 (BCO 19-1)** — Presbytery gives permission to a man to preach in a pulpit on a regular basis without proper licensure.

**Response:** The Presbytery undertook a full licensure exam at this meeting, but noted some weaknesses that needed further clarification before final approval. The Presbytery was well satisfied that they were preserving the pulpit by allowing this man to preach for a very set time that would not be extended beyond a second examination. The man was fully licensed at a Called Meeting on January 4, 2023.

- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-4: May 10, 2022 (BCO 20-1)** — No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** The Presbytery regrets the error of not noting that the work is a valid Christian ministry. A note was added to the minutes of May 10, 2022, to read: “The ministry to which this TE is called is a valid Christian ministry.” The Presbytery also notes that the citation regarding an “out-of-bounds ministry” in the September 13, 2022 minutes did not involve the actual approval of a call, but an inquiry by the Presbytery regarding a TE’s activity.

**Rationale:** No reason given for why it is a valid Christian ministry.

82. That the Minutes of **Susquehanna Valley** Presbytery: 58-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Apr 22, 2023; May 20, 2023; Sep 19, 2023**

- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Nov 18, 2023**

- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Feb 11, 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Congregation concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-2: Feb 11, 2023 (BCO 8-7)** — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: May 21, 2022 (BCO 13-6; 21-4)** — Incomplete record of transfer exam for minister from another denomination.

**Response:** Our Candidates, Interns, and Examinations (CIE) committee examined TE [name omitted] in the areas of Bible Content, Theology, Sacraments, Church History and Church Government. The CIE committee also heard his sermon and confirmed his educational credentials. During our floor examine, we only examined TE [name omitted] with representative questions from theology, sacraments, and church government as though he was transferring from another PCA presbytery. We apologize for our negligence and will be diligent going forward to fully examine men transferring from another denomination both in committee and on the floor of presbytery.

83. That the Minutes of **Tennessee Valley** Presbytery: 64-0-0

a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **None**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: Jan 17, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12; *RONR* (12th ed.) 25:10) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded).

**2024-2: Feb 11, 2023** (*BCO* 13-11; 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes, and these must be presented for review next year.

**2024-3: Feb 11, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-4: Feb 11, 2023** (*BCO* 23-1) — No record that Congregation (/Session) concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-5: Mar 23, 2023** (*BCO* 13-12; *RONR* (12th ed.) 25:10) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice, verbatim meeting call, etc., not indicated/recorded).

**2024-6: Mar 23, 2023** (*BCO* 30-1) — Presbytery requires additional steps after the censure of admonition is administered.

**2024-7: May 13, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-8: May 13, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-9: May 13, 2023** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-10: Aug 08, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

**2024-11: Aug 08, 2023 (BCO 8-7)** — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church.

**2024-12: Aug 08, 2023 (BCO 23-1)** — No record that Congregation (/Session) concurred with dissolution of pastoral relations.

**2024-13: Nov 07, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-month membership for candidate.

- c. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Jan 09, 2021 (BCO 22-5; 20-1)** — Improper status granted to TE who has no pastoral call but is stated supply, pending approval from other presbytery.

**Response:** The Tennessee Valley Presbytery acknowledges and apologizes for the mistake. The Pastoral Care Committee (functioning as a commission in accord with our Standing Rules) intended only to approve of the dissolution of the TE's current call, not to approve him as Stated Supply for another presbytery. For information that affects corrective actions, the TE has now been transferred out of the Tennessee Valley Presbytery with a new call.

**2022-3: Oct 19, 2021 (BCO 19-1)** — Candidate under care preaching regularly in PCA pulpits without a license.

**Response:** The Tennessee Valley Presbytery acknowledges and apologizes for the mistake. The Candidate was not preaching regularly. The Candidate did use the phrases "occasionally preaching" and "preaching various times per month." When TVP saw that language, we contacted the candidate to understand the regularity with which he had preached. He acknowledged that his communication with us was not clear, and that he preached only 3 total times in 2021.

**2023-4: Jan 8, 2022; Apr 9, 2022; Jul 12, 2022; Oct 18, 2022 (BCO 46-6)** — TEs are received from other PCA presbyteries but no evidence of action of other Presbytery.

**Response:** We erred by not recording the action of the other Presbyteries. We do now have it on record that TEs [names omitted] were all released from their respective Presbyteries

- d. That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:

**2022-2: Jul 13, 2021** (*BCO* 15-1, 2) — An individual may not take an action on behalf of a court; a commission is required.

**Response:** The Tennessee Valley Presbytery acknowledges and apologizes for the mistake. The motion for an individual to be empowered to respond to RPR exceptions was out of order. We will not make this mistake in the future.

**Rationale:** Presbytery has not corrected its error by ratifying the actions in question.

**2023-1: General 2022** (*BCO* 40-1; *RAO* 16-10) — Report of review by GA of 2021 minutes not included in the minutes of Presbytery, and no response to the Assembly concerning disposition of the exceptions of substance.

**Response:** We erred by not reviewing the report by GA of 2021 and by not approving a response by the deadline. We are responding now.

**Rationale:** *RAO* 16-10.a — No response to the Assembly concerning disposition of an exception of substance.

**2023-2: Jan 08, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1) — Commissions are formed to install previously ordained TEs but no commission reports are found in subsequent minutes.

**Response:** We erred by not including the installation reports for TE [name omitted] and TE [name omitted] was installed January 2022, and we do have his report. TE [name omitted] was installed February 2022, and we do have his report.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-3: Jan 08, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7; 20-1) — No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** We erred by not making sure the call had language guaranteeing that TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the

doctrine of our Church. We erred by not recording the reasons why we consider the work of a chaplain to be a valid Christian ministry

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-5: Apr 09, 2022** (*BCO* 19-7-10) — Presbytery “forms an internship” for a candidate, but does not approve the nature of the internship, does not examine the man, and does not address the intern as required.

**Response:** We erred by not recording the nature of Mr. [name omitted]’s internship, by not specifying that this internship candidate was examined with regard to his inward call to the ministry of the Word, and that the intern was addressed according to *BCO* 19-10. We did do all of these.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-6: Apr 9, 2022; Jul 12, 2022; Oct 18, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2; *RAO* 16-6.c.2) — No record of six-months membership requirement and one month application deadline for man coming under care. This was an Exception of Form also in the report on the 2021 minutes.

**Response:** We erred by not recording that Mr. [name omitted] , Mr. [name omitted] , and Mr. [name omitted] satisfied all the requirements of *BCO* 18-2, including the six-month membership requirement. They did satisfy those requirements at that time.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-7: Apr 09, 2022** (*BCO* 8-7; 15-1; 20-1; 21-1) — A TE’s status is changed from Honorably Retired to Out of Bounds, but specific arrangements of call not shown to be approved. No record that the Presbytery is assured that an out-of-bounds TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church. No record of the reasons why Presbytery considers an out-of-bounds work to be a valid Christian ministry.

**Response:** We erred by not specifying that we did in fact approve of TE [name omitted]’s call, and we erred by not including that call in the minutes. We erred by not making sure the call had language guaranteeing that TE will have full freedom to maintain and teach the

doctrine of our Church. We erred by not recording the reasons why we consider the work of a chaplain to be a valid Christian ministry

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-8: Apr 9, 2022; Oct. 18, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; 23-1) — A commission dissolves men's call, but no evidence of congregational (or sessional) concurrence, and sometimes the matter is not included in the minutes of Presbytery.

**Response:** We erred by not including the minutes from congregational or session meetings where the dissolution of pastoral relationship for TE [name omitted] , TE [name omitted] , and TE [name omitted] were voted on.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-9: Jul 12, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2, 3) — No record of endorsement by candidate's session, six-months membership, charge given to candidate, nor of his answering the required questions.

**Response:** We erred by not recording that Mr. [name omitted] satisfied all the requirements of *BCO* 18-2, including the six-month membership requirement and an endorsement by the candidate's session. He did satisfy those requirements at that time. We erred by not properly recording that we did in fact give a charge and that the candidate did answer the questions in 18-3.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-10: Jul 12, 2022** (*BCO* 5-9; 15-1; 24-1) — There is no report in the October meeting of the commission to organize the mission work and to show that *BCO* 5-9.i was followed even though the work is listed in the Directory as being organized.

**Response:** We erred by not including the report of particularization, which we did have at the time and which does satisfy that *BCO* 5-9.i was followed

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

**2023-11: Oct 18, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; 13-6; *RAO* 16-1.e.5) — Report and minutes of Theological Examining Committee, acting as a commission to conduct a transfer exam not included.

**Response:** We erred by not attaching the TEC minutes from July 7, 2022 where the TEC acted as a commission to conduct a transfer exam, which we do have now.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (RAO 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the minutes for review.

84. That the Minutes of **Tidewater** Presbytery: 64-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; May 01, 2023; Oct 05, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Feb 03, 2023**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory: 2021-1: Aug 01, 2019 (BCO 19-5) — Incomplete record of a licensure transfer exam.**

**Response:** [2022]: The Presbytery disagrees with this exception. We suggest that the language of 19-5 is confusing at best. In the first sentence we read, “the latter Presbytery may, at its discretion, on his producing proper testimonials from the former, repeat any portion of the previous Presbytery’s examination it desires.” The following sentence then reads, “The Presbytery into whose bounds the licentiate is moving, however, must at least examine the man concerning: a. his Christian experience, b. his call to preach the Gospel, c. his views in theology, d. Bible content, e. church government.” We erred in the favor of the “at its discretion” finding the examination of the previous presbytery and the documentation provided to as sufficient and decided to only repeat his testimony and views.

**Rationale:** [2022]: *BCO* 19-5 mandates a minimum exam that must be given to licentiate transfers. The whole *BCO* 19-2 exam need not be repeated, but the 19-5 elements must be.

**Response:** [2023] The Presbytery understands its error and has taken every step to correct this for the future. The membership committee has been apprised of the requirements of *BCO* 19-5 and moving forward a minimum exam will be given. The Tidewater Presbytery approved these actions in our 2/4/2023 Stated Meeting.

**Rationale:** [2023] No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (RAO 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not properly resolved the

examination of the licentiate through proper examination. If the man seeks to have his license renewed *BCO* 19-5 must be followed.

**Response:** Presbytery now better understands this exception. Presbytery's new Stated Clerk reviewed this matter extensively, including reviewing all related materials and interviewing individuals present at that exam. What was listed as an examination of the candidate's views did in fact include all the elements of *BCO* 19-5, though this was not properly recorded in the minutes. Presbytery has corrected our process for transferring licentiates to avoid this error in the future. As such, should this individual's licensure come up for renewal, Presbytery will make sure to follow *BCO* 19-5 and record the fulfillment of all the elements. Presbytery corrected the record at its next Stated Meeting on October 5, 2023, as follows: Mr. [name omitted] came for transfer of his licensure from the James River Presbytery. All appropriate documentation has been received. Mr. [name omitted] shared his testimony and call to preach the Gospel with the TWP. Mr. [name omitted] was examined by the TWP on his views in theology, Bible content, and church government. TWP notes that all elements of *BCO* 19-5 were fulfilled in this examination.

**2021-2: Feb 01, 2020** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission (to ordain and install) TEs [names omitted] not entered into presbytery minutes.

**Response:** [2022]: The Presbytery agrees with this omission. This was purely an oversight of the Clerk. The Sessional Oversight Commission was appointed to ordain and install and I failed to note that in the minutes

**Rationale:** [2022]: Presbytery needs to submit the commission minutes for review.

**Response:** [2023] While I failed to record the make up of the commissions to ordain the two candidates, the minutes of these commissions were not approved until a later Stated Meeting. At the Feb 1, 2020 meeting the candidates were examined and approved for ordination, the dates and times were not set at that meeting. One candidate left the PCA before his ordination, and the other did have his ordination commission at a later date.



**Rationale:** [2023] No record that Presbytery corrected its record (RAO 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the commission minutes for review.

**Response:** Presbytery now better understands this exception. One commission met, but the presbytery neglected to record that report in its minutes. Presbytery regrets the error and corrected the record at the Stated Meeting of October 5, 2023, by reviewing and recording the commission minutes for Chris Cartwright. However, the second commission involves a very complex situation with no satisfactory remedy. [Name omitted] was examined successfully for ordination and a commission was established to ordain and install him at a later date. Prior to that date, Mr. [name omitted] left the church and the denomination. The ordination and installation commission was never able to meet, so there are no minutes to review. Presbytery acknowledges the irregularity of this situation. Presbytery updated the record at its Stated Meeting of October 5, 2023, as follows: Presbytery recognizes that the commission to ordain and install [name omitted] was never able to carry out the work assigned to it. Presbytery recognizes the irregularity of these circumstances and dissolves the commission with thanks. Presbytery notes that [name omitted] is not at this time a member of Presbytery or of the PCA.

**2022-1: Feb 06, 2021** (Bylaws 7.2.1) — Taking action at virtual meeting expressly prohibited by Presbytery bylaws.

**Response:** Due to extraordinary circumstances of that week, the Executive Committee had to make a meeting decision. The meeting was scheduled to meet in a school, which closed due to a Covid outbreak. The local gas prices shot up and many stations were closed due to shortages, so the Executive Committee agreed that on the short notice of a change, rather than cancel the meeting, to hold it virtually. The Presbytery was in the process of making the Bylaws Change to allow this but had not had all the necessary readings. The Bylaws have since been amended, Covid shut downs are a thing of the past, and this will no longer be an issue.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its actions (RAO 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not ratified the actions taken without proper authority.

**Response:** Presbytery now better understands this exception and agrees. Presbytery updated the record at its Stated Meeting of October 5, 2023, to ratify the actions taken at the virtual presbytery meeting of February 6, 2021. Presbytery acknowledges the irregularity of the difficulties posed by the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2022-2: Feb 6, 2021; Oct 7, 2021 (BCO 15-1, 2)** — An individual may not take an action on behalf of a court; a commission is required.

**Response:** In the Feb 6 Minutes [p4] recommendation 3 reads; “Recommendation 3 – refer to admin committee and clerk to develop a plan of action – MSP. The Admin Committee and the Clerk were to serve together to develop the plan of action. As can be seen in the “Report of the Commission,” a commission was appointed to adjudicate the case and Recommendation 3, from the Commission, was for the Admin Committee with the clerk to handle one aspect of the resolution. At no time was an individual taking action on behalf of the court.

**Rationale:** The original exception related to the item on ll. 11–12 on p. 4 of the Feb 6, 2021 minutes and ll. 33–34 on p. 4 of the Oct 7, 2021 minutes. Presbytery did not respond to the identified exception of substance.

**Response:** Presbytery now better understands this exception and agrees. Presbytery updated the record at its Stated Meeting of October 5, 2023, as follows: Presbytery ratifies the actions of the Stated Clerk in the wake of the February 6, 2021, and October 7, 2021, Stated Meetings to approve nominations to General Assembly committees. Presbytery recognizes that it improperly assigned this duty to the Stated Clerk and notes that in the future, a properly-constituted commission will be established to take actions on behalf of Presbytery

**2022-3: Feb 06, 2021 (BCO 15-3)** — Presbytery took action on a recommendation from a judicial commission without receiving a full statement of the case.

**Response:** During the verbal report to the TWP, a full statement was made of the case. Due to the sensitive nature of the case, the Commission and the TWP concurred that a printed copy would not be distributed but the summary with the report. We will, in the future, make sure we clearly follow 15-3.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not provided the statement in written form to the Presbytery or submitted the record for review.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. Presbytery updated the record at its Stated Meeting of October 5, 2023, as follows: Correct the record of February 6, 2021, to include in the minutes a written version of the verbal the statement of the case presented by the judicial commission. That supplemental report has now been added to the minutes of Presbytery.

**2022-4: Oct 07, 2021** (*BCO* 13-11) — Complaint and Appeal sent to Presbytery not recorded in Presbytery's minutes.

**Response:** We were in error for not including all of the email correspondence as the majority of the complaint and appeal were handled via email conversations. We have since cleaned up our process for receiving and handling complaints and appeals.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1). Presbytery has not submitted the records for review.

**Response:** Presbytery better understands this exception and agrees that a complaint or appeal should be published in the minutes. Further investigation of this matter revealed that only an appeal was filed with presbytery, not a complaint. The confusion about having both a complaint and an appeal stemmed from initial communications from the laypersons involved. Only an appeal was filed; there was no complaint. Presbytery updated the record at its Stated Meeting of October 5, 2023, to record the Appeal sent to presbytery in the minutes.

**2023-1: Feb 05, 2022** (*BCO* 15-3) — Action of Presbytery judicial commission was not approved or disapproved by vote of Presbytery.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. The action of the judicial commission was approved but not recorded in the minutes. Presbytery corrected the record at its next Stated Meeting on October 5, 2023, as follows: Correct the record of the February 5, 2022, meeting of Tidewater Presbytery to... record that Presbytery did approve the action of the TWP judicial commission.

**2023-2: Feb 05, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Two stated differences not judged with the prescribed categories; one stated difference not judged at all.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. Presbytery corrected the record at its next Stated Meeting on October 5, 2023, as follows: Correct the record of the February 5, 2022, meeting of Tidewater Presbytery to... Clarify that Presbytery ruled all three of [name omitted] 's exceptions (Creation, Sabbath, Images) to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine.”

**2023-3: Feb 05, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — One stated difference not judged with the prescribed categories; and a difference the candidate did not state or was not recorded was judged.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. Presbytery corrected the record at its next Stated Meeting on October 5, 2023, as follows: Correct the record of the February 5, 2022, meeting of Tidewater Presbytery to... Clarify that Presbytery ruled two of [name omitted] 's exceptions (Sabbath, Images) to be more than semantic, but “not out of accord with any fundamental of our system of doctrine.” Presbytery ruled that his stated exception regarding “willful desertion” to be merely semantic. Correct the record of the February 5, 2022, meeting of Tidewater Presbytery to... record [name omitted] 's exception regarding images in his own words: As it pertains to *WLC* 109, I affirm the second commandment. I believe that for purposes of catechizing those in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, particularly young children, that it can be appropriate to show forth some kind of symbolic representation of the Lord Jesus that displays to the watching world that God the Son, did take on flesh in His incarnation. However, any illustrative or pictorial representations of God the Son in His incarnation as Jesus of Nazareth should be done with reservation and prayerful thought and not in a flippant manner. By this, I mean that any symbolic representation of Christ should never be portrayed or taught as being “the real Jesus”. Fundamentally, any symbolic representation of the Lord should never be used for the purpose of worshipping Him. It seems to me that the thrust of the second commandment is to prohibit those made in the image of God from bowing down or serving images or representations of created things as if they are God.

**2023-4: Feb 05, 2022 (BCO 15-2)** — Commission established to take action on behalf of Presbytery without meeting minimum membership requirement.

**Response:** Presbytery agrees with this exception. Presbytery has taken action to better handle nominations that arrive between the winter stated meeting and the deadline for nominations to General Assembly Committees of Commissioners. Presbytery corrected the record at its next Stated Meeting on October 5, 2023, as follows: Correct the record of the February 5, 2022, meeting of Tidewater Presbytery to... ratify the actions of the Moderator and Stated Clerk to approve nominations to General Assembly, noting that the minimum membership requirement of Ruling and Teaching elders was not met in the commission established for this purpose

85. That the Minutes of **Warrior Presbytery:** 60-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Jan 24, 2023; Mar 04, 2023; Apr 18, 2023; Oct 17, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory**
- c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023** — Annual reports of candidates not included.

**2024-2: General 2023 (BCO 10-3)** — The Moderator may be elected for at most 1 year at a time. The Standing Rules state that he "shall serve until his successor is elected", which has no limit.

- d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2023-1: General 2022 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of annual report(s) of TE(s) laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** Warrior Presbytery apologizes for this oversight and will ensure TEs laboring out of bounds provide an annual report. During this time period, Warrior only had two TEs laboring out of bounds and both were present at the January 25, 2022 meeting. It is possible they gave reports and it was not recorded in the minutes, however we are unable to verify this.

**2023-2: Oct 18, 2022 (BCO 15-1; RAO 16-3.e.4)** — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** Warrior Presbytery apologizes for this oversight and will ensure that minutes of commissions are entered into the minutes. At Warrior's October 17, 2023 meeting, the October 18, 2022 minutes

were corrected by appending the commission minutes through a motion to “Amend Something Previously Adopted.”

86. That the Minutes of **West Hudson** Presbytery: 39-16-10

a. Be approved without exception: **Sep 14, 2023; Nov 16, 2023**

b. Be approved with exception of form: **Directory; May 16, 2023**

c. Be approved with exception of substance:

**2024-1: General 2023** (BCO 19-12) — Reports on every intern by the committee charged with the oversight of interns at each stated meeting not included.

**2024-2: Feb 09, 2023** (BCO 19-6) — 3/4 vote for waiving internship requirement not recorded.

**2024-3: General 2023** (BCO 18-6) — Annual reports of candidates not included.

**2024-4: General 2023** (BCO 19-12) — Annual report of Interns not included.

d. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**

**2023-1: General 2021; General 2022** (BCO 8-7) — No record of annual reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**Response:** West Hudson agrees with the exception. Presbytery has begun in 2023 to receive and record in its minutes reports of TEs laboring out of bounds.

**2023-2: May 03, 2021** (BCO 23-1) — No record if presbytery determined “the dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the senior pastor was brought about in Christian love and good order on the part of the parties concerned.”

**Response:** West Hudson respectfully disagrees with the exception. There is no constitutional requirement that the words “the dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the senior pastor was brought about in Christian love and good order on the part of the parties concerned” be recorded in Presbytery’s minutes, and the operating assumption of Presbytery is that its committees are competent to discharge their duties according to the provisions of the *BCO*. Moreover, *BCO* 23-1 was explicitly cited in the minutes in reference to the required vote minimums, which suggests that Presbytery was aware of its obligation to ensure that the dissolution was brought about according to our standards. Finally, both the church

and the outgoing minister have the ability to complain against an action of Presbytery in the event that the dissolution was not brought about according to our standards, which did not happen. For these reasons, Presbytery does not agree that its minutes are deficient in this instance.

**2023-3: May 03, 2021 (BCO 15-2)** — No record of commission members or a motion to empower anyone to appoint members.

**Response:** West Hudson respectfully disagrees with the exception but will change its practice going forward. Presbytery's practice has been to form ordination/installation commissions using the method of appointment by the chair (*RONR* (12th ed.) 50:13 (d)) with the added implied understanding that the chair's designee, named 'convener' in the minutes, would fill out the committee membership as needed. Presbytery notes that this practice has not led to any exceptions of substance with respect to the make-up or discharge of the duties of any ordination/installation commission it has formed. Furthermore, not a single commissioner of Presbytery has ever objected to this practice. While the practice may be incautious, it has not impacted the actual work of Presbytery.

**2023-4: Sep 09, 2021 (BCO 8-7)** — No record of presbytery determining that a TE laboring out of bounds will "be assured he will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church."

**Response:** West Hudson agrees with this exception. A statement from the TEs church, which was supplied at the time of the TEs ordination, has been included in Presbytery's minutes, an extract of which is attached to this form.

**2023-5: Nov 18, 2021 (BCO 40-4)** — Presbytery failed to "deliberate and judge in the whole matter" regarding a report received according to *BCO* 40-4. ("Whether [church name omitted] erred by sustaining [name omitted] as Youth Director"—the committee chose not to make a recommendation because the person in question was no longer employed, and presbytery approved this recommendation).

**Response:** West Hudson respectfully disagrees with the exception. Presbytery did, in fact, "judge in the whole matter" by taking action on all three parts of the *BCO* 40-4 report, as the minutes indicate. That Presbytery responded to the *BCO* 40-4 report as it did, and not another way, may be a matter of wisdom, but in Presbytery's

judgment it is not an instance of failing to deliberate and judge in the whole matter.

**2023-6: Feb 10, 2022 (BCO 23-1)** — No mention that the pastoral relationship was dissolved “in Christian love and good order on the parties concerned.”

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception. There is no constitutional requirement that the words “in Christian love and good order on the parties concerned” be recorded in Presbytery’s minutes when acting on the dissolution of a pastoral relation, and the operating assumption of Presbytery is that its committees are competent to discharge their duties according to the provisions of the *BCO*. For these reasons, Presbytery does not agree that its minutes are deficient in this instance.

**2023-8: May 09, 2022 (BCO 21-4)** — Presbytery granted a doctrinal exception that needs further clarification for proper review.

**Response:** West Hudson respectfully disagrees with the exception. Presbytery does not agree that the granted exception requires further clarification for the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records to properly review the matter.

**2023-9: May 09, 2022 (BCO 19-1, 5)** — Presbytery transferred a licentiate without a proper examination.

**Response:** West Hudson agrees with the exception. The licentiate was examined according to *BCO* 19-5 prior to receiving him, but that examination only took place in committee and not on the floor of Presbytery. Presbytery will endeavor to be more careful in the future.

**2023-10: May 09, 2022 (BCO 38-2)** — Divesting a TE takes two meetings of presbytery. No record that he made the request at a previous meeting of presbytery.

**Response:** West Hudson agrees with the exception. The teaching elder in question was made fully aware of the process and made his request to be divested without censure prior to Presbytery’s stated meeting. Since the teaching elder in question did not reside in the geographic bounds of Presbytery, his request was reported and acted on at the same Presbytery meeting. Presbytery will endeavor to be more careful in the future.



- e. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found unsatisfactory, therefore new responses shall be submitted to the following GA:**

**2023-7: Apr 26, 2022 (BCO 13-6)** — No record of which presbytery TE is transferring from and whether he is a member in good standing.

**Response:** As far as Presbytery can discern, this is an error from the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records. Presbytery did not meet on April 26, 2022.

**Rationale:** Although the Presbytery did not meet on April 26, 2022, a commission of presbytery did meet on that date to examine a TE for transfer (page 2022-20). The commission minutes fail to record which presbytery the TE is transferring from and whether he is a member in good standing.

87. That the Minutes of **Westminster** Presbytery: 57-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **Mar 11, 2023; Apr 25, 2023; Aug 01, 2023; Aug 12, 2023; Nov 11, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of substance: **None**
- c. **No response to previous assemblies required.**

88. That the Minutes of **Wisconsin** Presbytery: 62-0-0

- a. Be approved without exception: **General 2023; Jan 28, 2023; Oct 28, 2023**
- b. Be approved with exception of substance:  
**2024-1: Apr 22, 2023 (BCO 38-3)** — No record that Presbytery made determinations required by *BCO* 38-3 (specifically in applying a. or b.).  
**2024-2: Apr 22, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-month membership for candidates  
**2024-3: Jul 22, 2023 (BCO 18-2)** — No record of six-month membership for candidates.
- c. **That the following responses to the 51<sup>st</sup> GA be found satisfactory:**  
**2022-1: Jan 23, 2021 (BCO 19-2.a)** — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded.

**Response:** As noted in the minutes, both Mr. [name omitted] and Mr. [name omitted] had been examined in the area of the “inward call to the ministry,” which included their inward call to preach the gospel,

during their exams for coming under care. Mr. [name omitted] had been examined at the Stated Presbytery meeting on September 26, 2020, and Mr. [name omitted] had been examined at the Stated Presbytery meeting on April 27, 2019.

**Rationale:** Candidates coming under care are required to be examined “on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry” (*BCO* 18-3). Licensure requires a “statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel,” which seeks greater scrutiny than to come under care (*BCO* 19-2.a). Furthermore, “No Presbytery shall omit any parts of examination except in extraordinary cases; and whenever a Presbytery shall omit any of these parts, it shall always make a record of the reasons therefore, and of the trial parts omitted.” (*BCO* 19-2).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to correct its minutes from January 23, 2021; and promises to be more careful in the future. The Presbytery did not think it possible to re-examine these men, who have been now been ordained, especially as they have since exhibited Godly personal character and family management in their own ministries.

**2022-2: Jan 23, 2021** (*BCO* 19-7) — All specific requirements of internship not recorded.

**Response:** Mr. [name omitted] was a candidate under the care of the Presbytery since being examined at the Stated Presbytery meeting on September 26, 2020. He had given an oral statement of his inward call to the ministry of the Word during that Stated Presbytery meeting and the Presbytery did not choose to re-examine him in this area at the Stated Presbytery in January, but accepted his statement from September 26, 2020. The internship program was presented and approved, he was given the requisite charge, and he was prayed for. It is unclear what further requirements need to be recorded.

**Rationale:** Candidates coming under care are required to be examined “on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry” (*BCO* 18-3). The process for becoming an intern requires a statement “of his inward call to the ministry of the Word” (*BCO* 19-10). These questions are different, and a single candidate must be examined on both questions.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to correct its minutes from January 23, 2021; and promises to be more careful in the future. The Presbytery did not think it possible to re-examine the intern, who has now been ordained, especially as he has since exhibited Godly personal character and family management in his own ministry.

**2022-3: Jan 23, 2021** (*BCO* 19-2.f; *RAO* 16-3.e.5) — Stated differences not recorded in the candidate's own words.

**Response:** Actually these are exactly the words the candidate submitted. Attached as Exhibit A is the document the Presbytery received from Mr. [name omitted] in preparation of this meeting.

**Rationale:** Presbytery had adopted a motion classifying the Framework Interpretation as “an allowable exception” (Jan 23, 2021, p. 4), and the candidate declared, “I humbly submit my exception to the phrase ‘in the space of six days’ as I personally hold to a Framework Interpretation.” Stating one's differences from our confessional standards in one's own words requires more than citing a different doctrine; a candidate must give his own biblical rationale for exactly what he believes, since “it is the right and responsibility of the Presbytery to determine if the candidate is out of accord with any of the fundamentals of these doctrinal standards and, as a consequence, may not be able to in good faith sincerely to receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and Catechisms of this Church as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures” (*BCO* 21-4.e).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to add the document the Presbytery received from Mr. [name omitted] referred to above as Exhibit A to its minutes from January 23, 2021, to document his rationale; and promises to be more careful in the future.

**2022-4: Apr 24, 2021** (*BCO* 21-5) — Constitutional vows for ordination not propounded to two ordinands.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes for this typo in its Commission's Report. The actual questions asked and vows taken were the ones from *BCO* 21-5, not 21-9.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct its minutes from April 24, 2021, and promises to be more careful in the future.

**2022-5: Apr 24, 2021** (*BCO* 5-9) — All specific requirements for the organization of a particular church not recorded.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes for failing to note the reception of petitions from each of the three churches. Petitions were received from the members of all three missions and can provide copies of the same upon request.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct its minutes from April 24, 2021, and promises to be more careful in the future.

**2022-6: Aug 07, 2021** (*BCO* 21-4; *RAO* 16- 3.e.5) — All specific requirements of ordination exam not recorded. (No Approval of Theological/Exegetical Papers; Personal Character; Family Management.)

**Response:** Mr. [name omitted] had been examined in the area of his acquaintance with experiential religion, personal character, and family management at the Called Presbytery meeting in July 2019, and was not re-examined in these areas. As noted in the minutes, it was acknowledged that Mr. [name omitted] submitted the necessary theological papers, which includes the Theological and Exegetical Papers required under *BCO* 21-4(c)(2) and (3). The Presbytery does not see where *BCO* 21-4 requires it to approve of said papers, only that preparation by the candidate is necessary.

**Rationale:** Licensure requires a “statement of his Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel” (*BCO* 19-2.a). Ordination, requires “A careful examination as to...his acquaintance with experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management (Based on the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1–7, and Titus 1:6–9)” (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1).(a)). Thus, questions for ordination are different from questions for licensure, requiring a higher level of Presbytery’s scrutiny. Additionally, all parts of the trials of ordination must be approved, including submitted theological and exegetical papers, since the Presbytery must be “fully satisfied of his

qualifications for the sacred office” (*BCO* 21-4.g). Furthermore, “No Presbytery shall omit any of these parts of trial for ordination except in extraordinary cases, and then only with three-fourths (3/4) approval of Presbytery” (*BCO* 21-4.c).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to approve the Theological/Exegetical Papers; has corrected its minutes from August 7, 2021; and promises to be more careful in the future. The Presbytery did not think it possible to re-examine the ordained minister, especially as he has since exhibited Godly personal character and family management in his own ministry.

**2022-7: Sep 25, 2021** (*BCO* 5-4) — The nature of provision for pastoral ministry for a mission church not clearly defined.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes that this is not clear in its minutes, but Rev. [name omitted] was hired as the Prospective Church Planter for [church name omitted].

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct its minutes from September 25, 2021, and promises to be more careful in the future.

**2022-8: Sep 25, 2021** (*BCO* 21-5) — Constitutional vows for ordination not propounded to an ordinand.

**Response:** The Presbytery apologizes for this typo in its Commission’s Report. The actual questions asked and vows taken were the ones from *BCO* 21-5, not 21-9.

**Rationale:** No record that Presbytery corrected its record (*RAO* 16-10.b.1).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct the Commission’s Report in its minutes from September 25, 2021, and promises to be more careful in the future.

**2023-1: Jan 22, 2022; Apr 23, 2022** (*BCO* 21-5) — Constitutional vows for ordination not propounded to an ordinand. (Vows given were installation only - *BCO* 21-9).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct its minutes from January 22, 2022, and April 23, 2022, reflecting that the vows under 21-5 were propounded. The Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future.

**2023-2: Jan 22, 2022; Jul 23, 2022; Oct 22, 2022** (*BCO* 19-2.a) — All specific requirements of licensure exam not recorded. (Christian experience; Inward call to preach the Gospel.)

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to correct its minutes from January 22, 2022, July 23, 2022, and October 22, 2022; and promises to be more careful in the future. The presbytery did not think it possible to re-examine those licentiates that have since been ordained, especially since they are exhibiting a strong Christian experience and inward call to preach the Gospel on a regular basis, but it will examine that licentiate examined on October 22 who has not yet been ordained if he comes before the Presbytery for ordination.

**2023-3: Mar 08, 2022** (*BCO* 13-12) — Notice for called meeting not in order (10-day notice).

**Response:** Presbytery respectfully disagrees with the exception, the Notice was sent out on Tuesday, February 22, 2022

**2023-4: Apr 23, 2022** (*BCO* 38-3) — Teaching elder removed from the rolls without specifying nature of removal, and without including either the “irregularity” (*BCO* 38-3.a) or the “full record of the matter” (*BCO* 38-3.b).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct its minutes from April 23, 2022, noting the irregularity under 38-3.a. The Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future.

**2023-5: Apr 23, 2022** (*BCO* 18-2) — No record of six-months membership for candidate or of endorsement by candidate’s Session.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception. It was seeking to transfer the candidate from the Chicago Metro Presbytery, from which the candidate had received a certificate of dismissal, in accordance with 18-7, and did not see the six-month membership and session endorsement under 18-2 being re-invoked or still required since he was already a candidate with Chicago Metro Presbytery. However, the Presbytery promises to be more careful in the future.

**2023-6: Apr 23, 2022; Oct 22, 2022** (*BCO* 19-9) — All specific requirements of internship not recorded (inward call to the ministry of the Word).

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to correct its minutes from April 23, 2022, and October 22, 2022; and promises to be more careful in the future. The Presbytery did not think

it possible to re-examine those interns that have since been ordained, but it will examine those interns who have not yet been ordained if they come before the Presbytery for approval of their internships and ordination.

**2023-7: Apr 23, 2022; Jun 3, 2022; Oct 22, 2022** (*BCO* 21-4) — Incomplete record of ordination exams. (Experiential religion, especially his personal character and family management.)

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception; has voted to correct its minutes from April 23, 2022, June 3, 2022, and October 22, 2022; and promises to be more careful in the future. The Presbytery did not think it possible to re-examine those men who have been ordained, especially as they have since exhibited Godly personal character and family management in their own ministries.

**2023-8: Jul 23, 2022** (*BCO* 15-1; *RAO* 16-3.e.4) — Minutes of commission not entered in Presbytery minutes.

**Response:** The Presbytery agrees with the exception, has voted to correct its minutes from July 23, 2022, attaches a copy of the Minutes of the commission here as well to correct its actions, and promises to be more careful in the future.

## VII. Officers Elected for 2024-2025

Chairman: TE Jon Anderson

Vice-Chairman: TE Stephen Tipton

Secretary: TE Thomas Rickard

Assistant Secretary: TE Jacob Gerber

## VII. Roster of Members Present

### *Presbytery*

Arizona

Ascension

Blue Ridge

Calvary

Canada West

Catawba Valley

Central Carolina

Central Indiana

Chesapeake

### *Representative*

TE Joshua Harp

RE Jay Neikirk

TE Jon Anderson

TE Robert Cathcart

TE Jeremy Britton

RE Steve Stout

RE Flynt Jones

TE Mike McBride

RE Brad Chwastyk

## APPENDIX O

Chicago Metro	TE Caleb Hughes
Columbus Metro	RE Michael Mattes
Covenant	RE Bob Barber
Eastern Canada	RE Mark Hare
Eastern Carolina	RE Daniel Prins
Eastern Pennsylvania	RE Terry Carnes
Evangel	RE Walter Monroe
Fellowship	TE Corey Lanier
Georgia Foothills	RE Martin A. Moore
Great Lakes	TE Elliott Pinegar
Gulf Coast	TE Stephen Tipton
Heartland	TE Dale Thiele
Heritage	TE Steve Coward
Highlands	TE James Curtis
Houston Metro	TE Mark Blalack
Illiana	TE Harris Adams
Iowa	TE Wayne Larson
James River	RE Matt Fender
Korean Capital	TE David Bae
Korean Central	TE Brian Park
Korean Northeastern	TE Paul Lee
Korean Southeastern	TE Eddie Lim
Lowcountry	TE Jacob Lee
Metro Atlanta	TE Rush Hill
Metropolitan New York	TE Jim Fredere
Mississippi Valley	RE Steven Holman
Missouri	RE Ken Leslie
Nashville	TE Matthew Bradley
New Jersey	TE Stephen O'Neill
New York State	TE Tim LeCroy
North Florida	TE Tommy Park
North Texas	TE Donny Friederichsen
Northern New England	TE Thomas Powell
Northwest Georgia	TE Robby Baxter
Ohio	TE Jason Piland
Ohio Valley	RE Bruce Petrie
Pacific	TE Nicholas Whitaker



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Pacific Northwest	TE Adam Parker
Palmetto	RE Andrew Rutherford
Pee Dee	RE Paul Goodrich
Piedmont Triad	TE Derek Radney
Pittsburgh	TE Frank D. Moser
Platte Valley	TE Jacob Gerber
Potomac	RE Mark Doehnert
Savannah River	TE Ken McHeard
Siouxlands	RE Blake Pool
South Texas	RE Barry McBee
Southeast Alabama	TE Reed DePace
Southern Louisiana	RE Alec Moyer
Southern New England	RE Patrick Sewell
Southwest Florida	TE Freddy Fritz
Suncoast Florida	TE David L. Stewart
Susquehanna Valley	RE Douglas Sharp
Tennessee Valley	TE Sean Morris
Warrior	TE Michael Perry
West Hudson	TE Christopher Diebold
Westminster	TE Thomas Rickard

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**  
**of the**  
**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**  
**VOLUME 2 of 2**

PLEASE NOTE:

1. The pages of Volume 1 and Volume 2 are numbered consecutively.
2. The INDEX to both volumes is found at the back of Volume 2.

**VOLUME 1, pp. 1-706**

PART I: Directory of General Assembly Committees and Agencies

PART II: Daily Journal

PART III: Appendices A-O

**VOLUME 2, pp. 707-1276**

PART III: Appendices P-V

PART IV: Corrections to Previous Minutes

Part V: References and Index

## APPENDICES CONTENTS

### REPORTS

APPENDIX A	Administrative Committee.....	115
APPENDIX B	Board of Directors .....	207
APPENDIX C	Committee on Discipleship Ministries.....	211
APPENDIX D	Committee on Constitutional Business.....	223
	Supplemental Report .....	231
APPENDIX E	Cooperative Ministries Committee .....	233
APPENDIX F	Covenant College.....	235
APPENDIX G	Covenant Theological Seminary.....	249
APPENDIX H	Geneva Benefits Group.....	291
APPENDIX I	Interchurch Relations Committee. ....	301
APPENDIX J	Mission to North America .....	303
APPENDIX K	Mission to the World .....	329
APPENDIX L	Nominating Committee.....	353
	Supplemental Report .....	389
APPENDIX M	PCA Foundation .....	397
APPENDIX N	Reformed University Fellowship.....	413
APPENDIX O	Review of Presbytery Records.....	457
APPENDIX P	Ridge Haven .....	707
APPENDIX Q	Standing Judicial Commission.....	711
	Supplemental Report .....	968
APPENDIX R	Stated Clerk .....	969
APPENDIX S	Theological Examining Committee .....	997

### OTHER ITEMS

APPENDIX T	Attendance Report.....	999
APPENDIX U	Overtures to the 51 <sup>st</sup> General Assembly .....	1047
APPENDIX V	Worship Services.....	1203

## **PART III**

### **APPENDICES**

**NOTE:** Appendices A-O are included in Volume 1 of these *Minutes*.  
Appendices P-V are found in Volume 2.  
See a Table of Contents for these Appendices on the previous page.

The Appendices include the Reports of the General Assembly Committees, Agencies, and Standing Judicial Commission as originally submitted to the General Assembly. The recommendations in this section are those originally submitted and may have been amended or not adopted by the Assembly. See Part II, Journal, to find the recommendations as they were adopted by the Assembly.

Appendix U presents the Overtures as originally submitted by the presbyteries. See the Overtures Committee report and other Committee of Commissioner reports for Assembly action on these overtures, including any amendments.

The PCA Committee and Agency budgets, as approved by the Assembly, are found in Appendix A, Attachment 2, beginning on p. 135.

This page intentionally left blank.

## **APPENDIX P**

### **RIDGE HAVEN BREVARD, NC – CONO, IA REPORT TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Ridge Haven seeks to be an indispensable resource to the PCA through its camp, conference, and retreat ministries, and by aiding in her in training and developing future ministry leaders. In fulfilling this goal, we hosted groups 50 out of the 52 weeks of 2023 totaling 13,761 people including providing ministry opportunities for over 320 staff and volunteers to be involved in.

Our desire is to provide an atmosphere free of distractions and inhibitors where the focus is fellowship and engagement for each individual, allowing each group to more fully experience the presence of God and be rejuvenated for lives of service to the church and the world. To further fulfill this purpose, we lead and facilitate activities that require teamwork and joyful engagement with one another and prioritize mealtimes knowing it is fruitful setting for conversation and connection. We strive to handle all the logistics for a ministry joining us so they may focus on drawing nearer to God and less on their practical needs. This is a huge demand on our staff, yet the Lord has blessed us by continually providing individuals with hearts set on service and the advancement of His kingdom.

To support our relational ministry, the Lord has enabled us to make significant advancements on our campuses. Last year at our Brevard Campus we announced the opening of our new 12,000 sq ft indoor, multi-purpose Badger Gym and surrounding cabins, and this year we are currently completing our new event complex adjacent to it. This complex will have a new Event Office, our third Camp Store, a second Soda Shoppe and Coffee Shop geared towards our college and adult groups, as well as a new Infirmary. Having this complex in addition to our Shep Town Camp complex geared more towards our youth gives us the ability to host multiple age group at the same time.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

At our Cono Campus we are currently working hard on finishing our new pool and sand volleyball court for the summer. Eventually we are hoping to enclose the pool to enhance our year-round ministry even more. The timeline will be tight, as we just secured the funding, but it should be available to serve our full eight weeks of summer camp. Additionally, it will be a great ministry to the local community, our school and our weekly youth gathering.

In addition to continuing to develop our campuses, our focus is to provide even more opportunities to train the next generation. In step with this, we are launching our 'Explorers Project', seeking to grow and cultivate gifts for ministry as individuals explore various aspects of ministry in a hands-on capacity. This project is a further expansion of our successful Gap-Year, Summer Staff, Seasonal, and Internship programs bringing them under one uniform umbrella as we strive to grow leaders for future ministry. This program will allow those interested in ministry to experience a variety of operational jobs, including but not limited to apprenticeships in activity leading, event coordination, recruitment, advertising, hospitality, food services, facilities, and office work.

The camp setting is uniquely equipped to host the Explorer Project as it provides a remarkable community of believers desiring to grow closer to God together while engaging in Kingdom advancement through serving others in various ways. This experience is invaluable and applicable for a multitude of future ministry opportunities, making Ridge Haven an important training field for ministry workers, but also providing staff to build better relationships with and serve our guests.

Our youth, and the church at large, need the hope of the Gospel more than ever, as we all face unprecedented obstacles and dangers that pull us from our walk with God. Yet, as always God has uniquely equipped His Church to "impart gracious realities to the next generation!" (TE Joe Novenson) We trust in the immense providence and mercy of our Lord who has overcome the world and remains steadfast and abundant for our every need and therefore cherish the opportunity before us to serve the entire PCA, providing programming for all ages from our Family Camps to our adult Keenagers Conference. There is a distinct longing in individuals these days to engage with each other on a personal level and be a part of something significant and worthwhile. Ridge Haven gives people this opportunity, as we unite under the Word of God and embrace the fellowship of believers, while pulling away

from the distractions of our world and setting our eyes upon His glory. In doing so, we trust our guests and staff leave Ridge Haven better prepared and equipped for the ministry we are tasked with in our daily lives.

Please continue to pray for the ministry at Ridge Haven and that the Lord would continue to use for His glory. May he continue to protect our youth and strengthen all who come through this place to better serve His church. Pray for the hearts of our staff as they seek Kingdom advancement through their service and witness boldly to our youth the hope of the gospel. Also, pray for our leadership as we desire wisdom in decision making and faithfulness in our actions as we continue to step forward in the paths God has laid out for us.

**Recommendations:**

1. That the Ridge Haven 2025 Budget, as presented through the AC Budget Review Committee, be approved.
2. That the 2022 audit dated December 31, 2022, performed by Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan, be received.
3. That the following minutes of the Board of Directors of Ridge Haven be approved: March 20-22, 2023, and September 11-13, 2023.
4. That February 16, 2025, be a day for our churches to pray for the ministries of Ridge Haven.
5. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the PCA answer **OVERTURE 31** from the New River Presbytery “Amend *BCO* 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy” by referring it to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly.
6. That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the PCA answer **OVERTURE 32** from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those employed by a Committee or Agency” by referring it to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly.

**Rationale:** The Ridge Haven Board did not receive these overtures in time to allow for adequate deliberation of the substance of each overture. Therefore, we think it prudent to refer them to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly for due consideration.



**SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT  
OF RIDGE HAVEN  
BREVARD, NC- CONO, IA  
TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA**

Ridge Haven submits the following Recommendation 7 as a Supplemental Report to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly:

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

7. That the General Assembly answer **OVERTURE 7** from Ascension Presbytery “Amend *RAO* 11-5 to Clarify Process for *RAO* Amendments” with reference to the answer provided by the Administrative Committee.

# APPENDIX Q

## REPORT OF THE STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

April 12, 2024

### Class of 2024

TE Hoochan Paul Lee	<i>Korean NE</i>	RE Howie Donahoe	<i>Pacific NW</i>
TE Sean Lucas	<i>Covenant</i>	RE Melton Duncan	<i>Calvary</i>
TE Mike Ross	<i>Columbus Metro</i>	RE Samuel Duncan	<i>Grace</i>

### Class of 2025

TE Paul Bankson	<i>Central Georgia</i>	RE Steve Dowling	<i>SE AL</i>
TE David Coffin, Jr.	<i>Potomac</i>	RE Frederick Neikirk	<i>Ascension</i>
TE Paul Kooistra	<i>Warrior</i>	RE R. Jackson Wilson	<i>GA Foothills</i>

### Class of 2026

TE Art Sartorius	<i>Siouxlands</i>	RE John Bise	<i>Providence</i>
TE Fred Greco	<i>Houston Metro</i>	RE James Eggert	<i>SW Florida</i>
TE Guy Waters	<i>MS Valley</i>	RE John Pickering	<i>Evangel</i>

### Class of 2027

TE David Garner	<i>Phil. Metro West</i>	RE Daniel Carrell	<i>James River</i>
TE Brad Evans	<i>S. New England</i>	RE John Maynard	<i>Central FL</i>
TE Rhett Dodson	<i>Ohio</i>	RE John B. White, Jr.	<i>Metro Atlanta</i>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Since our report to the 50<sup>th</sup> GA, the Standing Judicial Commission has held three meetings:

October 19-20, 2023	Stated Meeting; in-person
January 12, 2024	Called Meeting; videoconference
March 7-8, 2024	Stated Meeting; in-person

As of the date of this Report, there was a Called Meeting pending for May, and any report from that meeting will be in an SJC Supplemental Report.

Part IV contains several proposed changes to the SJC Manual.

**II. LIST OF JUDICIAL CASES PENDING, IN PROCESS, OR DECIDED**

This year, the SJC rendered Decisions or Rulings in 17 cases. As of April 12, 2024, eight other cases were pending or in process. All below are Complaints unless noted otherwise.

**In Process with Panels, or Pending Initial Review \***

2023-05	Ms. Emily Hyland v. Chicago Metro
2023-12	Appeal of TE Andrew Flatguard v. Metro Atlanta
2023-16	TE Craig Bulkeley et al. v Highlands
2023-18	Appeal of TE Ian Sears v. Nashville
2023-19	Appeal of TE Jared Huffman v. Tennessee Valley
2023-20	REs John Martinez & Jesse Cook v. Pacific
2023-21	TE Samuel Kang et al. v. Korean Central
2023-22	Appeal of TE Sam Jung Suh v. Korean Southeastern
2023-23	RE William Mueller v. South Florida *

**Completed Cases**

Of the 17 Cases below, four were ruled administratively or judicially Out of Order (OO), five were Sustained (S), two were Partly Sustained (PS), three were Not Sustained (NS), and Decisions were rendered in the two *BCO* 40-5 Hearings. The date of each Decision or Ruling is listed. For ease of reference, the Cases appear in numerical order, which sometimes differs from the order in which they were decided. SJC votes are noted for each Case. Abbreviations: C = Concurring Opinion(s), D = Dissenting Opinion(s), W = Withdrawn, O = Objection.

2022-21	TE David Senters v. Savannah River	10/20/23	PS	20-0
2022-22	RE Tom Turner v. South Florida	10/20/23	PS	20-0

# APPENDIX Q

2022-23	TE Michael Woodham v. South FL	10/20/23	NS	18-2
				2.C
2023-01	Mrs. Kristin Hann v. Pee Dee	10/20/23	OO	17-2
2023-02	Mrs. Kappie Reynolds v. Pee Dee	10/20/23	OO	18-1
2023-04	TE Ryan Biese et al. v. TN Valley	10/20/23	NS	18-1
				C, D
2023-06	TE Knox Baird et al. v. Grace	03/08/24	S	17-0
				C
2023-07	Appeal of TE Evans v. Arizona	03/08/24	S	22-0
				3.C
2023-08	TE Knox Baird et al. v. Grace	03/08/24	S	17-0
				C
2023-09	Appeal of TE Myers v. Illiana	03/08/24	S	21-1
				C, D
2023-10	REs Martinez & Cook v. Pacific	03/08/24	NS	22-0
2023-11	Mr. Timothy Psiaki v. Pacific NW	03/08/24	S	15-5
				C, 3.D, O
2023-13	BCO 40-5 Matter re Metropolitan NY	01/12/24	Decided	17-2
				2.D
2023-14	BCO 40-5 Matter re NW Georgia	01/12/24	Decided	19-0
2023-15	RE Tom Turner v. South Florida	03/08/24	OO	19-2
				D
2023-17	RE Tom Turner v. South Florida	03/08/24	OO	19-2
				D
2023-19	Appeal of TE Huffman v. TN Valley	03/08/24	remand	20-1

### **III. DECISIONS AND RULINGS**

**Case No. 2022-21**

***TE DAVID SENTERS***

***v.***

***SAVANNAH RIVER PRESBYTERY***

#### **DECISION ON COMPLAINT**

**October 20, 2023**

#### **CASE SUMMARY**

This case came to the SJC through a Complaint filed against the Savannah River Presbytery (“SRP”) by TE David Senters, Pastor of New Covenant Presbyterian Church in Richmond Hill, Georgia. The Complaint challenged a portion of Presbytery’s action in examining TE Jonathan Stamberg, who was seeking a transfer into SRP from the Metro Atlanta Presbytery. Specifically, the Complaint challenged Presbytery’s conclusion that TE Stamberg’s stated difference with our Standards concerning the gift of tongues was in fact not a difference. Once denied by a Judicial Commission of Presbytery, TE Senters brought the Complaint to the SJC, a Panel of which heard the Complaint on March 21, 2023.

TE Senters, assisted by TE Dominic Aquila, appeared at the hearing, which was conducted by videoconference. TE Alexander Brown, Pastor of Golden Isles Presbyterian Church in St. Simons Island, Georgia, represented the Respondent, SRP; also representing SRP was TE Kenneth McHeard, Assistant Pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Augusta, Georgia.

Having reviewed the Record and related briefs, and having heard the oral arguments of the Parties, the Panel unanimously concluded the Complaint should be sustained by annulling Presbytery’s action on the stated difference in question and remanding the case to SRP for further action in accord with this Decision.

By a vote of 20-0, the SJC adopted this Decision, as amended, denying the procedural part of the Complaint, and sustaining the confessional part.

## I. SUMMARY OF FACTS

09/28/21 TE Jonathan Stamberg came before SRP's Candidates and Credentials Committee ("CCC") for examination pursuant to *BCO* 13-6 in anticipation of transferring into SRP. (The only action by the Committee at that meeting in regard to TE Stamberg was to "delay recommending him to SRP until he has time to clarify his views and be reexamined ....")

10/2021 As part of that examination process, TE Stamberg provided a written statement of his "Stated differences with the Westminster Standards." Included in his list of differences was one relating to WCF 21.3, as follows:

**WCF 21.3 – "a known tongue."** The WCF helps to guard against abuses of its time when the language of worship was kept out of the vernacular tongue. It can also help to guard against much of the current abuses that take place in the name of the Spirit. But because I desire to not go beyond scripture and say it has more certainty on a topic than it actually does, I would just clarify by saying that I align with that which was adopted by our 2<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly ....

03/2022 A revised list of differences was presented to CCC before an upcoming reexamination. This list included only two differences. The previous stated difference relating to WCF 21.3 was omitted entirely from this second list.

04/12/22 Even though the second list did not include the WCF 21.3 stated difference, the minutes of the CCC, upon its reexamination of TE Stamberg, contain the following excerpt regarding his views and WCF 21.3:

WCF 21.3 "This TE's views changed so that he said that tongues & prophecy may be present in any age. He had experienced neither. This is essentially my view since I have experienced

neither, but I cannot say decisively from scripture that they are not possible.”

At its meeting the Committee again recommended that TE Stamberg “delay coming to the presbytery, to give him time to:

- Read either Tom Schreiner *Spiritual Gifts* or Richard Gaffin *Perspectives on Pentecost*.
- Consider his view in light of BCO 7-1.
- Consider his view in regard to the place of his difference with the Standards.”

04/19/22 SRP convened its 74<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting. The minutes of that meeting indicate that the CCC expressed its reluctance to bring to Presbytery TE Stamberg’s transfer request in that they wished to “give him time to consider his stated differences with the Westminster Standards.” Notwithstanding that recommendation, a “motion was made and approved to allow the court to hear Mr. Stamberg’s stated difference to WCF 21.3 (Att. E.1-2).” This led to adoption of what became an amended motion: “The court considers Mr. Stamberg’s stated difference with WCF 21.3 as not a difference.”

The stated differences, including the one regarding WCF 21.3, were attached to the minutes as Attachment E.1-2, the relevant portion being set forth below, except for its footnotes:

**1 Cor. 14:14 as a proof text for WCF 21.3.**

The WCF helps to guard against abuses of its time when the language of worship was kept out of the vernacular tongue. But the supporting verse I Cor. 14:14 seems to be more focused on the spiritual gift rather than translation of scripture into the vernacular (as Latham [sic] says was the original intended meaning of that part of 21.3).

Because I do not desire to go beyond scripture and say it has more certainty on a topic than it actually does, I would just clarify by saying that I align with our denominational fathers in

what they [said] in our 2nd General Assembly  
 [Emphasis in original]  
 (<http://www.pcahistory.org/documents/pastoralletter.html>), specifically, paragraph IV.A, namely: 1) how difficult it is to determine with certainty the nature of tongues outside of Acts 2 & the relationship of modern tongues with that mentioned in scripture; 2) that tongues cannot be conceived of as revelatory nor an essential sign of baptism of the Spirit; and 3) should not cause division or diversion from our mission. I would rather avoid the issue altogether because I realize that the probability for being misunderstood is very high, but I will try to address concerns which I can foresee. This may sound like I'm advocating for tongues, further exacerbating any misunderstanding, but I pray not.

- *“Do you speak in tongues or have you spoken in tongues?”* No.
- *“Do you believe ecstatic utterances are of God?”* No.
- *“But there have been many falsified manifestations of the Spirit and even abuses in His name.”* I agree.
- *“Do you believe the canon is closed?”* Yes.
- *“But the sign gifts were only to validate the inscripturation process.”* I definitely see heightened miraculous work of the Spirit in these times. But I am not aware of a strong case that the Spirit's leadership is limited to those times. So, for example, when testimonies of 100s (conservatively estimated) of Muslim Background Believers (MBBs) describe how their costly journey to Christ began with a dream, I do not have to risk blaspheming the Spirit by saying those dreams have a demonic source. On the other hand, nor do I give scriptural authority to the MBB dream reports; they should be soberly



examined and kept subordinate to scripture. Westminster Theological Seminary faculty [member] Dr. Robert Letham articulates holding tightly to the closed canon while giving room for God to still act as He wills:

*“There is no reason—theoretically—why God might not perform miracles at any time. He is able to do so if he chooses (WCF, 5.3). If this were not so, he would not be sovereign. However, the work of Christ is complete, and the canon of Scripture is closed (Heb. 1:1–3). We await the return of Christ and the consummation of salvation. In that context, given their function in the history of redemption, signs and wonders are theologically superfluous. The reality has already definitively happened. God has spoken his final word. There is nothing more he can say. He has said it all. He has left two vivid and effectual signs, baptism and the Lord’s Supper, together with the Word, all pointing to the incarnate Word, Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of the Father. Miracles may happen; if so, they do not have the same function as they once did.”*

- *“1 Corinthians 13 says that tongues will cease.”* There are three references I see in this passage to that which will cause the ceasing: “the perfect” (vs 10), “face to face” (vs 12), & “know fully, even as I have been fully known.” (vs 12). The first is ambiguous and the latter two are both personal. This personal nature fits most naturally with Christ’s return. It also aligns naturally with Paul’s use of the word face elsewhere to the Corinthians where he is talking about being with Christ (2 Cor 3:18, 4:6).

## APPENDIX Q

The examination for transfer was, thereafter, sustained “in all its parts,” and the transfer candidate’s call was approved.

- 06/13/22 The Complaint was filed, directed to the action of SRP in which it stated: “The court considers Mr. Stamberg’s stated difference with WCF 21.3 as not a difference.” However, the Complaint alleged TE Stamberg’s “stated difference was much broader than just with WCF 21.3,” asserting “TE Stamberg’s views in reality represent a stated difference with the WCF 1.1 and 1.6.”
- 07/16/22 At the 75<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of SRP, the Moderator appointed a Commission to consider the Complaint and report at the October Stated Meeting.
- 10/04/22 After prior meetings, the SRP Commission met “to approve the full statement of the case to be presented to the Presbytery.” (ROC 69) The Commission’s Judgment was that: “The SRP did not err in any of the three points of the complaint, and the complaint is denied.”
- 10/17/22 At the 76<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting of SRP, TE Brown, as Chairman of the Judicial Commission, rose to present its report, referred to in the SRP minutes as “Att. H. 1-50.” Before he could do so, however, Complainant Senters moved “that the presbytery refer to a study committee the following questions:
- a. Is it appropriate, and perhaps prejudicial, for a member of the ministerial staff of the church from which the case arose to serve as a member of the commission?
  - b. In order to serve the interests of justice, when a case is referred to a commission:
    - (i) Should not the commission be expected to hold a hearing so that the parties in the case can be heard on the matters before the commission?
    - (ii) And further, would not the presbytery be well advised to remand the case to the commission, and in so doing, replace the

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

member who is presently on the ministerial staff of the church from which the case arose?”

The motion related to a study committee failed. The report of the Judicial Commission was thereafter “received” by a vote of 27-2-4. (Although Attachment H is not included in the Record, we understand it to include the Judicial Commission's Proposed Decision.)

10/20/22 TE Senters carried his Complaint to the General Assembly.

03/21/22 The SJC Panel, consisting of RE Dan Carrell (Chairman), TE Arthur Sartorius (Secretary), RE Sam Duncan, TE Paul Bankson (Alt.), and RE Bruce Terrell (Alt.), heard the Complaint.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

1. Did the SRP err procedurally in the manner in which it brought a stated difference of TE Stamberg before the SRP in the course of his transfer exam pursuant to *BCO* 13-6?
2. Did the SRP err by judging TE Stamberg’s stated difference relating to WCF 21.3 on the meaning of tongues as “not a difference?”

## III. JUDGMENT

1. No.
2. Yes.

## IV. REASONING AND OPINION

The underlying Complaint in this matter presents a significant substantive issue surrounding an instance in which a Teaching Elder of the PCA, seeking transfer from one Presbytery to another, presented the receiving Presbytery with a “stated difference” concerning the gift of tongues. Complainant has also

argued that SRP's procedural process to reach its conclusion of there being "no difference" was in error.

### **Procedural Issues**

Among the procedures about which TE Senters complains are that SRP erred:

- 1) "by acting against the recommendation of its Candidates and Credentials Committee," and
- 2) by failing to follow the provisions of *BCO* 21-4.f and *RAO* 16-3.e(5), such as in "failing to distribute TE Stamberg's stated difference to the court in his own words."

As to SRP's procedures, the SJC finds there to be no error. Unless the Record reveals a breach of constitutionally required procedures, it remains in the hands of Presbytery to determine how to proceed. There was no such breach in this case.

Presbyteries often assign credential-related examinations, including transfer exams, to established committees such as CCC, and often Presbyteries follow recommendations of those committees, but it is the Presbytery itself that is charged with conducting and acting upon the examinations. (See, e.g., *BCO* 13-6, *BCO* 19-2, and *BCO* 21-4.)

Committees assist as "subordinate instruments" of a larger body like the Presbytery. (RONR (12<sup>th</sup> ed.) 1:24) The committee thus has an assisting role and is charged to "examine, consider and report" to the Presbytery. (*BCO* 15-1). It is the Presbytery alone, however, that exercises discretion to follow, reject, or even ignore its committee's recommendations.

Similarly, there is no clear error in the manner in which Presbytery had the transfer candidate present his stated difference to the Court. The SRP, when ruling on this Complaint, indicated that Presbytery's "habit" was "to require ministers and ministerial candidates to submit a written statement of their differences with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms, ...." In this case, however, the Court "audibly received TE Stamberg's statement of difference

to 1 Corinthians 14:14 as a proof text for *Westminster Confession of Faith* 21.3” when it was read to the Court by a representative of the CCC. The statement itself “was not included in the Presbytery minutes, as it was ruled to be ‘not a difference’ due to it being a stated difference to a footnote and not to a ‘statement’ or ‘proposition’ in *Westminster Confession of Faith* 21.3 (*BCO* 13-6).” The SJC notes, however, that the stated difference was later included as an attachment to the Presbytery minutes.

At the Panel hearing on this matter, there was some disagreement between the Parties as to whether the oral presentation of TE Stamberg’s difference matched “verbatim” the written attachment to the Presbytery minutes. Respondent indicated that the attachment was essentially read to the Presbytery. Complainant, however, questioned whether that was truly the case. The Record appears supportive of Respondent’s position but accepting that as accurate has no effect on the SJC’s view of the substantive issue addressed below.

One more procedural matter deserves attention. *BCO* 13-6 is unique in how it applies to PCA ministers transferring from one PCA Presbytery to another. For those ministers, the only examination requirement is that the transferees “be examined on Christian experience, and also touching their views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government.” Other examination requirements stated within *BCO* 13-6 do not relate to transfers between PCA Presbyteries, but to transfers of men coming from other denominations. As such, the only transfers covered by *BCO* 13-6 that trigger the more expansive exam outlined in *BCO* 21-4 are those of ministers coming from other denominations, unlike TE Stamberg.

An amendment added in 2011 to *BCO* 13-6 requires “ordained ministers coming from other denominations to state the specific instances in which they may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4 (see *BCO* 21-4.e,f).” This requirement, however, has never been extended to men transferring between PCA Presbyteries.

Nevertheless, nothing prohibits a Presbytery from imposing that requirement on transferees within the PCA, which would be a wise exercise of a Presbytery’s discretion. That is how SRP chose to proceed with TE Stamberg. Having done so, “Once a difference has been stated, or statements

suggesting a difference exists are made, the Presbytery has an affirmative duty to explore that difference ....” *Jones v. Louisiana Presbytery* (M36GA, 2008, p. 120.)

### **The Substantive Issue**

As noted above, the SRP, in concluding that TE Stamberg’s stated difference was “not a difference,” observed that the stated difference was “to a footnote and not to a ‘statement’ or ‘proposition’ in *Westminster Confession of Faith* 21.3 (BCO 13-6).” Complainant, however, contends that the stated difference in essence is actually a difference from the statements and propositions of WCF 1.1 and 1.6. The SJC agrees. As explained in *Jones*, “A difference does not require overt contradiction or denial.... It occurs whenever a position is asserted that ‘differs’ with the authoritative exposition stated in our Constitutional standards.” *Id.* at 119.

The fact that TE Stamberg first asserted his difference in regard to a footnote and proof text to WCF 21-3 is immaterial as to whether his view is truly a difference. As a result of Presbytery’s inquiries, legitimate questions arose regarding the man’s views on a continuation of the early New Testament spiritual gift of tongues. The Record reveals TE Stamberg’s view as articulated by him is that tongues are spiritual, and a continuing gift ongoing to the present day and beyond.

As pointed out above, at its April 12, 2022, meeting, the CCC recognized that TE Stamberg’s views had “changed so that he said that tongues & prophecy may be present in any age.” The CCC therefore again recommended that TE Stamberg delay coming before the Presbytery. The recommendation was not followed, however, and the matter was taken up by Presbytery at its meeting on April 19. Then, yet another revision to the stated difference was presented by TE Stamberg, who said that 1 Corinthians 14:14 “seems to be focused on the spiritual gift rather than translation of scripture into the vernacular ....” He later added that he would “try to address concerns which I can foresee.”

What followed – in regard to his addressing of concerns – was a series of bullet point questions and answers that TE Stamberg posed to himself and answered. Answering some questions with a simple “No,” or “Yes,” or “I agree,” the transfer candidate also posed whether “sign gifts were only to

validate the inscripturation process.” To that TE Stamberg questioned whether “the Spirit’s leadership is limited to those times [of the inscripturation process].” He then closed with a final paragraph, which is set forth above in context and repeated below:

*“1 Corinthians 13 says that tongues will cease.”* There are three references I see in this passage to that which will cause the ceasing: “the perfect” (vs 10), “face to face” (vs 12), & “know fully, even as I have been fully known.” (vs 12). The first is ambiguous and the latter two are both personal. This personal nature fits most naturally with Christ’s return. It also aligns naturally with Paul’s use of the word face elsewhere to the Corinthians where he is talking about being with Christ (2 Cor 3:18, 4:6).

In asserting that the timing of ceasing tongues “fits most naturally with Christ’s return,” TE Stamberg appears essentially to be saying that tongues “most naturally” should be understood, in some measure, as continuing through all times including the present. Thus, it would be an error to judge such a view as “not a difference” at all.

As Complainant has argued, such a view differs with portions of the first chapter of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*, particularly the first and sixth paragraphs. These paragraphs assert that as God has now provided His revelation in written form, “those former ways of God’s revealing His will unto His people have now ceased” (1.1), and that “the whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for His own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added, whether by new revelations of the Spirit, or traditions of men.” (1.6)

By concluding that it was error for the SRP to judge TE Stamberg’s view as being “not a difference,” the SJC has not resolved the totality of the matter. The various renditions of TE Stamberg’s differences create some doubt as to his precise view toward tongues. Perhaps with more reflection, he might further modify his view. Perhaps with expanded and more precise articulation, his view could still be deemed as expressing no difference; or as merely semantic; or more than semantic but not out accord with any fundamental of

our system of doctrine. Or it could be that his view is out of accord. In any event, what does appear from the current Record is that it was error to find his view as not stating any difference at all with our Standards.

### **Conclusion and Amends**

For the reasons above stated, the action of Savannah River Presbytery on April 19, 2022, by which the Presbytery considered TE Stamberg's stated difference with WCF 21.3 as not a difference is annulled. We remand the matter to Presbytery to take further action to foster clarification of his view toward tongues and judge that view once clarified. Nothing further can be directed to Presbytery beyond that, as the SJC has before it at this time only the question of whether it was error for SRP not to find a difference.

---

A proposed decision was drafted by Panel members TE Sartorius and RE Carrell, amended by the Panel, and adopted by a unanimous vote on 5/2/23. The SJC reviewed each part of the proposed decision and approved the amended Decision on the following **20-0** vote, with four absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Absent	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Absent	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	<i>Concur</i>
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>



**CASE No. 2022-22**

***RE TOM TURNER***

***v.***

***SOUTH FLORIDA PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON COMPLAINT**

October 20, 2023

**CASE SUMMARY**

This case came before the SJC on the Complaint of RE Tom Turner, a member of and ruling elder at The Cross Community Church (“CCC”) in Deerfield Beach, Florida. The Complaint arose from an investigation regarding how the Session of CCC (“Session”) dealt with allegations of sexual abuse within the church, and Presbytery’s judgments against the Session of guilt on four counts – three related to the alleged incidents of abuse and the alleged inadequate responses of the Session to those and the fourth to the Session’s refusal provide records and to meet with the Judicial Commission (“JCOM”) of the South Florida Presbytery (“SFP”). The case was heard via video conference call (GoToMeeting) by a Panel of the SJC on July 18, 2023.

Tom Turner appeared on his own behalf and was assisted by TE Dominic Aquila. TE Andrew Siegenthaler (of Coral Ridge Presbyterian Church and a member of the JCOM) appeared as the Representative of the Respondent Presbytery.

The Record of the Case (“ROC”) shows no evidence that either the JCOM or Presbytery exceeded its constitutional authority in the conduct of its investigation.

The ROC reveals that SFP, at its meeting on August 8, 2022, and upon the recommendation of its JCOM judged the Session guilty of three “important delinquencies” and of insubordination “by rejecting [SFP’s] authority to examine its actions and inactions.” In addition to its judgments of guilt, SFP admonished the Session and required two actions which appear to be curative in intent. The ROC further reveals that despite extended communications between the JCOM and the Session, no charges were presented to the Session and that the JCOM believed that, as a consequence of the unwillingness of the

Session to appear before it in answer to two successive citations coupled with publicly available information, judgments could be rendered without a trial on the bases of *BCO* 40-4 and 40-5. Complainant Turner asserted that a trial is mandatory before adjudication.

Because of the lack of presentation of specific charges and the failure to conduct a trial, the SJC denies the Complaint in part (as to the right of Presbytery to conduct an investigation) and sustains the Complaint in part (as to the findings of guilt) and remands the case to SFP for adjudication. The SJC specifically rejects the assertion by Complainant that the case should be dropped.

## I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS

- 12/24/16     An alleged sexual battery incident (#1) occurred against a 14-year-old girl at Cross Community Church. The alleged perpetrator was the pastor's son ("Son A").
  
- 09/20/18     Alleged sexual battery victim #1 disclosed the 12/24/16 incident in an essay at school.
  
- 09/25/18     The investigating police officer was advised by mother of battery victim #1 that she "did not wish to pursue the investigation at this time."
  
- Oct 2019     Approximate date of alleged sexual battery #2, based on item reported on to the Session on 4/9/21.
  
- 10/20/20     Sexual battery victim #1 conducted a controlled call to alleged perpetrator in which he acknowledged the event, but with different explanation as to intent and consent.
  
- 11/04/20     Son A - a member and staff member of The Cross Community Church and further, the son of TE Tommy Boland - was arrested and charged with sexual battery. (This related to incident #1.)
  
- 04/04/21     The daughter of a couple ("Smiths") who were members of CCC reported to her parents that a year and a half earlier, a second

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

teenage boy, another son of TE Boland ("Son B"), had touched her inappropriately. (Incident #2.)

- 04/05/21- The Smiths had multiple meetings and telephone conversations  
05/05/21 with TE Boland and his wife in which, according to the Smiths, TE Boland denied, then admitted, then denied that Incident 2 occurred. The "Smiths" insisted on Sessional involvement.
- 06/07/21 Member Mr. Smith met with the Session at a called meeting, relaying information about "an incident which allegedly occurred in October 2019 involving his daughter and the teenage son of the pastor...." The Pastor was not present. The Smiths allegedly asked for SFP involvement but that is not reflected in the Session minutes.
- 06/08/21 At a called meeting, the Session heard from the Pastor and his wife about the night on which the alleged Incident 2 occurred, as well as their account of their interactions with the Smiths. After the Pastor and his wife were dismissed. The REs convened a call with TE Dominic Aquila to seek counsel. The "Session" (with only the REs present) determined it could not comply with all the Smiths requested actions (which are not recorded in the minutes), "due to conflicting accounts, due to the long period of time between the date of the alleged incident and it being reported, and due to the nature of the allegation." Session did agree to seek an apology from the accused to the Smiths' daughter "for anything he may have done that made [her] uncomfortable," advise the member that the Pastor is under counseling, advise the member Session has "engaged third-party counsel to discuss the allegation, and advise the Smiths that children's ministry security is being reviewed and addressed."
- 06/14/21 The Smiths assert that they met again with the Session. The Session allegedly told the Smiths that it was unable to reconcile stories and no further action was planned. No Session record of this meeting was in Session minutes or the ROC.
- 06/17/21 Session minutes indicate review of liability insurance was requested.

## APPENDIX Q

- 08/10/21 Through their attorney, the Smiths appealed to South Florida Presbytery, detailing their allegations with reports about phone calls and meetings.
- 08/10/21 FL State Attorney petitioned the Circuit Court to amend Pretrial Release and bond to require that Son A have no contact with any minor children.
- 08/18/21 The Court ordered that Son A have no unsupervised contact with children.
- 09/07/21 A called Session meeting was held which TE Dominic Aquila attended by phone for a portion. The purpose of the meeting is omitted from minutes. There was discussion concerning a deacon's family no longer attending, that the deacon was approached by a member about "allegation #1 and allegation #2" and that other discussions were occurring about allegations among members. The Session also received multiple email communications from a CCC member, one containing a complaint. The Session conferred with TE Aquila. That complaint was dismissed as "administratively out of order and outside of the 60-day window to file a complaint."
- 09/15/21 Dr. Josh Bruce "appealed" to SFP regarding Session's failure to act on two allegations of public scandal, and denial of his previous complaint to Session regarding Session's failure to act on those allegations. This is the complaint that Session ruled out of order on 9/7/21, and the two allegations are the two accusations against the Pastor's sons.
- 09/18/21 A meeting of Session was held at which Session agreed to communicate with deacon's family regarding absence and to solicit a proposal from a third-party organization "to assist with resolution of issues regarding Allegation #2."
- 09/27/21 Dr. Sam Lamerson, a professor at Knox Seminary who had participated in teaching and church life at CCC, filed a "complaint" with SFP against the judgments of the Pastor and the

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Session as they related to the two allegations of sexual abuse. In addition to his complaint, he stated, "pursuant to [BCO] 31.2 I believe it is in the proper action of the South Florida Presbytery to demand satisfactory explanation from the Session of the Cross and Dr. Boland for their actions which have led to this scandal."

- 09/28/21 There was a called meeting of Session "to discuss how to proceed regarding the complaint filed by Dr. Sam Lamerson with the presbytery." TE Aquila attended, counseled that Dr. Lamerson had no standing to file a complaint and further provided a draft response which Session agreed to transcribe onto CCC letterhead and send to Presbytery.
- 09/29/21 The Session sent a letter to SFP, asserting "The Complaint filed by TE Lamerson is administratively out of order and cannot be adjudicated...."
- 10/2/21 At a called meeting of the Session, it agreed to engage Crossroads Resolutions Group to "resolve matters with the [Smiths], as well as Drs. Lamerson and Bruce." There is no evidence in subsequent minutes that this ever happened.
- 11/22/21 JCOM, a standing commission of SFP, took up the complaint and report from Dr. Lamerson as empowered by the Standing Rules of Presbytery. JCOM requested and demanded Session minutes and other documents related to claims asserted.
- 12/16/21 Session wrote JCOM indicating, "we don't believe there is reason or standing to bring these issues to the JC."
- 01/17/22 JCOM acts to "demand that the CCC Session, within ten days, show cause why the JC[OM] should not cite the CCC Session for failing to provide the properly requested records of the CCC Session despite repeated written requests."
- 01/26/22 RE Tom Turner, Clerk of the Session submitted minutes of the Session from 2021 as part of the regular annual reviews of Session minutes required by BCO 12-7.

## APPENDIX Q

- 02/02/22 Session objected to "threat to cite the Session of [CCC]," questioned the constitutional basis for [JCOM's] authority to demand documents and asserted that "[JCOM] does not have subpoena powers by which it can compel a lower court to respond to requests outside of its jurisdiction."
- 02/08/22 SFP voted to "direct Presbytery to obtain Session Minutes from 2019 to present in regard to an active JCOM case involving Cross Community Church." The motion further directed that the minutes be provided by February 19, 2022.
- 02/25/22 JCOM voted to cite Session to appear before it.
- 03/15/22 The Session declined to appear before JCOM on April 1, claiming that JCOM had no constitutional authority to direct such an appearance.
- 05/10/22 At SFP meeting, SFP discussed CCC case and related items. "...a motion was made by TE Sam Lamerson that both CCC matters (against TE Tommy Boland and the CCC Session) be referred to the JC [Judicial Commission] for investigation and if necessary, adjudication, as required by *BCO* 31-2 (in the case of TE Boland) and by *BCO* 40-4 (in the case of CCC Session)." This action was taken in response to a request from JCOM that Presbytery decide whether these matters, as they had unfolded, should remain with JCOM or if SFP, as a whole, should take them up.
- 05/12/22 RE Tom Turner, Clerk of CCC Session, submitted minutes of CCC Session from 2018, 2019, and 2020. Again, he was explicit in saying that he was submitting these minutes under *BCO* 12-7.
- 05/25/22 JCOM cited the Session, the Clerk of Session, an RE, and TE Boland, Pastor, to appear to answer as to "credible reports with respect to the Session of important delinquencies or grossly unconstitutional proceedings." The citation also included reference into the termination of membership of Josh Bruce.
- 05/31/22 Session informed JCOM it would not appear, contending complaints of Lamerson and Bruce were out of order.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 08/03/22 JCOM unanimously approved its final decision and report regarding the Cross Community Session.
- 08/08/22 SFP affirmed the decision of JCOM to find that the CCC Session was guilty of important delinquencies and failures and further of insubordination to presbytery. The decision of JCOM and SFP then "admonished" Session for failing to "fulfill its duty to care for all the members of CCC" and for "failing to respect the constitutional authority of [SFP]." It further directed Session to take several actions.
- 08/13/22 RE Turner complained against the August 8 action of SFP.
- 08/23/22 JCOM recommended denial of the Turner Complaint.
- 11/08/22 SFP denied Turner Complaint at its stated meeting.
- 11/09/22 Turner elevated his Complaint to the SJC.
- 12/16/22 Initial ROC was received by Office of the Stated Clerk.
- 05/11/23 Finalized ROC was completed.
- 07/18/23 Hearing was held in the case. The SJC Panel included RE Bise (chair), TE Kooistra and TE Ross, along with alternates TE Bankson and RE Neikirk.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

1. Did South Florida Presbytery err by investigating these matters through its Judicial Commission?
2. Did South Florida Presbytery err by judging the Session of Cross Community Church guilty of alleged offenses without first following the steps for judicial process: namely, issuing an indictment with charges and specifications, citing the Session to enter a plea, and conducting a trial?

### III. PROPOSED JUDGMENTS

1. No.
2. Yes. The decision of Presbytery to approve the recommendations of JCOM, thereby finding the Session guilty of four matters and then imposing on Session censure and mandated corrective actions is hereby annulled (*BCO* 43-10). The matter is returned to Presbytery with instructions that Presbytery either: a) proceed with this matter through the avenue of raising exceptions to the Session's minutes, should Presbytery be convinced that such exceptions are justified, and dealing with whatever response is forthcoming; or b) engaging in informal interactions with Session in an effort to reach a mutual understanding of the proper course of action, which would not preclude other options if the informal interactions do not yield agreement; or c) proceeding to formal judicial process following *BCO* 40-6. Further, given the gravity of the allegations, we direct that Presbytery determine at its first stated meeting after this decision is reported as final, or at an earlier meeting if desired by Presbytery, which of these paths it will follow and how.

### IV. REASONING AND OPINION

This matter arose when various individuals raised complaints to Presbytery regarding how the Session of Cross Community Church dealt with (or did not deal with) allegations of two instances of sexual misconduct by members of Cross Community Church. The serious nature of these allegations was exacerbated in that the alleged victims were minors, the alleged perpetrators were sons of the pastor, there was an arrest of one of the sons growing out of one of these incidents, and there was some knowledge of these allegations in the church. Recognizing the serious nature of the allegations, SFP sought, through its Judicial Commission (JCOM), to investigate these matters. Session raised, at various points in the process, objections regarding: whether JCOM was properly empowered to deal with these matters; whether JCOM had a right to demand several years' worth of past minutes of the Session, as well as other documents; whether there were really "credible reports"; whether JCOM had a right to "cite" the Session to appear before them; and whether complaints from individuals seeking to get these matters



before Presbytery were in order. As a result of these concerns, Session stated that it was unwilling to comply with citations from JCOM and that it would not meet with JCOM (or respond in writing) unless or until Session's concerns were addressed. Session did eventually provide the requested minutes of Session for the years 2018-2021 although it did not provide certain other documents that were requested.

JCOM met with the individuals who presented complaints to Presbytery and reviewed various documents, including Session minutes for the years in question, a police report that dealt with one of the allegations of misconduct, and a letter from a law firm (styled an appeal) that contained the second allegation of misconduct. The Commission also considered Overture 6 that was approved by the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly, and the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault that came to the 49<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

In the course of its work, JCOM concluded that the two complaints brought with regard to these matters were not properly before Presbytery and that the letter from the law firm did not meet the criteria for an appeal. JCOM did conclude, however, that these documents, together with the police report and the interviews conducted by JCOM, constituted credible reports of "neglect by the CCC Session to perform its duty," and, thus, that SFP, through its JCOM, was required by BCO 40-4 to "take cognizance of" "and to examine, deliberate, and judge."

In light of the information gathered and Session's unwillingness to comply the JCOM's citations, JCOM reached the following decisions:

### The Judgment of the Presbytery Judicial Commission

#### 1. Judgment:

- a. The CCC Session is guilty of the important delinquency of failing to support the alleged victims by failing to have their allegations investigated by an expert third party.
- b. The CCC Session is guilty of the important delinquency of failing to care for the CCC members by failing to report the alleged incidents to the congregation, failing to have the incidents

expertly investigated, and by retaining [name] on staff as worship leader even after his arrest.

- c. The CCC Session is guilty of the important delinquency of failing to follow the reporting requirements of the 42<sup>nd</sup> GA and the State of Florida.
- d. The CCC Session is guilty of insubordination by rejecting the South Florida Presbytery's authority to examine its actions and inactions.

2. Actions:

- a. Therefore, the South Florida Presbytery (SFP) requires the CCC Session to call a meeting of its members to take place within 60 days of the SFP's approval of these actions at which designated representatives of the Presbytery will explain the entire situation to the Congregation (*BCO* 13-9f). (A separate action of the South Florida Presbytery will be necessary to appoint the representative.)
  - b. The SFP admonishes the CCC Session to fulfill its duty to care for all the members of the church, (including families with children, alleged victims of abuse, and alleged abusers) by following the 42<sup>nd</sup> GA's resolutions, the 49<sup>th</sup> GA's advice, and Florida Statutes.
  - c. The SFP requires the CCC Session to report in writing to the SFP within three months of the SFP's approval of these actions on all measures taken to comply with this judgment. The SFP retains jurisdiction to receive the written report and to take such further actions as it may deem necessary.
  - d. The SFP admonishes the CCC Session to respect the constitutional authority of SFP (*BCO* 13-9e).
3. The JC retains jurisdiction to take such other and further action as may be necessary in furtherance of this finding and in relation to the other matters reached herein.

### The Reasoning and Opinion of the Presbytery Judicial Commission

1. The JC[OM] is not judging the truth of the allegations of sexual abuse, but rather the actions and inactions of the CCC Session in response to them and its response to the efforts of the JC[OM] to investigate.

SFP considered the JCOM report at its meeting of August 8, 2022. It is not clear from the minutes whether SFP approved the entire report or only the Judgment section shown above, but it certainly approved the material contained in the Judgment section of the JCOM Report.

RE Turner's Complaint against the action of Presbytery raised many of the procedural issues noted above. In his Brief, however, and in oral argument, the Complainant and his representative were explicit that the sole issue they wished to have before the SJC was whether SFP had the right to declare the Session guilty of various allegations, and on the basis of those declarations of guilt to censure Session and direct it to take certain actions, without following formal judicial process.

While Complainant granted that *BCO* 40 gives Presbytery the right to review the records and actions of Session, and that *BCO* 40-5 provides remedies when a Presbytery receives "credible reports" of "any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings" of a Session, Complainant contended that *BCO* 40-6 (*cf.*, *BCO* 32; 30-1) requires that those remedies, particularly when they deal with findings of guilt and imposition of censure, are available only after formal process has been followed (or when there has been an admission of guilt by the Session). Complainant argued, not only that such process is a Constitutional requirement and right, but that it is also the only way that the lower court can be accorded a fair opportunity to defend its actions. Thus, the presence of an indictment ensures the Session will know exactly where Presbytery believed Session erred, and the conduct of a formal trial is the only way to ensure that Session has an opportunity to present evidence and defend its actions. In support of this understanding, Complainant cited the process followed by the SJC in case 2006-02 (*Report on Memorial from Central Carolina Presbytery*). In that case, the SJC concluded that Louisiana Presbytery had failed to "reach a decision consistent with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America." Following *BCO* 40-5,

the SJC then cited Louisiana Presbytery to appear “to show what it has done or failed to do” in the case in question. The decision then stated that this process would be implemented by the SJC appointing a prosecutor, ordering an indictment to be drawn, citing Presbytery to respond to the indictment by entering a plea on the matters contained in the indictment, and ordering a trial should the plea be “not guilty.” (*M36GA*, pp. 89-90) Thus, Complainant argued that the SJC understood that it could not impose the outcomes of *BCO* 40-5 without proceeding to formal process under *BCO* 40-6.

SFP argued “Although the Session twice refused to appear when cited, the JC[OM] found that the Sessional records and interviews of aggrieved church members were sufficient to determine that important delinquencies and grossly unconstitutional proceedings had occurred” and that Session had neglected to perform its required duties. SFP noted that where there is evidence that a lower court has neglected its duty, *BCO* 40-4 gives the appellate court jurisdiction to “examine, deliberate, and judge in the whole matter as completely as if it had been recorded, and thus brought up by review of its records.” SFP further contended that once such neglect, delinquencies, and grossly unconstitutional proceedings are identified, *BCO* 40-5 gives the appellate court “four options for how to proceed after citing the lower court to appear and explain itself: a. reverse or redress the lower court’s actions, b. censure the delinquent court, c. remit the matter, and d. stay proceedings.” Respondent granted that *BCO* 40-6 “certainly envisions a trial in some situations, specifically if the lower court has followed 40-5 and cooperated with the higher court during the investigative period.” Respondent was not convinced, however, that formal process is required in all cases, and particularly that such process is not required in a case such as this where Session refused to appear when cited and where, in the judgment of SFP, documentary evidence makes it clear that Session failed to perform its Constitutional duties.

We recognize the confusion that existed in this matter because the original reports came to Presbytery largely by way of complaints and an “appeal” that were brought by ones who did not have standing. We further recognize that at least some of Session’s reticence to respond to the citations from JCOM was a function of their belief that since the complaints and appeal were not in order Presbytery could not deal with them. Having said that, we do agree with Presbytery that, even though these filings were out of order, Presbytery was within its rights to take these filings, along with the other documentary evidence that came out in the course of JCOM’s discussions of these filings,

as “credible reports” that could reasonably have led Presbytery to invoke *BCO* 40-5. *BCO* 40-5 is silent as to the method by which such credible reports come to the higher court and as to the standard by which the higher court is to evaluate the credibility of such reports. Thus, presbyteries have broad discretion in receiving reports and determining their credibility.

Additionally, while we understand some of Session’s procedural concerns about the investigative process, and while we recognize Session’s offer to meet informally with the SFP Minister and Church Relations Committee to try to deal with these issues in a non-judicial forum, and while we recognize that Session eventually provided JCOM with the Sessional minutes it desired, we conclude that the gravity of the allegations and a proper respect for the courts of the Church should have led Session to be more forthcoming in meeting with and providing documents to JCOM, even if Session desired to assert various procedural concerns about JCOM’s process. Following that path would have likely reduced suspicions and allowed for a better dialogue about the allegations.

While we agree that Presbytery was within its rights to receive and investigate these credible reports, and while we recognize that Presbytery made a good faith effort to investigate carefully and with sensitivity, we do not agree that Presbytery was within its rights to judge Session to be guilty, and then to impose censures on Session, without issuing an indictment with charges and specifications, citing the Session to enter a plea, and conducting a trial per *BCO* 40-6 (or receiving an admission of guilt from Session). Courts, just as much as individuals, must have the right to know exactly what they are being charged with, and they must have the right to question witnesses and evidence, and to present witnesses and evidence on their own behalf. This conclusion is consistent with Proverbs 18:7, the concern for the rights of both parties that is evidenced throughout the “Rules for Discipline,” the lack of any qualifying language (*e.g.*, “ordinarily”) in *BCO* 40-6, and the pattern established in case 2006-02 (see above). Moreover, this understanding is not new. In his 1898 *Exposition of the Book of Church Order*, F.P. Ramsey offered the following comment on the very similar paragraph contained in the PCUS “Rules of Discipline:”

In the exercise of general review and control the superior court may go so far as to enter upon the records of the inferior court a censure of the records (but not of the court), or send to

the inferior court an order to review and redress irregular proceedings; but in the exercise of its jurisdiction **by process** the superior court may censure the inferior court (and not its records merely), and may itself reverse and redress the proceedings (in other than judicial cases) instead of ordering the inferior court to reconsider and correct them. .... [N]o inferior court may be censured except after conviction on regular trial, any more than an individual. (pp. 242-243, <https://www.pcahistory.org/bco/rod/40/05.html>; emphasis added.)

The import of proceeding by formal judicial process in cases such as this is highlighted by examples that are evident in the Record. First, it is not clear that some of the matters for which Session was adjudged guilty were set out clearly (maybe at all) in JCOM's citation for Session to appear [compare the "Matters" raised on ROC 162-164 that Respondent said "basically laid out the charges" with the "Judgments" in the matter on ROC 192-193]. It is unclear how Session could defend itself if the charges were not clearly laid out and if Presbytery was not limited to those charges. Second, Session stated repeatedly that they did not agree with factual statements made by JCOM, yet some of those disputed facts underpin JCOM's conclusions. Third, Presbytery's "Judgment" and "Actions" contained conclusions about the meaning of the PCA Constitution (*e.g.*, does the Constitution require third party investigations in cases such as these? what is the proper authority of the higher court? can a Presbytery compel a Session to follow resolutions and advice from GA?) and the laws of the civil magistrate (*e.g.*, what does the relevant Florida statute require?). Surely, Session should have had the right formally to challenge whether Presbytery's understanding of the PCA Constitution and the laws of the civil magistrate were accurate before Session was judged guilty of violating what Presbytery understood to be the requirement of those documents.

We understand that Presbytery was, rightly, concerned about the gravity of the allegations, and that Presbytery was frustrated by what it saw as an unwillingness of Session to cooperate in the investigation. The remedy for those concerns was not, however, to proceed without process. The proper remedy would have been for Presbytery to have begun process and then, if Session refused to participate, to deal with them for their contumacy (BCO 32-6).

The decision of Presbytery to approve the recommendations of JCOM, thereby finding the Session guilty of four matters and then imposing on Session censure and mandated corrective actions is hereby annulled (*BCO* 43-10). The matter is returned to Presbytery with instructions that Presbytery either: a) proceed with this matter through the avenue of raising exceptions to the Session's minutes, should Presbytery be convinced that such exceptions are justified, and dealing with whatever response is forthcoming; or b) engaging in informal interactions with Session in an effort to reach a mutual understanding of the proper course of action, which would not preclude other options if the informal interactions do not yield agreement; or c) proceeding to formal judicial process following *BCO* 40-6. Further, given the gravity of the allegations, we direct that Presbytery determine at its first stated meeting after this decision is reported as final, or at an earlier meeting if desired by Presbytery, which of these paths it will follow and how.

Finally, we note the Respondent asked in his brief that if the SJC remitted this matter to Presbytery for trial, it do so with "an order that in the meantime the Session comply with the Presbytery's directives on August 9, 2022 - to call a congregational meeting with Presbytery representatives present to explain the situation to the congregation and to follow Florida statutes for reporting." We decline to issue this ruling because it assumes the very things that would need to be proven, that is, that the allegations are true, that Session failed to deal properly with the allegations, and that Session has failed to follow Florida law. We share Respondent's concern that justice be done, that individuals are protected against any future sexual misconduct, and that Session follow the mandates of Romans 13. But we cannot do that by opining on the requirements of civil law or by ordering the very thing we said Presbytery did not have the right to order apart from formal judicial process. We, like Presbytery, can encourage Session to apprise the Congregation of the issues, but the only way that can be mandated is by following the constitutionally allowed mechanisms set forth above.

---

In the Panel's proposed decision, the Case Summary and Summary of the Facts were drafted by RE Bise; the remainder of the proposed decision was drafted by RE Neikirk. The entirety of the proposed Panel decision was edited by the Panel and adopted unanimously on 8/18/23. The SJC reviewed each part of the

## APPENDIX Q

proposed decision. The SJC approved the amended Decision on the following **20-0** vote, with four absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Absent	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Absent	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	<i>Concur</i>
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>



**CASE No. 2022-23**

***TE MICHAEL WOODHAM***

***v.***

***SOUTH FLORIDA PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON COMPLAINT**

October 20, 2023

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

- 02/09/21 The resignation of TE [Name Redacted] as Associate Pastor of [Congregation Redacted] was reported to South Florida Presbytery ("SFP").
- 05/18/21 The congregation's approval of TE [redacted]'s resignation was reported to SFP.
- 05/28/21 TE [redacted] drafted and sent a letter declaring that his "attempts to keep my views and vows in the PCA are becoming disingenuous," and that he has made the "decision to step down from pastoral ministry and demit my credentials in the PCA."
- 08/17/21 The Minister and Church Relations Committee (MCRC) reported to SFP its "ongoing ministry to TE [redacted]."
- 10/08/21 SFP's Judicial Commission (JC) discussed SFP "Case No. 21-01" regarding TE [redacted].
- 11/23/21 SFP's JC "reached tentative agreement" that TE [redacted] "be censured with the (*sic*) Deposition from office ...," and "that a final decision and motion be withheld pending a meeting (to be set) with TE Halleran to discuss the role of the MCRC in deposed TE's (*sic*) generally, and then specifically in this case, given that the censure, once delivered, concludes the judicial process (*BCO* 30-1)."
- 01/12/21 SFP's JC met to continue to discuss censures regarding TE [redacted].

## APPENDIX Q

- 02/16/22 SFP's JC agreed to consult with TE [redacted] regarding proceeding with the Case under *BCO* 38-1.
- 05/10/22 SFP, upon report of SFP's JC, "approve[d] the judgment of the JC as the decision of the Presbytery," namely, "to depose TE [redacted] and to suspend him from the Sacraments of the Church." TE Halleran then reported to SFP "that he, on behalf of the MCRC, will continue to endeavor to bring [name redacted] to a sense of his guilt and repentance." Presbytery Minutes then indicated that "the JC retained jurisdiction of the case to monitor any progress and, if necessary, to impose additional discipline."
- 08/02/22 SFP's JC "discussed the Presbytery's attempts to work with TE [redacted] (through the MCRC) and the complete lack of any progress." JC thereupon acted to "impose the final censure (excommunication)," and to bring this action "to the floor of Presbytery for final approval."
- 08/08/22 It is reported to SFP that "MCRC [is] working with Mr. [redacted] on an ongoing basis." Presbytery minutes then indicate "[d]iscussion on Mr. [redacted]'s church oversight, ruled out of order as he has not been led to repentance and will be excommunicated later in this meeting (*BCO* 46). (Mr. [redacted] has been under the care of MCRC in regard to this matter.)" SFP then acted "to accept ruling of JCOM (*sic*) to excommunicate Mr. [redacted]," and proceeded to inflict the censure of excommunication upon Mr. [redacted].
- 08/12/22 TE Michael Woodham filed complaint with SFP for having "erred in taking this action [i.e., excommunicating Mr. (redacted)] by failing to assign Mr. (redacted) to membership in some particular church as required by *BCO* 46-8."
- 09/26/22 SFP's JC issued its "Final Decision and Report" regarding TE Woodham's August 12, 2022 Complaint, acting to deny in whole TE Woodham's Complaint.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 11/08/22 JC reported to SFP its action to deny TE Woodham's Complaint, and SFP "approves" the matter.
- 11/14/22 TE Woodham carried his Complaint to the General Assembly.
- 06/20/23 The Hearing was held via videoconference before a Panel, composed of TE Guy Waters (chair), RE Melton Duncan, and RE Jim Eggert. Both parties had previously filed timely briefs. The Complainant, TE Woodham, was present and was assisted by TE Dominic Aquila. TE Damon Palmer represented Presbytery.

### II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

Did South Florida Presbytery err when, after deposing a Teaching Elder from office and not yet having assigned him to membership in some particular church, it subsequently excommunicated him?

### III. JUDGMENT

No

### IV. REASONING AND OPINION

This case involves a Teaching Elder whom South Florida Presbytery (SFP) both deposed and suspended from the Sacraments of the Church on May 10, 2022. At its next stated meeting, on August 8, 2022, South Florida Presbytery acted to excommunicate this TE. At neither meeting (nor at any point in the interim) did Presbytery act to assign Mr. [redacted] "to membership in some particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church" (*BCO* 46-8).

Complainant argues that "the one and only proper action SFP should [have] take[n] under our constitution after deposing Mr. [redacted] from office was to assign him to membership in some particular church." When SFP acted to excommunicate TE [redacted], Complainant continues, it therefore acted "contrary to *BCO* 46-8," since "Mr. [redacted] was no longer a teaching elder member of SFP, and no longer under its judicial oversight." Complainant requests that that the "censure of excommunication [be] annulled," and that "South Florida Presbytery assign Mr. [redacted] to membership in some

particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that Church per *BCO* 46-8.”

Two matters are necessary to the resolution of this case. The first concerns the constitutional question of the nature and extent of Presbytery’s jurisdiction over a Teaching Elder whom it has deposed from the ministry. The second concerns the factual question of South Florida Presbytery’s actions, in light of *BCO* 46-8, relating to Mr. [redacted] in the window of time between his deposition and excommunication.

### **Presbytery’s Jurisdiction**

The *Book of Church Order* stipulates that “when a Presbytery shall ... depose [a minister] without excommunication, it shall assign him to membership in some particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church” (*BCO* 46-8). In view in this provision is the transfer of a deposed minister from the jurisdiction of one court (Presbytery) to a lower court (Session). Having been judicially removed from the ministry, a deposed man is no longer eligible to maintain his membership in Presbytery. He is therefore assigned to membership in a particular church.

While the action of *BCO* 46-8 is obligatory, *BCO* 46-8 specifies neither a timeframe within which Presbytery must complete this action, nor the particular means or mechanism by which this action must be accomplished. Presbytery, therefore, has Constitutionally delimited discretion in the manner in which it implements this provision to those men to whom this provision applies.

Until such a man is transferred to the membership in some particular church, he remains under the jurisdiction of Presbytery, his deposition notwithstanding. This principle is reflected elsewhere within the *Book of Church Order*.

Members of one church dismissed to join another shall be held to be under the jurisdiction of the Session dismissing them until they form a regular connection with that to which they have been dismissed (*BCO* 46-3).

When a Presbytery shall dismiss a minister, licentiate or candidate, the name of the Presbytery to which he is dismissed shall be given in the certificate, and he shall remain under the jurisdiction of the Presbytery dismissing him until received by the other (*BCO* 46-6).

And, in the case of “a member of a particular church [who] has willfully neglected the church for a period of one year, or has made it known that he has no intention of fulfilling the church vows,” that member remains under the jurisdiction of his Session and subject to its discipline (*BCO* 38-4).

Once a man is transferred to the jurisdiction of a lower court, Presbytery’s jurisdiction over the man does not altogether terminate. Should a Teaching Elder, deposed and suspended from the sacraments, profess his repentance to Presbytery and furnish satisfactory evidence of the same to Presbytery, it is *Presbytery* and not his local Session that is tasked with removing the censure(s) and, if applicable, restoring him to office. This is the express testimony of *BCO* 37-9(a).

If the censure(s) does not include excommunication, the presbytery inflicting the censure(s) shall retain the authority to remove the censure(s) and, at its discretion, restore him to office. This authority is retained by the presbytery even when a divested or deposed minister is assigned, under the provisions of *BCO* 46-8, to a session.

While these circumstances envisioned in *BCO* 37-9(a) did not take place in this particular Case, this hypothetical example illustrates the ongoing jurisdictional power of Presbytery over a man, deposed and assigned to membership in a particular church, with respect to his restoration and the removal of censure(s). Presbytery retains this power in light of the fact that it rendered judgment in this particular case (whether with or without process).<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Complainant argued that a previous SJC ruling, *Randy C. Stringer v. Mississippi Valley Presbytery* Case No. 90-7, *M19GA*, 1990, pp. 533-5, is “a precedent case quite similar to this one” (Complainant’s Brief, 2). In *Stringer*, the SJC found that Presbytery erred when, having deposed a minister and not having assigned him to a particular church, it subsequently excommunicated him. SJC then ruled that Presbytery “should take no other action but to assign Mr. Stringer to a particular church according to *BCO* 46-8” (*M19GA* 1990, p. 534). Setting aside the question whether SJC correctly adjudicated that particular case in 1990, we note that *BCO* 37-9 was subsequently added to the *BCO* in 1994 (*M22GA*, 1994, p.61). *BCO*

If a Teaching Elder, deposed and suspended from the sacraments, were to continue impenitent, it would therefore be the same court – Presbytery – that would be tasked with taking action with respect to this man. Presbytery is the appropriate court to inflict, if warranted, the higher censure of excommunication upon this man, should the sin continue. We note that the question of the process by which a presbytery would move to excommunication was not before us, so we make no comment on that procedure. Such an action would simply constitute the conclusion of a particular case that had originated within and had been conducted by the Presbytery.

It is for these reasons, contrary to the claim of Complainant, that South Florida Presbytery retained jurisdiction to inflict the censure of excommunication upon a Teaching Elder whom it had deposed from the ministry. Having acted to depose and to suspend from the sacraments Mr. [redacted], South Florida Presbytery did not altogether forfeit its jurisdiction over Mr. [redacted]. It was not, therefore, constitutionally barred from inflicting the censure of excommunication upon Mr. [redacted] on August 12, 2022.

#### South Florida Presbytery’s Actions in Light of *BCO* 46-8

The second matter necessary to the resolution of this case concerns the actions that South Florida Presbytery took with respect to Mr. [redacted] in light of *BCO* 46-8. The Parties are factually agreed that Presbytery took no action to assign Mr. [redacted] to membership in a particular church, neither on May 10, 2022, August 12, 2022, or at some point in the interim. It is important, therefore, to review from the Record what actions Presbytery and its committees did take in this time period regarding Mr. [redacted].

The minutes of South Florida Presbytery for May 10, 2022 (the date on which SFP deposed and suspended from the sacraments Mr. [redacted]) indicate that a member Teaching Elder of SFP, acting on behalf of Presbytery’s Minister and Church Relations Committee (MCRC), would “continue to bring [redacted] to a sense of his guilt and repentance.” Simultaneously, the Presbytery’s Judicial Commission “retained jurisdiction of the case to monitor

---

37-9(a) affirms explicitly that Presbytery continues to have jurisdiction over a deposed minister, even when that minister has been assigned to a session per *BCO* 46-8.

any progress and, if necessary, to impose additional discipline.” The minutes for Presbytery’s Judicial Commission’s meeting of August 2, 2022 indicate that the Commission “discussed the Presbytery’s attempts to work with TE [redacted] (through the MCRC) and the complete lack of any progress.” It was this discussion that occasioned the Commission’s recommendation to SFP that the censure of excommunication be inflicted upon TE [redacted]. The September 26, 2022 Report of Presbytery’s Judicial Commission in response to the Complaint of TE Woodham against SFP, a Report that was subsequently approved by SFP on November 8, 2022, in its statement of the facts of the case, described the work of the MCRC subsequent to “Mr. [redacted] [having been] formally advised of the censures in writing by the Judicial Commission.”

MCRC (through TE Halleran) then continued try (*sic*) to minister to Mr. [redacted] including trying to place him with a PCA church. Mr. [redacted] made it very clear that he would not start going to any such church whether South Florida Presbytery “assigned” him to one or not” (emphasis and quotation marks original). MCRC reached the point where in their opinion, any such further efforts would be futile and so advised the Judicial Commission. The MCRC’s opinion was consistent with what the Judicial Commission had also witnessed concerning Mr. [redacted]’s most recent thoughts on the PCA. During the course of these efforts, Mr. [redacted] did advise that he was attending a non-PCA church and this was corroborated by his social media posts and other Teaching Elders.

This factual summary, drafted by SFP’s Judicial Commission and presented to the Presbytery, met with no objection from Presbytery, so far as the Record indicates. This Summary documents the efforts of the two bodies – the Minister and Church Relations Committee (MCRC) and the Judicial Commission (JC) – that Presbytery had tasked with pursuing Mr. [redacted] subsequent to its censuring of Mr. [redacted] in May, 2022. This summary reflects sincere efforts on the part of SFP’s MCRC to assist Presbytery in fulfilling its BCO 46-8 mandate to assign Mr. [redacted] to membership in some particular church. Mr. [redacted]’s intransigent resistance to membership in a member congregation of the PCA prompted the MCRC to conclude any further efforts to assign him to be “futile.” The MCRC’s conclusion was “consistent with” what the JC had itself “witnessed” regarding Mr. [redacted]

and was also confirmed by evidence of [redacted]’s attendance at a non-PCA church.

Thus, it is clear that SFP undertook efforts to implement the provision of *BCO* 46-8. It did so through its MCRC and its JC. MCRC – and ultimately Presbytery itself – halted those efforts when it became clear that Mr. [redacted] would not cooperate with Presbytery in its endeavors to implement *BCO* 46-8, and when Presbytery’s JC determined to recommend to SFP that the censure of excommunication be inflicted upon Mr. [redacted]. It should be remembered that this committee and commission undertook and concluded their work rapidly, within the space of three months. Neither the committee nor the commission could be fairly faulted with undue delay in taking up the matters that Presbytery had set before it.

In evaluating Presbytery’s factual determinations regarding Mr. [redacted] in light of *BCO* 46-8, the provisions of *BCO* 39-3(2) and 39-3(3) apply. In the first place, the SJC must “exhibit great deference” to SFP “regarding those factual matters which the lower court is more competent to determine,” and thus “should not reverse a factual finding of a lower court, unless there is clear error on the part of the lower court.” (*BCO* 39-3(2)) In the second place, the SJC must “exhibit great deference” to SFP “regarding those matters of discretion and judgment which can only be addressed by a court with familiar acquaintance of the events and parties,” and thus “should not reverse such a judgment by a lower court, unless there is clear error on the part of the lower court.” (*BCO* 39-3(3))

In light of the above, we conclude that nothing in the Record indicates “clear error” on the part of South Florida Presbytery’s efforts to implement *BCO* 46-8. On the contrary, SFP made the effort to implement *BCO* 46-8 and ceased those efforts only when it concluded that circumstances bound them to do so. The SJC therefore has no basis upon which to reverse the lower court’s findings and judgments in this matter.

## Conclusion

Complainant claims that a Presbytery is constitutionally disbarred from inflicting the censure of excommunication upon a minister whom it has deposed and suspended from the sacraments, that South Florida Presbytery erred in so doing, and that South Florida Presbytery should only have assigned



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Mr. [redacted] to membership in a particular church. But a Presbytery retains jurisdiction over a deposed minister until the transfer of that jurisdiction to a lower court is concluded, and, even after that conclusion, retains a measure of jurisdiction over that man. Furthermore, the Record indicates that South Florida Presbytery undertook efforts to implement the provisions of *BCO* 46-8 with respect to Mr. [redacted]. Complainant has demonstrated from the Record no clear error on the part of Presbytery with respect to the actions in question. It is for these reasons that the Complaint is denied.

---

The Panel's proposed decision was written by TE Guy Prentiss Waters, amended by the Panel, and adopted by the Panel by vote of 2-1 on 7/7/23. The SJC reviewed each part of the proposed decision. The SJC approved the amended Decision on the following **18-2** vote, with four absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Absent	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Dissent</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Absent	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	<i>Concur</i>
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Dissent</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

## CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2022-23: *TE Woodham v. South Florida*

RE Howie Donahoe

November 9, 2023

I concurred in this Decision but believe some brief, additional clarification of *BCO* 46-8 is warranted. And I feel conscience bound to comment further on my understanding of whether a presbytery can excommunicate a man after it has already deposed him.

*BCO* 46-8. When a Presbytery shall divest a minister of his office without censure, or depose him without excommunication, it shall assign him, to membership in some particular church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church.

### Grammar & *BCO* 46-8

Some might argue *BCO* 46-8 requires *immediate* assignment which, practically speaking, probably means two options. Either a motion to divest/depose will contain the name of the church to which the man is assigned, or the assignment motion will immediately follow the adoption of a motion to divest/depose. However, the SJC's Reasoning understands the "when" conjunction more broadly. In short, it means "in the event that ..." rather than "at the same time that ...". The SJC rightly contends:

While the action of *BCO* 46-8 is obligatory, *BCO* 46-8 specifies neither a timeframe within which Presbytery must complete this action, nor the particular means or mechanism by which this action must be accomplished.

I agree. The opening word "When" in *BCO* 46-8 is a conjunction that connects a subordinate clause (divest/depose) and a main clause (assign). But the conjunction itself doesn't indicate whether the action in the main clause (assign) occurs "at the same time," or simply, "in the event of" the action in the subordinate clause (divest/depose). Several provisions in the *BCO* open with the conjunction "When" and are later followed by the imperative "shall." In those instances, "when" is best understood as "in the event of." Put another

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

way, the conjunction "when" does not require the subsequent "shall" action to be understood as "shall, *at the same moment*, ...." Below are some examples. All emphasis is added.

14-3. *When* an emergency shall require a meeting of the General Assembly earlier than the time to which it stands adjourned, the moderator *shall* issue a call for a special meeting at the request or with the concurrence of ten percent (10%) of the commissioners who had seats in the Assembly at its preceding meeting, ....

24-9. *When* a ruling elder or deacon cannot or does not for a period of one year perform the duties of his office, his official relationship *shall* be dissolved by the Session and the action reported to the congregation.

32-18. *When* a case is removed by appeal or complaint, the lower court *shall* transmit "the Record" thus prepared to the higher court with the addition of the notice of appeal or complaint, and the reasons therefor, if any shall have been filed.

38-1. *When* any person shall come forward and make his offense known to the court, a full statement of the facts *shall* be recorded and judgment rendered without process.

See also *BCO* 5-9.c, 8-4, 13-2, 13-10, 20-9, 21-1, 24-8, 25-2, 36-1, 38-4 & 57-3.

Granted, there are a few instances in the *BCO* where "When" means "at the same time as" or perhaps "hastily," but in those instances the timing is explicitly clarified later in the sentence.

21-2. *When* an intern has completed his internship to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, and has accepted a call, the Presbytery shall take *immediate* steps for his ordination.

## APPENDIX Q

33-2. *When* an accused person is found contumacious (cf. 32-6), he shall be *immediately* suspended from the sacraments (and if an officer from his office) for his contumacy.

34-4.a. *When* a minister accused of an offense is found contumacious (cf. 32-6), he shall be *immediately* suspended from the sacraments and his office for his contumacy. [cf. *BCO* 34-7]

I can't find any instance in the *BCO* where there is a "when ... shall" arrangement that indicates immediacy unless the explicit timing is also specified, as in the four instances above.

At the same time, a Presbytery is ordinarily expected to ensure a divested/deposed minister is promptly and officially transferred to the jurisdiction of an individual church. Such a transfer would probably work best if it was mutually satisfactory to both the Session and the divested/deposed minister, but that's not constitutionally required. And if a Presbytery assigned a divested/deposed minister to membership in ABC PCA Church, with that Session's consent, that would not prevent him from soon thereafter requesting the Session to transfer his membership to DEF PCA Church - or even to XYZ ARP Church.

And if the Session of ABC PCA Church can later transfer a deposed minister to XYZ ARP Church, at his request, soon after Presbytery assigns his membership in the PCA Church, I don't see why the Presbytery couldn't transfer his membership to XYZ ARP Church in the first place. That would seem prudent, and doing something like that might have avoided the turmoil in this Case. The main goal of *BCO* 46-8 seems to be to get the man under the jurisdiction of the government of a Bible-believing individual church ASAP.<sup>1</sup>

The Record in this present Case indicated a Presbytery committee reported the deposed minister did not want to be assigned membership in a church in the Presbytery that deposed him. That's probably not an uncommon, or even an unreasonable, sentiment amongst deposed PCA ministers. *BCO* 46-8 doesn't

---

<sup>1</sup> The SJC Decision noted that Presbytery's Ministers & Church Relations Committee concluded there was "evidence of [redacted]'s *attendance at a non-PCA church*." [Emphasis added.] The Record doesn't indicate the name or denomination of that non-PCA church.

explicitly require assignment to membership in a PCA church (though one might argue it seems implied).

The original Complaint in this Case was more concerned with Presbytery's excommunication after deposition, than the speed at which membership assignment was made, though they were related. In the excerpt below, the original Complaint grants that immediacy is not required by *BCO* 46-8.

Following the infliction of the censure of deposition, SFP should have acted to assign [the deposed minister] to membership in some particular church. Since SFP did not act to assign him to membership at the May 10, 2022 meeting, it could have appointed a committee or commission to carry out the requirement of *BCO* 46-8. Or, it could have concluded the requirements of *BCO* 46-8 at its next meeting on August 9, 2022.

### **Jurisdiction Regarding Post-Deposition Censure**

In the 20 days since I concurred in denying this Complaint, I've begun to have reservations. I'm no longer sure that a presbytery has any jurisdiction over a man after the moment he is divested or deposed (unless, perhaps, while those actions are held in abeyance during an appeal.)

*BCO* 37-9 explicitly addresses the jurisdiction of presbyteries vs. sessions regarding the *removal* of censures imposed on a minister and the *restoration* of a minister. The provision says nothing about the jurisdiction to increase censure.

*BCO* 37-9. In the case of the *removal* of censures from, or the *restoration* of, a minister, jurisdiction shall be as follows:

- a. If the censure(s) does not include excommunication, the presbytery inflicting the censure(s) shall retain the authority to *remove* the censure(s) and, at its discretion, restore him to office. This authority is retained by the presbytery even when a divested or deposed minister is assigned, under the provisions of *BCO* 46-8, to a session.

- b. If the censure includes excommunication, the penitent may only be *restored* to the communion of the church through a session (*BCO* 1-3; 6-4; 57-4; 57-5; 57-6). Once the penitent is restored, and therefore a member of a local church, the authority to remove any other censure(s) in respect to office, *concurrently imposed with that of excommunication* shall belong to the court originally imposing such censure(s). [Emphasis is added here, and throughout this Opinion.]

A fair reading of *BCO* 37-9.b. concludes that if excommunication is warranted, it is imposed *concurrently* with deposition. That did not occur in this Case. I can find no *BCO* statements giving a presbytery authority to subsequently increase, or add, a censure to a divested or deposed minister.

As reported in the SJC Decision, Presbytery's Minutes of May 10, 2022 indicated the Presbytery Judicial Commission "retained jurisdiction of the case to monitor any progress and, if necessary, to impose additional discipline." Similarly, footnote 1 in the SJC Decision ends with: "*BCO* 37-9(a) affirms explicitly that Presbytery continues to have jurisdiction over a deposed minister, even when that minister has been assigned to a session per *BCO* 46-8."

I now believe that *BCO* 37-9 only affirms a Presbytery's authority to *lift or remove* censures related to office, but not to impose some censure after deposition. *BCO* 37-9.a. only affirms a presbytery's right to *remove and restore* in a non-excommunication situation. And *BCO* 37-9.b. only affirms a presbytery's authority to decide what to do *about office* if a man has been restored by a church post-excommunication. Nothing is said in *BCO* 37-9 about increasing a censure.

*BCO* 30-3 specifies: "Indefinite suspension [from office] is administered to the impenitent offender until he exhibits signs of repentance, or until by his conduct, the necessity of the greatest censure be made manifest." There is no similar *BCO* paragraph specifying that deposition is imposed until the necessity of the greatest censure be made manifest.

*BCO* 36-7 stipulates: "The censure of deposition shall be administered by the moderator in the words following: ... If the censure *includes* suspension or

excommunication, the moderator shall proceed to say: ..." *BCO* 30-5 mentions similar timing: "Deposition is the degradation of an officer from his office and may or may not be *accompanied with* the infliction of other censure."<sup>2</sup>

*BCO* 34-4.b stipulates: "If after further endeavor by the court to bring the [contumacious minister already suspended from office] to a sense of his guilt, he persists in his contumacy, he shall be deposed *and* excommunicated from the Church." Neither *BCO* 34-4 nor any other provision in the *BCO* stipulates something like the following: *If after further endeavor by the Presbytery to bring a deposed minister to a sense of his guilt, he persists in his contumacy (or impenitence), Presbytery shall excommunicate him from the Church.* Yet that seems to have been the situation in this Case.

The legislative history of *BCO* 37-9 sheds some light on this. Over three decades ago, in 1989, Delmarva Presbytery overtured the Assembly regarding *BCO* 37 and the overture was referred to the Committee on Judicial Business ("CJB"). (*M17GA*, p. 166) The following year, no action was recorded. In 1991 and again in 1992, the matter was referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business ("CCB", which was the new name of the CJB.) In 1993, the CCB recommended adding what was to become *BCO* 37-9, and the Assembly in Columbia, SC adopted it. (*M21GA*, pp. 80, 281). Presbyteries then voted 45-4 to approve, and in 1994, the 22<sup>nd</sup> GA in Atlanta, moderated by TE Will Barker, enacted the change (*M22GA*, p. 61). Nothing in the legislative history of *BCO* 37-9 supports the interpretation that a presbytery can excommunicate a man at some point after it has deposed him. The history of *BCO* 37-9 demonstrates the matter in question involved jurisdiction in the process of *restoring* an excommunicated or a deposed teaching elder.

---

<sup>2</sup> *BCO* 30-5 dates to 1879 and stipulates: "Deposition is the degradation of an officer from his office and may or may not be accompanied with the infliction of other censure." That's confusing. Does that mean suspension from sacraments? I doubt it. In his 1898 comments on this provision, F.P. Ramsay simply writes: "Courts should be careful not to suspend indefinitely from office unless in cases in which deposition should follow if there is not repentance." I believe it is unfair for a presbytery to impose the censure of suspension from the sacraments on a minister *being deposed*. It is unfair, and frankly, I think a bit strange to give a presbytery jurisdiction to continue that suspension over a man who is no longer under its jurisdiction. I believe that demonstrates a failure to trust a session. And I believe it's an inaccurate reading of *BCO* 37-9. If I am wrong, I hope the PCA will revise that paragraph.

I apologize for not preparing better for this Case when it was heard by the SJC. I regret not raising these arguments during the SJC meeting. Because our SJC Rules say that should ordinarily be done, I fully understand if the SJC puts an Answer to this Concurrence.

/s/ RE Howie Donahoe

### CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2022-23: *TE Woodham v. South Florida*

RE Jim Eggert

November 3, 2023

I concur with the result of the Court's Decision but not with all its reasoning.

I disagree with the Decision's assessment that "two matters are necessary to the resolution of this case." Per the Decision those two matters are: (1) "the constitutional question of the nature and extent of Presbytery's jurisdiction over a Teaching Elder whom it has deposed from the ministry and (2) "the factual question" of the Presbytery's "actions," considering *BCO* 46-8 relating to "the window of time between his deposition and excommunication."

Although my reasoning is somewhat different from that of the Decision, I believe that the answer to the former question is entirely dispositive, and therefore evaluation of the latter question is not necessary to the resolution of this case. Furthermore, with respect to the latter question, I disagree with the Decision's deferential approach to the Presbytery's *BCO* 46-8 activities.

I believe that the issue presented is simple: the Complainant maintained that "the one and only action" that Presbytery could take after deposing the minister "was to assign him to membership in some particular church" pursuant to *BCO* 46-8. Put another way, the Complainant effectively maintained that the Presbytery, having deposed the minister and suspended him from the Sacraments, lacked continuing jurisdiction over him to elevate that censure to excommunication, such jurisdiction being exercisable only by a Session to whom the deposed minister should have been assigned. I maintain that the



Complainant's contentions were incorrect and therefore the complaint should be denied on that basis alone.

### ***I. Presbytery's Limited Jurisdiction***

The Decision asserts that until a deposed minister "is transferred to the membership in some particular church, he remains under the jurisdiction of Presbytery, his deposition notwithstanding."

I disagree with the breadth of the Decision's framed statement. For the reasons set forth below, I am convinced that the Constitution affords Presbytery limited jurisdiction to elevate censure in an adjudicated case regarding the minister but assigns no general residual jurisdiction to Presbytery.

Citing a "principle" that is "reflected elsewhere in the *Book of Church Order*," the Decision, in part, supports Presbytery's retained general jurisdiction over deposed ministers on analogical reasoning and inferences from *BCO* 46-3 (relating to the residual jurisdiction of Sessions over dismissed members); *BCO* 46-6 (relating to residual jurisdiction of Presbyteries over dismissed ministers); and *BCO* 38-4 which prescribes the power of Sessions to remove members from the roll when they have neglected the church for a period of one year.

My disagreement with the Decision's use of the above provisions turns on my interpretational approach to our Constitution. The Constitution assigns different roles to each of the Session, Presbytery, and General Assembly such that they are "limited by the express provisions of the Constitution" (*BCO* 11-4). Because the respective jurisdictions of the courts are "limited," we consult the Constitution to resolve any question about the boundaries of power between Sessions and Presbyteries, which are "distinctly defined" so that the courts may collectively achieve an "orderly and efficient dispatch of ecclesiastical business" (*BCO* 11-4).

With respect to the general jurisdiction of Presbytery over deposed ministers, *BCO* 46-3, *BCO* 46-6, and *BCO* 38-4 (cited by the Decision) do not expressly assign such jurisdiction to Presbytery over deposed ministers. To the contrary, the fact that *BCO* 46-3 and *BCO* 46-6 explicitly retain jurisdiction in the case of *dismissals* supports the *opposite* inference in cases like *BCO* 46-8 governing the deposition and *assignment* (not *dismissal*) of deposed ministers. Unlike *BCO* 46-3, *BCO* 46-6, and *BCO* 38-4, *BCO* 46-8 directs assignment of a

deposed minister to a local church and Session but does *not* state that Presbytery retains any *general jurisdiction* over the deposed minister. Therefore, in the absence of other language in the Constitution, Presbytery is assigned no jurisdiction over a deposed minister at all.

Whereas a *dismissal* of a minister from one Presbytery to another involves transfer of like kind, the *deposition* of a minister from office instantly degrades the former minister's association with and spiritual relationship to the Church from one tier of the courts of the Church (Presbytery) to another (Session).

The jurisdiction of deposed ministers is constitutionally assigned to a Session, not the minister's former Presbytery. The constitutional rule is simple: "Process against all church members, other than ministers of the Gospel, shall be entered before the Session of the church to which such members belong, except in cases of appeal" (BCO 33-1). Being "other than a minister of the Gospel," process against a deposed minister is, unless prescribed otherwise, to be entered against him only before the Session to whom he is assigned pursuant to BCO 46-8. BCO 46-8 does not grant (or even mention) residual jurisdiction to Presbytery over a deposed minister.

Notably, however, the Constitution does provide a *limited exception* to the general rule that a Session rather than Presbytery has sole jurisdiction over deposed ministers. BCO 37-8 (governing "The Removal of Censure") provides, "In the restoration of a minister who is under indefinite suspension from the Sacraments, and/or his office, or has been deposed, it is the duty of the Presbytery to proceed with great caution." In other words, it is specifically and solely the duty of *Presbytery* to "proceed" in the restoration of the minister regarding any case in which the Presbytery censured a minister. BCO 37-8 further provides the method for restoration: the Presbytery (not a local Session) "should first admit him to the Sacraments, if he has been debarred from them." Thus, our Constitution assigns exclusively to Presbytery (rather than his Session) the power to restore the deposed minister to the Sacraments.

Further, BCO 37-8 prescribes that the case of the deposed minister for which he was censured "shall always be under judicial consideration until the declaration of restoration has been pronounced." The "judicial consideration" in view is that of the Presbytery, not a local Session, and is indefinite in duration since it is the task of the Presbytery to conclude the judicial case either by restoration or by elevation of the censure.

What is more, *BCO* 37-9 was added in 1994 and settled any previous doubt about Presbytery's continuing jurisdiction over a minister suspended from the Sacraments," despite his *BCO* 46-8 assignment to a Session. It reads as follows:

In the case of the **removal of censures** from, or the **restoration** of, a minister, jurisdiction shall be as follows:

a. If the censure(s) does not include excommunication, the presbytery inflicting the censure(s) shall retain the authority to remove the censure(s) and, at its discretion, restore him to office. **This authority is retained by the presbytery even when a divested or deposed minister is assigned, under the provisions of *BCO* 46-8, to a session.** [emphasis added].

Since Presbytery "retains authority" to restore a deposed minister, it must also, by necessary implication, retain sole authority to *elevate* the censure in the judicial case in question since such a matter remains specifically under its "judicial consideration" (*BCO* 37-8). This brings harmony to the relationship between the courts. If the power to elevate censure to excommunication in the case were assigned to a local Session, such would contradict Presbytery's express obligation to "proceed with great caution" in the matter. Moreover, the assigned Session, having the power to excommunicate the deposed minister, could both interdict and deprive the Presbytery of its constitutionally assigned sole authority to "first admit him to the Sacraments, if he has been debarred from them" (*BCO* 37-8).

Therefore *BCO* 37-8 and *BCO* 37-9 together implicitly assign exclusive (if *limited*) jurisdiction to Presbytery to not only restore a deposed minister whom it has censured with suspension from the Sacraments, but also to *elevate* his censure to excommunication. This is a *limited residual jurisdiction* in favor of Presbytery, contrary to the broad assignment of residual jurisdiction to Presbytery expressed by the language adopted in the Decision. In my view, all jurisdiction outside the case adjudicated against the deposed minister is assigned to a Session, and Presbytery retains no residual jurisdiction to consider such other matters.

This is why I agree with the result reached by the Decision. Contrary to the argument of the Complainant, the Presbytery had the power to elevate the minister's censure in this case to excommunication, which is exactly what Presbytery did. Since that *limited* jurisdiction was exclusive to Presbytery, the complaint must be denied on this ground alone, and, being totally dispositive of all questions, this is the only issue that needed to be addressed.<sup>1</sup> I agree with the Decision's conclusion that Presbytery had power to elevate the censure, but merely think that the Decision has framed that jurisdiction too broadly when it asserts that until a deposed minister "is transferred to the membership in some particular church, he remains under the jurisdiction of Presbytery, his deposition notwithstanding."

## ***II. South Florida Presbytery's Actions in Light of BCO 46-8***

Having answered in the negative that "the one and only action" that Presbytery could take after deposing the minister "was to assign him to membership in some particular church" pursuant to *BCO* 46-8, the second half of the Decision (titled "South Florida Presbytery's Actions in Light of *BCO* 46-8") proceeds to evaluate Presbytery's application of *BCO* 46-8. For the reasons stated above, I believe that the Decision's evaluation of this question is unnecessary, Presbytery's elevation of its prior censure to excommunication having made this consideration irrelevant to the outcome of this case. But I would add that I believe that the latter half of the Decision is not only superfluous; it is also mistaken.

While conceding Presbytery's obligation to assign the deposed minister to a local church, the Decision makes two assertions: (1) "*BCO* 46-8 specifies neither a timeframe within which Presbytery must complete this action, nor the particular means or mechanism by which this action must be accomplished" and (2) that Presbytery possesses a "Constitutionally delimited discretion in the manner in which it implements this provision to those men to whom this provision applies."

I disagree with both assertions.

---

<sup>1</sup> I would add that the complaint did not raise the question of whether the censure could be elevated without further process, a question that I leave for another day. (*See BCO* 39-3: "A higher court, reviewing a lower court, should limit itself to the issues raised by the parties to the case in the original (lower) court").

***A. BCO 46-8 Assignments Should be Made Contemporaneously with Deposition from Office.***

With respect to timing, *BCO* 46-8 plainly states that the assignment to a local church is to occur “[w]hen a Presbytery shall depose [a minister] without excommunication.” While it is true that the word “when” affords a range of meaning, including, “in the event that” or “if” (e.g., “a contestant is disqualified when he disobeys the rules”), the word “when” is most reasonably understood in *BCO* 46-8 to specify that the assignment is to be made *at the same time* as the deposition. This interpretation is preferable because it advances the apparent purpose of the assignment, namely, to afford continued oversight and jurisdiction over a deposed minister concerning his spiritual life outside the limited residual matter framing the ground of his censure still pending before Presbytery (*BCO* 37-8 & *BCO* 37-9). As explained in the previous section, upon his deposition, a deposed minister is no longer a minister or member of Presbytery, and Presbytery retains only that residual jurisdiction over him afforded to it under *BCO* 37-8 and *BCO* 37-9 pertaining to the case still under judicial consideration, but nothing more. That is why the assignment to a local church is directed to be made “when” (i.e., *at the time*) the minister is deposed. Such an assignment is both urgent and needful for the deposed minister who is otherwise jurisdictionally adrift under our Constitution, particularly bearing in mind that original jurisdiction of the deposed minister of everything in his life other than the case adjudicated against him in Presbytery is constitutionally assigned to a Session (*BCO* 33-1).

Consequently, I disagree with the Decision’s claim that *BCO* 46-8 specifies no timeframe within which Presbytery must assign the minister to a church. It must do so immediately.

***B. Presbyteries Are Owed no Deference in Delaying the Mandatory BCO 46-8 Assignment.***

The Decision, holding that there is no “particular means or mechanism” by which the assignment must be accomplished, recounts the “sincere efforts” of Presbytery to fulfill its obligation to assign, noting that it only “halted those efforts when it became clear that the deposed minister would not cooperate with Presbytery in its endeavors to implement *BCO* 46-8,” the deposed minister’s “intransigent resistance” making any further efforts “futile.” The

Decision, invoking the discretionary standard of *BCO* 39-3.2, maintains that the minister's resistance presented "factual matters" which the Presbytery was more competent to determine, finding that the court owes "great deference" to the Presbytery on such points since they are matters of Presbytery's "discretion and judgment." I disagree.

Since the requirement to assign the deposed minister to a local church is coincident with the deposition of the minister, I believe the Decision's claim that Presbytery "made the effort to implement *BCO* 46-8," which Presbytery delayed (and ultimately never implemented at all) is not supported by the Record.

In my view, the fact that a *BCO* 46-8 assignment is "subject to the approval" of the assigned Session does not afford an extension of time to Presbytery to make an assignment; it only makes that assignment defeasible by the assigned Session.

If an assigned church Session declines its assignment, Presbytery is obligated to assign the deposed minister to another church, subject to the approval of the Session of that church. There is no reason to complicate the simple procedure prescribed by *BCO* 46-8 which neither requires nor authorizes "means or mechanisms" of assignment as suggested by the Decision. Of course, any Presbytery would be well served by deliberating carefully when it makes the assignment and, if possible, coordinating that effort with a member church together with or in anticipation of a decision to depose a minister to ameliorate the risk that an assigned Session might decline the same.

But *BCO* 46-8 unequivocally states that the assignment is due "[w]hen a Presbytery shall depose a minister without excommunication." Presbyteries and their member Sessions should act with comity, cooperation, and compassion as coordinate courts of the Church. The expectation not only of our Constitution but of the Church's Chief Shepherd is that some Session (and perhaps more than one) will be willing to accept the assignment of a deposed minister for both the good of the Church and the obvious need of the deposed minister to be a member of a particular congregation and subject to the jurisdiction of a court of the Church.

A Presbytery's election to assign a deposed minister to one church rather than another is certainly a matter of discretion to which this court would owe "great

deference,” but no such deference is owed to the *failure to assign* the deposed minister at all – which is what happened in this case.

The deposed minister’s reported “intransigent resistance” to the assignment purportedly making any further efforts to assign him “futile” is irrelevant. *BCO* 46-8 does not require the consent or cooperation of the deposed minister; the only “approval” prescribed by *BCO* 46-8 is the Session’s. In my view, any judgment about a minister’s alleged “intransigent resistance” would belong to the assigned Session, not to Presbytery which, by virtue of the minister’s deposition, loses jurisdiction to adjudicate and censure such alleged conduct, assuming that “resistance” (“intransigent” or otherwise) is censurable.

The Decision’s deference would apparently grant discretionary power to Presbytery to indefinitely augment its jurisdictional power over the minister by deciding to delay exercising its *BCO* 46-8 obligation to assign the deposed minister to a Session, the only proper judicatory for the governance of his spiritual life outside the limited parameters of the case over which Presbytery has constitutional authority. Therefore, I think the Decision’s deference to Presbytery’s discretion as to when the assignment should be made is facially contrary to the *BCO* 46-8 assignment framework.

Presbytery had no jurisdiction over the unadjudicated claim referenced in the Decision that the deposed minister “would not cooperate with Presbytery in its endeavors to implement *BCO* 46-8,” a claim for which no formal process was ever afforded to the minister before he was excommunicated (presumably on other grounds). Alleged offenses of a minister after he is deposed from office and distinct from the residual case still under Presbytery’s judicial consideration per *BCO* 37-9 are the exclusive prerogative of a Session with jurisdiction over the man, not the Presbytery that deposed him.

I therefore disagree with the Decision’s reasoning that finds no “clear error” in Presbytery’s conclusions about the deposed minister’s alleged lack of cooperation with the Presbytery’s “efforts to implement,” *BCO* 46-8. The coordination of jurisdiction between Sessions and Presbyteries prescribed by our Constitution requires a coincident assignment of a deposed minister to a local church at the time he is deposed. The local Session, not the Presbytery, is in the best position to assess whether the minister is cooperative with the assignment, and therefore our Constitution assigns the local Session (not Presbytery) jurisdiction over such matters, including the power to initiate

## APPENDIX Q

formal process if the deposed minister refuses to cooperate with the Session's assigned jurisdiction.

Thus, while I concur in the result, for the reasons and to the extent set forth above, I disagree with the form of the Decision.

/s/ RE Jim Eggert



**CASE No. 2023-01**

***MRS. KRISTIN HANN***  
**v.**  
***PEE DEE PRESBYTERY***

**RULING ON COMPLAINT**

October 20, 2023

This Case is judicially out of order because the Complainant lacks standing. Because Mrs. Hann is not subject to the jurisdiction of Pee Dee Presbytery her Complaint is out of order and cannot be put in order, and therefore is dismissed.

We note, however, that the record indicates Presbytery continues to investigate these matters. This out of order Ruling does not stay any action that may grow out of such investigation, nor the review of any actions that may grow out of the review of Presbytery's records.

---

The Panel included TE Coffin (chair), RE Pickering and RE Eggert, with alternates RE S. Duncan and TE Greco. After reviewing the Panel's 6/30/23 proposed Ruling, SJC voted to approve this Ruling on the following **17-2** vote, with four absent and one recused.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Absent	Maynard	<i>Dissent</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Absent	Sartorius	<i>Dissent</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Recused
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

TE Ross recused himself from Case 2023-01 reporting it was "because of personal advice given to members of these disputes and prior knowledge of issues in said Cases."

**CASE No. 2023-02**

***MRS. KAPPIE REYNOLDS***

***v.***

***PEE DEE PRESBYTERY***

**RULING ON COMPLAINT**

October 20, 2023

The instant Complaint is judicially out of order because it was not timely filed. The Complaint seeks to redress acts or decisions taken by a Session which received and acted upon a confession at a meeting of the court in excess of six months before the Complaint was filed, putting the Complaint far outside the sixty-day period prescribed by *BCO* 43-2.

For these reasons, the Complaint is not demonstrated to be timely, nor can it be cured to be rendered timely. Therefore, the instant Complaint is judicially out of order and should be dismissed.

This Ruling expresses no opinion (1) as to whether Mrs. Reynolds might be eligible to bring a charge as an “injured party” and prosecute her claims as a “personal offense” (*BCO* 31-5) or (2) concerning the Session’s jurisdiction to determine whether Mrs. Reynold’s claims are outside the scope of the confession it received from the censured Ruling Elder.

---

The Panel included TE Coffin (chair), RE Pickering and RE Eggert, with alternates RE S. Duncan and TE Greco. After reviewing the Panel’s 6/30/23 proposed Ruling, the SJC voted to approve this Ruling on the following **18-1** vote, with four absent and one recused.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Absent	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Absent	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Recused
Donahoe	<i>Dissent</i>	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

TE Ross recused himself from Case 2023-02 reporting it was "because of personal advice given to members of these disputes and prior knowledge of issues in said Cases."

**Case No. 2023-04**

***TE RYAN BIESE et al.***  
**v.**  
***TENNESSEE VALLEY PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON COMPLAINT**

October 20, 2023

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

- 10/14/22 The Tennessee Valley Presbytery (TVP) Committee for the Review of Session Records (RSR) met and reviewed minute submissions from various churches, one set of which was from Redeemer Church in Knoxville, TN. The minutes, dated January 26, 2022, contained this statement: “The youth group will have an outdoor Super Bowl Party on Feb. 7.”
- 10/18/22 TVP held its Stated Meeting and the RSR committee recommended that the Redeemer Church Session minutes be cited for an exception of substance based on WLC 117, WLC 118, WCF 21:8, and *BCO* 40-2. After floor debate, the RSR Committee motion failed. A subsequent motion to approve the Redeemer Church minutes without exception carried.
- 12/07/22 Teaching Elder Biese, Ruling Elder Nathan Bowers, and Ruling Elder Wil Davis complained against the 10/18/22 action of TVP approving the minutes of Redeemer Church without exception.
- 02/11/23 At its Presbytery meeting, the TVP Stated Clerk reported that the Presbytery Leadership Committee recommended sustaining the Complaint of TE Biese et al., but a substitute motion to deny the Complaint prevailed.
- 03/08/23 The Complaint was carried to the General Assembly.
- 03/15/23 The Complaint was received by the Stated Clerk of the PCA.

06/22/23 The SJC Panel held the Hearing via videoconference. Panel members included RE Dowling (chair), TE Sartorius, and RE Wilson with alternates TE Lee and RE Donahoe.

## **II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE**

1. Did Tennessee Valley Presbytery err in approving without exception the minutes of Redeemer Church at its meeting on 10/08/22 and by denying the Complaint of TE Ryan Biese et al. at its meeting on 2/11/23?

## **III. JUDGMENT**

1. No.

## **IV. REASONING AND OPINION**

Complainants allege that Presbytery erred when it approved without exception on October 8, 2022 the minutes of the Session of Redeemer Church (Knoxville) from January 26, 2021, and thereby declined to cite the Session with an exception of substance for these minutes. Complainants further allege that Presbytery subsequently erred when it denied a Complaint brought against Presbytery for its approval of these minutes. The language from these Session minutes in question reads as follows, “The youth group will have an outdoor Super Bowl party on Feb. 7.” On October 8, 2022, Presbytery’s Committee for Review of Sessional Records recommended that Presbytery cite Session with an exception of substance. Presbytery thereupon acted to “remove [this] item from the motion” and “approve[d] without exception the January 26, 2021 minutes of Redeemer Church (Knoxville).”

Complainants argue that the youth group event of February 7 “appears to violate the Scripture and represents a clear and serious irregularity from the prescriptions of the Constitution.” They contend that, in its actions of October 8, 2022, Presbytery erred when it approved these minutes and thus did not find “an exception of substance in the aforesaid minutes.” Presbytery should have cited Session with an exception of substance, Complainants continue, “since the action of the Session is not in accordance with the Constitution of the PCA.”

## APPENDIX Q

The Record indicates, and Complainants acknowledge, that Presbytery adopted no grounds for its actions on October 8, 2022. That is to say, when it acted to remove the RSR Committee’s recommendation from the motion, and when it approved without exception the Session minutes, Presbytery afforded no explanation for either action. One could speculate as to why Presbytery acted as it did. Perhaps it was discovered that the planned Super Bowl party never took place. Perhaps Presbytery was uncertain from the Session minutes whether the language in question reflected an action of the Session. In either case, one could see why Presbytery might not have taken an exception of substance. But such speculations as these fall entirely outside the Record. The Record affords insufficient information to permit the higher court to find Presbytery to have erred in its interpretation of the Constitution with respect to these two actions. It is for this reason that the Complaint is denied.

As a final note – when those members of a lower court are contemplating a complaint over any action, it is wise to make substantial effort to better preserve the record of the action taken. Similarly, presbyteries, as a whole, should strive to keep more detailed records over matters of controversy.

---

The Panel’s proposed decision was written by RE Dowling and revised and approved by a Panel vote of 3-0 on 7/31/23, with concurrence by the two alternate panel members. The SJC approved the Decision, as amended, on the following **18-1** vote, with four absent and one recused.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Absent	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Dissent</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Absent	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	<i>Concur</i>
Donahoe	Recused	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

RE Donahoe recused himself and reported doing so in accord with SJC Vow 5 (RAO 17.1), the reasons for which had become clearer to him as the Case proceeded: "If in a given case I find my view on a particular issue to be in conflict with the Constitution of the PCA, I will recuse myself from such case, if I cannot conscientiously apply the Constitution."

**CONCURRING OPINION**

Case 2023-04: *TE Ryan Biese, et al. vs. Tennessee Valley*  
TE Arthur G. Sartorius  
November 9, 2023

I concur with the Decision of the Standing Judicial Commission in Case 2023-04. I write, however, to highlight the importance of the underlying substantive issue of the Case, and to emphasize that the SJC Decision should not be read as if it in any way addresses the underlying substantive issue.

In this particular Case, the core of the Complainants' position was that a church-sponsored youth group Super Bowl Party is in conflict with the propositions of the Westminster Standards which relate to a proper observance of the Christian Sabbath.

The Westminster Confession of Faith, Chapter 21 paragraph 8, sets forth the overall tone of the Standards in regard to the observance of the Christian Sabbath. There it is explained that:

“This Sabbath is then kept holy unto the Lord, when men, after a due preparing of their hearts, and ordering of their common affairs beforehand, do not only observe an holy rest, *all the day*, from their own works, words, and thoughts about their worldly employments and recreations, but also are taken up, *the whole time, in the public and private exercises of his worship, and in the duties of necessity and mercy.* (emphasis added)

Westminster Larger Catechism Question and Answer 117 is similar in content:

Q. How is the Sabbath or the Lord's Day to be sanctified?

A. *The Sabbath or Lord's Day is to be sanctified by an holy resting all the day*, not only from such works as are at all times sinful, but *even from such worldly employments and recreations as are on other days lawful; and making it our delight to spend the whole time (except so much of it as is to be taken up in works of necessity and mercy) in the public and private exercises of God's worship: and, to that end, we are to prepare our hearts, and with such foresight,*

## APPENDIX Q

diligence, and moderation, to dispose and seasonably dispatch our worldly business, that we may be the more free and fit for the duties of that day. (emphasis added)

Questions 118 through 121 also deal with the manner in which one is to keep the Christian Sabbath, all of which set forth the proposition that the Sabbath Day is a holy day of rest for the purpose of worship, so as the whole time of the day is to be our delight in the Lord. Of these further parts of the Larger Catechism, Question and Answer 118 is particularly worth noting in that it speaks of “the charge of keeping the Sabbath” being “more specially directed to... superiors, because they are bound not only to keep it themselves, but to see that it be observed by all those that are under their charge; and because they are prone oftentimes to hinder them by employments of their own.”

Based upon such particular language in our Standards, it would seem difficult to conceive of how a church session allowing a youth group to put on a Super Bowl Party on a Sunday would be an activity that could be considered within the bounds of what the Westminster Standards deem to be an appropriate Sabbath observance.

Furthermore, in the past, at the yearly meeting of the General Assembly, efforts were advanced with a design to possibly lead to amending the Standards to broaden allowable recreation on the Sabbath Day. Such efforts were defeated. (See Overture 7 answered in the negative at the 41<sup>st</sup> GA which sought to “Establish Study Committee on Sabbath Issue in Westminster Standards” and similarly, Overture 2 brought before the 43<sup>rd</sup> GA)

While it could be true that a number of officers of the PCA hold stated differences to the Standards in regard to “recreation” on the Christian Sabbath, and that such differences have not been found to strike at the vitals of religion or found to be hostile to our system of doctrine, that should not authorize churches or presbyteries to ignore what our Constitution sets forth. When a decision of a lower court is reviewed by a higher court it is the duty of the higher court to “insure that this Constitution is not amended, violated or disregarded in judicial process....” BCO 39.3.

Therefore, in conclusion, it is urged by this concurrence that the decision of the SJC in this Case only be read as a denial of the Complaint based upon the clear inadequacy of the Record, and not as one addressing the



underlying substantive issue.

/s/ TE Arthur G. Sartorius

## **DISSENTING OPINION**

Case No. 2023-04: *TE Biese, et al, v. Tennessee Valley*

RE Jim Eggert

November 8, 2023

### ***Background and Summary***

At its meeting on October 18, 2022, the Presbytery, exercising its “Review and Control” jurisdiction over one of its member Session’s records, took and recorded the following act in its own minutes: “MSP to approve without exception the January 26, 2021, minutes of Redeemer (Knoxville).” The propriety of Presbytery's action is the subject of the instant complaint.

The Session minute from Redeemer (Knoxville) under review was this: “The youth group will have an outdoor Super Bowl Party on Feb. 7 [2021]” (hereafter referred to as “the Super Bowl Minute”).

The SJC’s Decision poses and answers the following question in the negative:

Did Tennessee Valley Presbytery err in approving without exception the minutes of Redeemer Church at its meeting on 10-08-2022 and by denying the Complaint of TE Ryan Biese (Et al) at its meeting on 02-11-2023?

I dissent from the Decision on procedural grounds because I believe this case has been presented in a mode of review that the SJC is not Constitutionally authorized to adjudicate. Because the SJC cannot reach the question posed, I cannot join in the Decision’s declaration that the Presbytery did not err.

The Presbytery’s review of the Super Bowl Minute is non-justiciable because the Constitution does not commit Presbytery's review of Session records to the Assembly (and therefore the SJC). Furthermore, other than cases presenting credible reports of an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional

proceedings” of a “court next below’ under *BCO* 40-5, the Assembly has not committed to the SJC any part of what “Review and Control” authority it *does* have.

### **I. The Case is Judicially Out of Order Because the SJC Has No Jurisdiction to Review the Super Bowl Minute.**

*BCO* 39-1 states, “The acts and decisions of a lower court are brought under the supervision of a higher court in one or another” of the four modes of review: (1) Review and Control, (2) Reference, (3) Appeal, and (4) Complaint.

When we look at this case, we find that, while different “modes of review” were in operation, they all pertained to the propriety of the way Presbytery carried out its Session minutes review function under *BCO* Chapter 40. The ultimate question, however framed, is “Did Presbytery make the right decision about the Super Bowl Minute when it approved it without exception”?

Presbytery was unquestionably engaged in *BCO* Chapter 40 “Review and Control” activities when it approved the Super Bowl Minute. When the Complainants later invoked that “mode of review” called “complaint” (governed by *BCO* Chapter 43) -- a “written representation made against some act or decision of a court of the Church” -- it was directed against Presbytery’s act or decision to approve the Super Bowl Minute per its *BCO* Chapter 40 “Review and Control” powers.

What shall we do when a complaint proceeding, representing one mode of review, asks for a review of a court’s acts or decisions taken while it was exercising another mode of review? To answer that question, we must consult the Constitution to determine what powers and parameters are afforded to the court in the mode of review complained against. Therefore, to consider the question posed by the complaint in this case, the SJC must consider those constitutional powers assigned to Presbyteries whenever they review minutes of their member Sessions.

When we read *BCO* Chapter 40, we discover its six constituent paragraphs bear such a relation to one another as to set out that “mode of review” we collectively call “Review and Control” jurisdiction. These paragraphs establish an amalgam of proceedings depending on which of the six sequenced sections of that chapter is invoked:

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- *BCO* 40-1 prescribes both “the right and duty of every court above the Session to review, at least once a year, the records of the court next below.” *BCO* 40-2 and 40-3 set the constitutional standards for what we customarily call the review of minutes or, more precisely, “records” of a “court next below,” the type of proceedings at issue in this case.
- *BCO* 40-4 governs the situation, not raised in this case, when a court does not “distinctly record” its action in its minutes and therefore its records do not “exhibit to the higher court a full view of their proceedings.”
- *BCO* 40-5 and *BCO* 40-6, also not at issue in this case, govern those instances where a court “having appellate jurisdiction” receives a “credible report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court.” In such matters, the higher court can initiate formal proceedings against the lower.

*BCO* 40-1’s phrase “court next below” pertaining to records review is important to the instant matter. Our polity does not authorize records review of *non-adjacent* courts. Because Sessions are not “courts next below” from the General Assembly, the Assembly has no authority to review the records of Sessions. This elementary observation has an important implication for this case: because the General Assembly has no jurisdiction to review Session records under *BCO* 40-1 through *BCO* 40-3, the SJC (which is no more than a commission of the Assembly) lacks authority to undertake the review of Session records, just as it lacks authority to undertake the review of the review of Session records.

We see how this principle touches this case when we read the Decision’s framing of the issue presented by the complaint:

Did Tennessee Valley Presbytery err *in approving without exception the minutes of Redeemer Church at its meeting on 10-08-2022 and by denying the Complaint of TE Ryan Biese (Et al) at its meeting on 02-11-2023?* (Emphasis added)

Presbytery’s act of “approving without exception” certain minutes of a Session was a *review of a Session record*. And once we apprehend that our polity *prohibits* the review of records by non-adjacent courts, we see that the first

question framed by the Decision -- did Presbytery err in approving the minutes of the Session -- makes it hard to understand how the SJC, without effectively engaging in record review of a non-adjacent court, could evaluate whether the Presbytery erred or not when it approved the record in question. The problem is not remedied by the Decision's framing of the seeming second question -- whether Presbytery erred "by denying the Complaint..." -- because the second question is identical to the first. The SJC could not possibly dispose of the complaint without effectively engaging in a review of the Super Bowl Minute.

The Decision, reasoning that the record in this matter "affords insufficient information to permit the higher court to find Presbytery to have erred in its interpretation of the Constitution," declines to disturb Presbytery's judgment about the Super Bowl Minute, implying that if the SJC would have had additional information available it might have reached a different result. The Decision even encourages those who file complaints concerning record review "to make substantial effort to better preserve the record of the action taken" and for Presbyteries to "strive to keep more detailed records over matters of controversy" pertaining to minute review. The Decision assumes that the Presbytery had a process that may have produced information or material *outside* of the Super Bowl Minute when it was considering whether it would approve or disapprove the same, and that the Presbytery's evaluation of the minute together with such unidentified possible extra information or material should be afforded deference by the SJC. For instance, the decision "speculates" that perhaps Presbytery concluded that the Super Bowl party "never took place" or that it was not "not an act of the Session."

It's tempting to suppose that the SJC is in no different position whatsoever than the Presbytery to read the thirteen words of the Super Bowl Minute and make its own "interpretation of the Constitution" regarding the same. In that case, how was the Presbytery in any different or better position to evaluate the Constitution as it pertained to the Super Bowl Minute than is the SJC? What additional "information" is relevant in reviewing Session minutes beyond Session minutes themselves?

It is instructive to compare the detailed regulations and procedures afforded for the review of Presbytery minutes via the *Rules of Assembly Operation* (RAO) Chapter 16 as against the absence such guidelines and procedures afforded for the review of Session minutes per BCO 40-1 through BCO 40-3. RAO Chapter 16 helpfully sets out detailed guidelines for the review of

Presbytery minutes, for keeping Presbytery minutes, for submitting Presbytery records, for examining Presbytery records, for reporting on Presbytery records, and for Presbyteries responding to the General Assembly. These regulations map a procedure for the Assembly and the Presbyteries to both evaluate Presbytery minutes and communicate with one another regarding the Assembly's review of Presbytery records so that errors, mistakes, and sometimes misunderstandings can be identified and resolved through a mutual process of orderly exchange between the Assembly and its Presbyteries. In other words, *RAO* Chapter 16 affords a mechanism for review and the development of information that the General Assembly can use to evaluate and resolve issues arising out of Presbytery minutes, which is seemingly the kind of "information" found wanting in the Decision.

In contrast to *RAO* Chapter 16, our Constitution prescribes no such guidelines for Presbytery review of Session minutes. The *RAO* is not part of the Constitution because it has never been adopted through a constitutional process and is therefore not enforceable as a rule governing Session minute reviews. The only guide that we have in a case like this, and the only rules the SJC could ever constitutionally enforce, if any, pertaining to a Presbytery's review of Session minutes are those that can be discerned from the first three short paragraphs of *BCO* Chapter 40.

We might mistakenly assume in a case involving Session record review by a Presbytery that *RAO* Chapter 16 applies to the review of Session minutes, but it does not. In fact, the Decision shows signs of this assumption, using the phrase "exception of substance" no less than five times, and concluding that "one could see why Presbytery might not have taken an *exception of substance*" (emphasis added) to the Super Bowl Minute. But the phrase "exception of substance," introduced and defined only in *RAO* Chapter 16, is not found anywhere in our Constitution, the only authority that the SJC may apply in cases arising before it.

In the absence of the Assembly's adopting constitutional rules governing Presbytery review of Session records, Presbyteries are presumptively free to adopt and implement their own procedures for such Session record review if such procedures do not transgress the Constitution. Many such schemes might be (and presumably have been) fashioned that suit the size, characteristics, and preferences of our various Presbyteries.

I believe that the absence of constitutional uniformity in the procedures regulating Session record review illustrates the problematic nature of SJC jurisdiction in a case like today's. Presbytery may adopt its own written rules (or even implement *unwritten* customs or practices) governing its Session record review. But it is neither the place nor prerogative of the SJC, charged as it is with interpreting and enforcing our *Constitution*, to either interpret or enforce Presbytery's *local rules or customs*, whether written or otherwise, and it certainly is in no position to interpret and apply the *RAO* rules governing the review of *Presbytery* minutes as if such rules applied to the review of Session minutes in any way.

This reveals a real gap between our Constitution and the unregulated local procedural frameworks governing Session minute review. Through this fissure one can begin to see the shape of the argument advanced in this dissent. It is my contention that this disjunction between the constitutional prescription requiring the review of minutes of "courts next below" and the absence of procedural mechanisms to realize such review is evidence that the Presbytery review of Session records is an insular feature of our polity. The regulation of the exchange between Presbyteries and their member Sessions that is essential to effective Session record review is left entirely to the government of Presbyteries, and neither the Assembly nor the SJC (as it commission) has jurisdiction to review a Presbytery's review of Session minutes, other than pertaining to those prescriptions that can be discerned in *BCO* Chapter 40.

If one thinks about it, the same principle operates with respect to the General Assembly's review of Presbytery records: the Constitution does not prescribe a particular procedure for the General Assembly to implement Presbytery minute review pursuant to *BCO* 40-1 through *BCO* 40-3, so the General Assembly has adopted its own procedures for implementing those provisions in *RAO* chapter 16. Presbyteries do the same by adopting their own standing rules or local customs and practices governing Session record review. Thus, both the Assembly and Presbyteries "legislate" "between the lines" of those standards that our Constitution prescribes for the review of minutes of adjacent courts.

One might conclude that the procedural vacuum pertaining to Presbytery review of Session minutes just means that the Assembly should afford deference to Presbytery's activity, which is perhaps a reasonable interpretation of the Decision's approach. But, for the reasons set out below, I believe that

the Assembly's power of review is more limited than that and have concluded that the Assembly lacks jurisdiction over a Presbytery's review of Session minutes at all. Therefore, for practical purposes, the Assembly's power of "Review and Control" is restricted to those cases that arise as credible reports of important delinquencies or grossly unconstitutional proceedings under *BCO* 40-5.

These constitutional restraints on Assembly review can be demonstrated by trying to apply the first three paragraphs of *BCO* chapter 40 to this case. *BCO* 40-2 lays out four considerations that the higher court (in this case Presbytery) is to apply when it is examining the records of a court next below. The instant Complaint might implicate two of them: "Whether they [the proceedings of the Session] have been regular and in accordance with the Constitution" and "Whether they [the proceedings of the Session] have been wise, equitable and suited to promote the welfare of the Church" (*BCO* 40-2.2 and *BCO* 40-2.3)

But after listing these considerations, *BCO* Chapter 40 continues, "It is ordinarily sufficient for the higher court [in this case Presbytery] merely to record in its own minutes and in the records reviewed whether it approves, disapproves or corrects the records in any particular" (*BCO* 40-3). This means that, as a constitutional "standard of review," the SJC must presume that it was "*sufficient*" for Presbytery to approve the Super Bowl Minute. (Exactly the same result would obtain, by the way, if Presbytery had *disapproved* the minute because that also would "ordinarily" be "*sufficient*.") "Ordinarily" means of a kind to be expected in the normal order of events; routine; or usual. In other words, normally it is *sufficient* for a next higher court (in this case Presbytery), upon reviewing the records of a lower court (in this case a Session), to simply set out the higher court's approval, disapproval, or correction of the lower court's minutes. That is all that is required. Since either the approval or disapproval of records of courts next below is *sufficient*, Presbytery's acts or decisions about Session records are subject to no meaningful "standard of review" implementable by the SJC.

Moreover, the word "ordinarily" suggests that some records reviewed by a next higher court (in this case, Presbytery with respect to the Super Bowl Minute) might present *extraordinary* circumstances. This implication is made explicit in the second clause of *BCO* 40-3 which continues, "but should any serious irregularity be discovered the higher court may require its review and correction by the lower."

“*May* require its review and correction?” That is surprising since one might have expected that the emergence of a “serious irregularity” in the minutes of a Session would *mandate* the reviewing Presbytery act to redress it. Yet that is not what our Constitution prescribes. Even in such an *extraordinary* case, *BCO* 40-3 merely provides that the higher court “may” (not “shall”) in such cases require the “serious irregularity” to be reviewed and corrected by the lower court, making such review and correction solely a matter of *discretion* with Presbytery without any apparently meaningful standard of review to evaluate the exercise of that discretion. Whereas the Decision implicitly interprets this provision to permit the SJC to review the activity with bounded deference to Presbytery, I take it that the deference due to Presbytery by this language to be so complete as to make a complaint against the action *non justiciable*.

Thus, even if we assume that the Super Bowl Minute presents a “serious irregularity,” and that the Assembly is constitutionally permitted to review the question, the Assembly (through the SJC) faces an impossible situation. Strictly applying the standard of *BCO* 40-3, nothing in those constitutional provisions authorizes the SJC to require the Presbytery to, in turn, require the Session’s review and correction of the Super Bowl Minute, seeing that such an act rests entirely within Presbytery’s sole discretion.

The above analysis is just another way of explaining how the Constitution neither authorizes nor assigns the General Assembly (through the SJC) constitutional jurisdiction or standards to review the records of a non-adjacent court. Put another way, records review is a discrete “Review and Control” activity under *BCO* Chapter 40 that begins and ends with the court adjacent to the court that makes a record. Records review, as such, creates and encourages an insular forum of exchange between those two adjacent courts. Filing a complaint against a records review decision of Presbytery confuses two distinct modes of review because the SJC has no authority to engage in what is effectively a review of a Session record under *BCO* 40-2 and *BCO* 40-3.

A point of clarification is in order. This dissent is not to be understood to render all matters recorded in Presbytery minutes to be nonjusticiable simply because they involve records that could, in theory, be reviewed pursuant to “Review and Control” under *BCO* 40-2 and *BCO* 40-3, nor should it be understood to generally restrict the ability of the higher courts to review acts or decisions recorded in Presbytery minutes. Obviously, the acts and decisions of Sessions



and Presbyteries are usually recorded in their minutes. This case is unique in that the *particular activity* of Presbytery complained against is itself the review of the records of a Session bounded by *BCO* 40-1 through *BCO* 40-3. The non justiciability of simple records review comprises the intended scope of this dissent. This dissent is not intended to find a restriction on the constitutional review of other acts or decisions of Presbyteries in any way.

I will be quick to add that the General Assembly *is* granted other “Review and Control” powers under *BCO* Chapter 40. The General Assembly may, upon receipt of a “credible report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court” cite the court alleged to have offended to appear before the SJC and give an account. (*BCO* 40-5). But this is not at all a review of a “records review” process where the General Assembly “looks over the shoulder” of that exchange between lower courts essential to the records review process, critiquing and correcting the adequacy of Presbytery’s review of Session records, but instead mirrors a formal “case of process” where the “accused” is a court. And I would add that this mode of review ensures that the SJC will have before it the kind of “information” the Decision found wanting in the instant case.

## **II. The SJC Lacks Authority to Adjudicate “Review and Control” Decisions of Presbyteries Except in *BCO* 40-5 Proceedings**

The obstacle to the SJC review of the instant complaint is even more profound than already stated.

Even if we were to assume, contrary to all that is set forth in the above section, that the General Assembly has jurisdiction to review the Presbytery’s review of the Super Bowl Minute, the General Assembly has never in fact delegated to the SJC authority to implement *BCO* 40-2 and *BCO* 40-3, making it unconstitutional for the SJC to apply these standards to a case like this.

The General Assembly’s powers are enumerated in *BCO* 14-6 and include the following:

- a. To receive and issue all appeals, references, and complaints regularly brought before it from the lower courts; to bear

testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, injuriously affecting the Church; to decide in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline; ...

c. To review the records of the Presbyteries, to take care that the lower courts observe the Constitution; to redress whatever they may have done contrary to order;

While unequivocally granting these powers to the General Assembly, *BCO* 15-4 nevertheless also directs the Assembly to delegate certain of those powers to the SJC:

The General Assembly shall elect a Standing Judicial Commission to which it shall commit all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline, except for the annual review of Presbytery records, which may come before the Assembly.

This direction to commit matters to the SJC corresponds to the powers afforded to the Assembly in *BCO* 14-6(a): “To receive and issue all appeals, references, and complaints regularly brought before it from the lower courts; to bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, injuriously affecting the Church; to decide in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline...”

But the “Rules of Discipline” encompass Chapters 27 through 46 of the *Book of Church Order*, which include the four modes of review of the acts or decisions of lower courts set out in *BCO* 39-1. “All matters governed by the Rules of Discipline” is a wide designation and therefore seems, at first impression, to indicate that the Assembly is obliged to commit anything at all relating to the implementation of the Rules of Discipline to the SJC rather than the Assembly. “All matters” on its face would presumptively include “Review and Control” proceedings as encompassed under the six paragraphs composing *BCO* Chapter 40.

But that “first impression” would be incorrect.

It must be presumed that, until the Assembly in fact commits any particular of its powers to the SJC, such powers are retained by the Assembly. Upon closer review, we discover that the Assembly has not delegated to the SJC jurisdiction of proceedings under *BCO* 40-1 through *BCO* 40-4.

*BCO 15-4*'s imperative "shall commit all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline" to the SJC is a direction to the General Assembly, and is not, on its face, self-executing. While *BCO 15-4* directs the Assembly to act, the question remains whether the Assembly has done so as a matter of historical fact, as well as in what manner it has done so. The SJC may not presume to possess independent powers to set the boundaries of its own jurisdiction; it must defer to the Assembly's interpretation and implementation of its mandated duty to "commit" certain matters to the SJC under *BCO 15-4*. Otherwise, the SJC would become a law unto itself, effectively defining its own powers beyond the accountability of the Court that created it.

The *RAO* evinces the Assembly's interpretation and implementation of its mandated duty to "commit" matters to the SJC pursuant to *BCO 15-4*. That interpretation and implementation appears in two paragraphs of the *RAO*:

RAO 17-1: "The Standing Judicial Commission shall have oversight of appeals, complaints and judicial references from lower courts."

RAO 17-2: "With respect to the Rules of Discipline, any reference (*BCO 41*), appeal (*BCO 42*), complaint (*BCO 43*), *BCO 40-5* proceeding, or request to assume original jurisdiction (*BCO 34-1*) made to the General Assembly shall be assigned to the Standing Judicial Commission for adjudication."

Assuming that *RAO 17* conveys the Assembly's understanding and implementation of the *BCO 15-4* mandate, we see that *RAO 17* commits to the SJC precious little of the Assembly's presumptively retained *BCO* Chapter 40 and *BCO 14-6(c)* "Review and Control" jurisdiction.

In *RAO 17-1* the Assembly merely declares the SJC's "oversight of appeals, complaints and judicial references from lower courts," omitting altogether any oversight over *BCO* Chapter 40 "Review and Control" jurisdiction. In other words, this provision affords the SJC no "oversight" over the implementation of any of the paragraphs of *BCO* Chapter 40.

At least *RAO* 17-2 “assigns” the limited class of “*BCO* 40-5 proceedings” to the SJC, but it assigns nothing else, implicitly *excluding* any assignment of *BCO*-40-1, 2, 3 and 4 proceedings from the SJC’s power of “adjudication.”

In other words, the entire “mode of review” we call “Review and Control,” other than “proceedings under *BCO* 40-5,” has not in fact been committed to the SJC for either “oversight” or “adjudication.” Consequently, the SJC has no authority to implement or apply *BCO* 40-2 through *BCO* 40-4 in this or in any other case, and the Complaint is judicially out of order.

The *RAO* delegates only *BCO* 40-5 proceedings to the SJC, not any other part of *BCO* Chapter 40 “Review and Control.” As a result, Presbytery’s “Review and Control” decisions about Session minutes are outside the scope of the SJC’s review powers unless, having met the threshold requirement of a “credible report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court,” they are presented to the SJC in *BCO* 40-5 proceedings. But no such proceedings are before the SJC in this matter, and therefore this matter is outside the purview of the SJC.

### **III. The Instant Complaint is Governed Exclusively by “Review and Control,” and is Not a “Proceeding in a Judicial Case”**

Notwithstanding the above analysis, if this case were not a proceeding in “Review and Control,” but were instead a “proceeding in a judicial case,” then the SJC would have jurisdiction to adjudicate it. To this end, we must consider the possible application of *BCO* 40-3, providing as it does an exception to the “Review and Control” jurisdiction of the Assembly in the following phrasing:

Proceedings in judicial cases, however, shall not be dealt with under review and control when notice of appeal or complaint has been given the lower court; and no judgment of a lower court in a judicial case shall be reversed except by appeal or complaint.

Therefore, if the instant proceedings are deemed to be “proceedings in a judicial case” then the instant complaint, including the issues it raises, falls outside of the orbit of “Review and Control” jurisdiction altogether.

When Presbytery approved the Super Bowl Sunday Minute it was not engaged in a “proceeding in a judicial case,” but in a “Review and Control” proceeding. Presbytery’s mere receipt and consideration of a complaint did not transform its “Review and Control” proceeding into a “proceeding in a judicial case.” As noted above, to adjudicate the Complaint before us, the SJC must take up in hand the very standards that apply to “Review and Control” proceedings as prescribed in *BCO* 40-2 and *BCO* 40-3. Therefore, the SJC is today invited to apply the standards applicable to “Review and Control” proceedings, not “proceedings in a judicial case.”

That a complaint is not a “proceeding in a judicial case” is also supported by the observations of the esteemed commentator on the *Book of Church Order*, F.P. Ramsay:

And that a complaint is not judicial process is evident from these two considerations: that no one can be censured by the issue of a complaint; and that questions that were not connected with a judicial cause may be the subjects of complaint (F.P. Ramsay, *Exposition of the Book of Church Order* (1898, pp. 252-254), on XIII-4-1).

In this case, the “questions that were not connected with a judicial cause” are questions pertaining to how Presbytery acquitted itself in exercising its “Review and Control” powers under *BCO* Chapter 40. So, although questions about acts or decisions taken in “Review and Control” proceedings might have otherwise been the proper subject of a complaint, they fall *outside* the delegated purview of the SJC because they are not “proceedings in a judicial case” pursuant to *BCO* 40-3.

#### **IV. Conclusion**

Upholding our standards is an important matter, and the questions raised by the Complainants in this case are good and important ones.

The enforcement of the Sabbath by the ecclesiastical courts might arise in various forms other than “Review and Control.” These other modes of review may also be considered by those who believe that the Church needs reform or correction in this area.

Such a concern may be brought by a member of the Session or a member of the church as a complaint against an act of a Session approving a Super Bowl party, or for refusing to exercise discipline and oversight concerning it. In such a case that “act or decision” of the court, if any, would be directly under consideration.

Those who believe that a Super Bowl Party violates our standards, after following the prescriptions of Matthew 18, might consider bringing charges and formal process against those they believe have violated the Sabbath.

Per *BCO* 33-1, “if the Session refuses to act in doctrinal cases or instances of public scandal and two other Sessions of churches in the same Presbytery request the Presbytery of which the church is a member to initiate proper or appropriate action in a case of process and thus assume jurisdiction and authority, the Presbytery shall do so.” Therefore, if two Sessions of a Presbytery agreed to ask for this relief then a matter such as presented in this case could be handled as a case of process with the full development of the facts that attend a trial. The decision would be subject to SJC review by complaint or appeal, and the SJC would have the benefit of a fully developed record in such a case.

Such complainants could also request their Presbytery to invoke *BCO* 40-5 jurisdiction over the Session on the ground that the Session’s “approval” of a Super Bowl party -- if such approval were in fact established --- was an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding.” If Presbytery agreed, Presbytery would cite the Session to appear and show cause. If the Presbytery refused to invoke such jurisdiction, or if the complainants were unhappy with the outcome of a show cause proceeding, the complainants might file a complaint to the Presbytery and take the matter to the SJC through *BCO* Chapter 43 arguing that Presbytery erred by either refusing to invoke its *BCO* 40-5 powers or by failing to censure the Session. In such a case, the SJC would have a much more fully developed record by virtue of the evidence adduced in the proceedings, which would be in the nature of a trial.

Lastly, if concerned persons were of the conviction that a Presbytery’s actions or inaction regarding church Super Bowl parties in its member churches under its care present an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding,” then *BCO* 40-5 charges may be sought with respect to the Presbytery.

Some might assert that all decisions of a Presbytery, including decisions about the exercise of its “Review and Control” jurisdiction should be subject to review by the higher court, and this dissent unreasonably undermines that principle. While I respect the point, I cannot reconcile it with the current structuring of our Constitution. I would point out that the modes of review are neither comprehensive nor equal. Our Constitution affords different modes of review. The various “modes of review” help ensure that important matters touching the peace and purity of the Church might be addressed “in one or another” of the “modes of review” (*BCO* 39-1), just like one city may have multiple roads leading to it. But it does not follow that every mode of review is as suitable as every other to achieve a desired objective, just as we find that some roads prove to be unsuitable avenues to one’s intended destination.

I believe that our Constitution permits the Assembly to exercise “Review and Control” authority only in the most extreme cases (involving “important delinquencies” or “grossly unconstitutional proceedings”), and only in those cases involving the acts or delinquencies of Presbyteries. The Constitution does not grant to the Assembly “Review and Control” authority over the acts or delinquencies of Sessions, and therefore the Assembly cannot assign such authority to the SJC. The only part of “Review and Control” jurisdiction the *RAO* assigns to the SJC is *BCO* 40-5, ensuring that the SJC may only proceed in accordance with the protections and advantages afforded to deliberation and decision in judicial proceedings (not general review proceedings), with citation and a trial “according to the rules provided for process against individuals.” This method affords the full development of the facts as well as the protections that realize the comity and regard due to coordinate courts of the Church.

Because I cannot agree that the Presbytery did not err in approving the disputed minutes, I cannot concur and respectfully dissent. I maintain that the SJC cannot say whether the Presbytery erred or not. The case is simply judicially out of order.

/s/ RE Jim Eggert

**CASE Nos. 2023-06 and 2023-08 <sup>1</sup>**

***TE KNOX BAIRD et al.***

**v.**

***GRACE PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON COMPLAINTS**

March 7, 2024

**CASE SUMMARY**

These cases came before the SJC on the Complaints of TE Knox Baird and several other members of the Session of First Presbyterian Church of Hattiesburg, Mississippi (“FPCH”) against Grace Presbytery (“GP”) arising out of actions by GP in response to multiple requests for review or investigation of actions by the Session of FPCH (“the Session”).

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

- 05/18/22 By a vote of 17-0 the Session voted to engage a third-party mediator to assist in identifying and resolving conflicts within the church. Session minutes indicate that this followed a period of “many trials and difficulties,” and note “disagreement between members of the staff.”
- 05/25/22 The Session voted 13-4 to engage the Blue Hen firm as a mediator.
- 05/31/22 TE Jim McCarthy, Senior Pastor of FPCH wrote the Session indicating that he “[could not] participate in this ‘Blue Hen’ process,” noting that he believed the proposed process was contra-Biblical.
- 06/03/22 A complaint by RE Hugh Bolton and seven other FPCH members against the May 25 action of the Session was addressed to the

---

<sup>1</sup> These two Cases were assigned to the same Panel under *RAO* 17-3(d). The Panel heard and decided the Cases together because they involve the same parties and present interconnected questions of fact.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Stated Clerk of the Session. The Clerk later indicated that RE Bolton instructed him to “hold the Complaint.”

- 06/22/22 The Session approved a motion to: (1) request assistance from GP’s standing Advisory Committee “to promote the peace, purity and unity within the leadership of the church,” (2) request that the Advisory Committee co-receive the report of Blue Hen, and (3) “that the Advisory Committee of GP provide counsel and coaching where needed, and identify action plans to assist in the restoration of damaged relationships.”
- 07/19/22 RE Bolton addressed another complaint against the Session’s actions concerning Blue Hen to the Stated Clerk of the Session. Documents produced by the Session indicate that Mr. Bolton instructed the clerk to “hold” the complaint and that this complaint was not known to the Session until it was produced as an attachment to a Dec. 22, 2022 complaint to GP by FPCH member Mr. Charles Wilson.
- 07/20/22 At the Stated Session Meeting, the Session passed a Motion to suspend the activities of The Blue Hen Group for three (3) months. A timeline produced by the Session further indicated that TE Toby Holt, Chairman of the Presbytery Advisory Committee, proposed “3 months of peace” when the Session would not discuss nor take any action related to disputed matters. That timeline also indicated that RE Hugh Bolton addressed the Session to inform the Session members that he had prepared a Complaint against the Session for its engagement with The Blue Hen Group and that RE Bolton told the Session that he had instructed the Clerk of Session to hold the Complaint and not file it. Note that these timeline items do not appear in Session minutes.
- 09/21/22 A representative of Blue Hen hand-delivered a check to FPCH refunding the fee previously paid, less its out-of-pocket costs.
- 10/19/22 GP’s Advisory Committee produced a “Preliminary Report” in which it summarized its understanding of the history of conflict and offered five options for FPCH: reconciliation, church

## APPENDIX Q

planting, judicial process, congregational meeting, and departure of parties.

- 11/30/22 Charges were filed against nine members of the Session by 27 members of FPCH. The charges included “making accusatory and slanderous statements ...untrue [statements] concerning [FPCH’s Senior Pastor], ... [attempt[ing] to go outside the church to settle disputes, and violat[ion of] their vows.” (“Charges #1”)

Special Called Session Meeting by RE Greg Powell and RE Randy Henderson to discuss reconciliation among the Session. All options/alternatives for pathways forward as suggested by the GP Advisory Committee from its report dated October 19, 2022, were discussed. At the conclusion, TE McCarthy told the Session that he did not know why it wouldn’t call a Congregational Meeting to resolve these matters as the Session had the votes to do so.

- 12/02/22 Eleven (11) Ruling Elders of the Session filed a request for the Session to call a Congregational meeting to vote to dissolve the call of TE McCarthy should he not resign by December 28.

- 12/07/22 Called Session meeting called by TE McCarthy to bring up the matters in Charges #1. The nine (9) Ruling Elders named in Charges #1 were not allowed to attend the meeting based upon Moderator McCarthy’s unilateral decision made prior to the meeting that (a) process had immediately begun against the nine (9) Ruling Elders by the accusers reducing the charges to writing and delivering same to the Session, and (b) that Charges #1 constituted a single, collective charge of slander against nine (9) men. The remaining members of the Session (exclusive of the nine (9) men) met separately and dismissed Charges # 1.

- 12/09/22 Called Session meeting, moderated by TE Jim Misner, to receive the request of the Eleven (11) Ruling Elders to call a Congregational Meeting for the purpose of voting to dissolve the call of TE McCarthy. No action was taken at this meeting. The meeting was concluded when RE Hugh Bolton requested that he and two (2) other Ruling Elders be allowed to speak privately with TE McCarthy about his resignation. Note that this timeline item

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

does not appear in Session minutes, however, the minutes of a meeting on December 14 characterized that meeting as “a resumption of the Called Meeting begun on December 9, 2022.”

- 12/10/22 Request for Review on Dismissal of Charges based on *BCO* 40-5 filed with GP by FPCH member Charles Wilson and 24 others for the dismissal of Charges #1. The Session indicated it did not receive a copy of said Request for Review until January 24, 2023, when received from GP’s First Pres Committee/ Commission.
- 12/11/22 Complaint by FPCH Member Wade Walker filed with the Clerk of the Session alleging that he was improperly excluded from worship originating from his disruption of Communion during the FPCH Worship Service on November 22, 2022.
- 12/13/22 Charges # 2 dated Dec. 10, 2022 for Bribery/Extortion against Eleven (11) Ruling Elders filed by Charles Wilson and 24 others were received by the Session.
- 12/14/22 Request for Review filed with GP by Wade Walker and Frances Allston related to issues originating from Mr. Walker’s disruption of Communion during an FPCH Worship Service. The Session has indicated it did not receive a copy of said Request for Review until January 24, 2023, when received from GP’s First Pres Committee/Commission.
- Called Session meeting where RE Hugh Bolton delivered TE McCarthy’s resignation proposal that was agreed to by the Session.
- 12/21/22 Complaint filed with GP by Charles Wilson and 19 others pursuant to *BCO* 43-1 concerning the Session’s use of Blue Hen. The Session has indicated it did not receive a copy of this Complaint until January 24, 2023, when received GP’s First Pres Committee/Commission.
- 12/22/22 TE McCarthy sent a letter to the members of FPCH informing them of his resignation.

## APPENDIX Q

Request of Review on Lack of Action based on *BCO* 40-5 filed with GP by Charles Wilson and 24 others for lack of action on Charges #2. The Session has indicated it did not receive a copy of this Request until January 24, 2023 when received from Presbytery's First Pres Committee/Commission.

- 12/26/22 The Session mailed a letter calling a congregational meeting to act upon the resignation of TE McCarthy.
- 01/01/23 Charges # 3 dated December 27, 2022 for Slander against RE John Kosko by Charles Wilson was received by the Session.
- 01/08/23 The FPCH congregation voted 273-92 to accept the resignation of TE McCarthy.
- 01/09/23 Three (3) Complaints against the Session were filed by FPCH RE Grant Bennett. (Complaint 1- Excluding 9 Elders from the called meeting of December 9, 2022; Complaint 2- Not proceeding with judicial process on Charges #2; Complaint 3- Not acting in a timely manner at the "next Session meeting" on Charges #3.) All three (3) Complaints were later sustained by the Session on January 18, 2023.
- 01/10/23 GP acted to dissolve the pastoral relationship between FPCH and TE McCarthy. Also, the Presbytery voted to appoint the First Pres Committee/Commission.
- 01/18/23 The Session initiated judicial process on the Twenty-One (21) Charges pursuant to Charges # 1 dated Nov. 30, 2022 for Slander, Charges # 2 dated December 10, 2022 for Bribery/Extortion, and Charges # 3 dated December 27, 2022 for Slander. Prosecutors were appointed for each set of Charges with instructions for indictments to be drawn and delivered to each accused.
- 01/24/23 GP's Committee/Commission wrote the FPCH Clerk of Session directing certain documents be made part of the Record, including individual communications among elders and church members.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 02/06/23 *BCO* 43-1 Complaint by Charles Wilson and Ed Allegretti dated February 4, 2023, signed February 5, 2023. was received by the Session.
- 02/22/23 Letter from the GP's First Pres Committee/Commission was received by the Session. This letter responded to a request for extension of time to produce documents, alerted the Session to a 40-5 complaint concerning the conduct of slander trails ("Charges #1"), and asked that the Session notify the FPCH congregation of the committee-commission's ongoing work.
- 02/22/23 The Session received pleas from each accused on the Twenty-One (21) indictments, set trial dates, and appointed a Judicial Committee to coordinate same. The Session also acted on the *BCO* 43-1 Complaint of Charles Wilson and Ed Allegretti received on Feb. 6, 2023. Additionally, the Session instructed Church Administrator Arrington Rhett to email the requested Session minutes to the Committee/Commission.
- 02/23/23 FPCH Church Administrator emailed the First Pres Session Minutes for the years 2021 and 2022 to the Presbytery's First Pres Committee/Commission.
- 03/02/23 FPCH Church Administrator emailed the Session Minutes for the January 2023 Session meeting to the Presbytery's First Pres Committee/Commission.
- 03/06/23 FPCH elders filed their First Complaint with GP seeking the dismissal of the Blue Hen Complaint and the dissolution of the GP Commission on procedural grounds. ("First Complaint") On the same date the FPCH elders filed their Second Complaint with GP seeking the dismissal of the *BCO* 40-5 Requests for Reviews and the dissolution of the GP Committee on procedural grounds. ("Second Complaint")
- 03/07/23 GP Commission issued a Stay of pending trials.
- 03/30/23 GP met in a called meeting and denied the First Complaint and the Second Complaint and further directed that all related matters at

## APPENDIX Q

the Session level and at the Presbytery level be held in abeyance until decisions are rendered by the higher court.

- 04/20/23 FPCH elders elevated the First Complaint and the Second Complaint to the General Assembly by filing notice with the Office of the Stated Clerk.
- 04/24/23 FPCH elders filed their Third Complaint with GP, seeking to vacate the Stay order issued by the GP Commission, thereby allowing FPCH Session to conduct trials.
- 05/09/23 At its stated meeting GP denied the Third Complaint.
- 05/17/23 FPCH elders filed with the General Assembly, escalating the Third Complaint.
- 08/29/23 SJC cases 2023-06 and 2023-08 were assigned to a panel consisting of RE John Bise (convener), TE Rhett Dodson, RE Jack Wilson, and alternates RE John Maynard and TE Mike Ross.
- 10/25/23 The Panel conducted a Hearing on the Record of the Case and subsequently finalized the ROC.
- 12/20/23 The Panel conducted the Hearing.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

1. Did Grace Presbytery err under *BCO* 43-8 in appointing the Commission to hear December 21 Blue Hen complaint due to that complaint being administratively out of order and otherwise untimely per *BCO* 43-3?
2. Did Grace Presbytery err under *BCO* 43-8 in appointing the Commission to hear December 21 Blue Hen complaint due to that complaint being moot and thereby administratively out of order under *BCO* 43-3?

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

3. Did the GP Commission violate *BCO* 11-4, 13-9, and 43-6 and grossly exceed its authority when it directed the Clerk of Session and the Session to produce personal communications of individual Session members?
4. Did the Commission violate *BCO* 11-4, 13-9, and 43-6 and grossly exceed its authority when it directed the Session to inform the FPCH congregation of the Commission's work?
5. Did Grace Presbytery err under *BCO* 11-4, 13-9, 40-3, and 40-5 when it appointed the Committee to address three Requests for Review that were already the subject of complaints filed with the Session?
6. Did the Commission exceed its authority in staying the pending trials?
7. Was the Commission's Stay of Pending Trials unconstitutional because the Commission demonstrated it is not impartial respecting FPCH?

### III. JUDGMENTS

1. Yes
2. Yes
3. Yes, in part.
4. Yes
5. No
6. Yes
7. Not reached or decided

### IV. REASONING AND OPINION

**Issues 1 & 2** - The appointment and work of the Commission to hear the "Blue Hen Complaint."

In May 2022, the Session voted to hire the Blue Hen Group to assist in identifying and mediating relational, administrative and personnel issues. A ruling elder in active service on the FPCH Session presented a written complaint (joined by other church members) against this action to the FPCH Clerk and instructed him to "hold" it. In June 2022, the Session requested

assistance from GP's standing Advisory Committee. In July 2022, the same ruling elder wrote to the Session regarding his Complaint. On July 20, 2022, the Session approved a motion to suspend the activities with the Blue Hen Group pending further interaction with the Presbytery's Advisory Committee. In September 2022, the Session terminated the engagement with Blue Hen.

The FPCH Session contends the "Blue Hen Complaint" was never properly presented to it because of the filer's instructions to the Clerk to "hold" it, and that it became moot when the engagement with Blue Hen was terminated. Session minutes for 2022 do not indicate that the ruling elder who initiated the "Blue Hen Complaint" ever released his "hold" or took other action to request a hearing or obtain a decision from the Session. However, in December 2022, he presented the Complaint to GP and contended that the Session had failed to act on it. GP assigned the matter to the Commission for adjudication.

The Record clearly demonstrates that the original Complaint was never formally filed (because the filer requested it to be "held" and never instructed the Clerk to present it to the Session) and was thus never considered by the FPCH Session. In intervening months, the action of the Session to abandon and terminate the engagement with the mediator/consultant rendered the issues presented in the Complaint moot. The effect of the termination was to take the same action (namely, terminating the engagement) as the relief sought in the Complaint. For these reasons, the questions presented in the "Blue Hen Complaint" were subsequently rendered moot. As to this issue these issues, the Complaint is sustained.

**Issue 3** - The GP directive for the FPCH Clerk to provide communications not in his possession.

In January 2023, while the charges against ruling elders were pending trial in the lower court, GP's Committee/Commission directed that the Clerk of FPCH's Session transmit the following to be made a part of Committee/Commission's Record:

1. Complete Session Minutes, including unredacted Executive Session Minutes touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE Jim McCarthy, from 01-01-2021 through 01-10-2023...



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2. All communications (letters, emails, text messages) among the FPC teaching and ruling elders touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE Jim McCarthy, from 01-01-2021 through 01-10-2023;
3. All communications (letters, emails, petitions, and text messages) presented by the FPC teaching and ruling elders at FPC Session meetings touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE Jim McCarthy, from 01-01-2021 through 01-10-2023;
4. All communications (letters, emails, petitions, and text messages) from FPC members to the FPC teaching and ruling elders, touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE Jim McCarthy, from 01-01-2021 through 01-10-2023, whether read at Session meeting or not shared by the Clerk with the Session;
5. Lists of FPC members contacted by each FPC elder touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE Jim McCarthy, from 01-01-2021 through 01-10-2023; numbering from original.
6. All communications (letters, emails, text messages) between the ITC teaching and ruling elders and The Blue Hen, either the entity or individuals working with or for The Blue Hen
7. All minutes, reports, and communications between the members of the FPC Session committee recommending the employment of The Blue Hen;
8. All communications (letters, emails, text messages) between the FPC teaching and ruling elders and the Presbytery Advisory Committee, including any individual members of the Advisory Committee; and
9. Any other information or documentation touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE Jim McCarthy, from 01-01-2021 through 01-10-2023 believed to be relevant.

The requests for Minutes, papers presented to Session, etc. (i.e. items 1, 3, 6, 7, 8, 9) were appropriate. With regard to the other items the Committee/Commission went too far. Here GP's Committee/Commission demanded that the Clerk obtain documents not in his custody or control from individuals against whom several charges were pending at the time of its request. The request was not limited to Session records and actions. Instead, it sought "all communications," including individual communications and messages among elders and from members "touching on the conflict."

Clerks of Sessions and Presbyteries have a duty to keep accurate records of the proceedings of their respective courts (*BCO* 12–7, 13–11). In the case of a trial, the minutes of the trial, consisting of the charges, the answer, record of the testimony, and all such acts, orders, and decisions of the court relating to the case, form the Record of the Case (*BCO* 32–18). When the case is removed from the lower court by appeal or complaint, it is the duty of the lower court to provide the Record of the Case to the higher court, along with the notice of appeal or complaint and the reason(s) for said action (*BCO* 32–18, 42–5, 43–6). Nothing outside this Record may be taken into consideration by the higher court (*BCO* 32–18).

In the case of investigations, both Sessions and Presbyteries have a duty, which they are to exercise with due diligence and great discretion, to demand from those under their care satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character (*BCO* 31–2). If such an investigation results in raising a strong presumption of guilt, then the court is to initiate process (*BCO* 31–2).

Applying those provisions to these cases, we reach three conclusions regarding the Committee / Commission's directive for the Clerk of Session to submit documents:

First, the Presbytery's Committee/Commission directed the FPCH Clerk of Session to make "all communications (letters, emails, text messages) between the FPC teaching and ruling elders and the Presbytery Advisory Committee, including any individual members of the Advisory Committee; and any other information or documentation touching on the conflict leading to the resignation of TE McCarthy from 01–02–2021 through 01–10–2023" a part of the Record. This directive was, in the first place, unduly broad and sweeping in its range. The Clerk could not reasonably be assumed to have in his possession or have access to "all communications (letters, emails text

messages)” among individual members of the session, members of the church, and a committee of Presbytery etc. Furthermore, *BCO* 32–18, 42–5, and 43–6 define the contents of the Record. Those contents consist of the official records of the court and do not extend to or include personal communications except those voluntarily submitted as evidence in the course of an investigation or trial. The foregoing *BCO* provisions should not be understood to impose a duty on the clerk of the lower court to obtain documents, even from members of the court, that the clerk does not already have in his possession. The obligation for the clerk of the lower court to assemble the record of the case should not be interpreted as a subpoena power by the higher court. When the Presbytery Commission requested the FPCH Clerk of Session submit the relevant documents, he submitted to the Commission all the relevant Session minutes and documents in his possession. The *BCO* requires him to deliver no further documents.

Second, had Presbytery followed the required procedure of *BCO* 40–5 and in the first instance cited “the court alleged to have offended to appear before the court having appellate jurisdiction, or its commission,” then the Committee/Commission could have requested personal communications directly from the individuals involved rather than addressing a sweeping directive to the FPCH Clerk of Session. Moreover, the demand that correspondence among individuals be made a part of the “record of the case”, suggests an intention to use these communications as part of a formal investigation and subsequent proceedings, even though those individual communications were not part of the Session’s records and could not, by definition, evidence or reflect any official acts of the Session. The Committee/Commission confused its pastoral or shepherding function (acting as a committee, in part at the invitation of the Session) with its quasi-judicial function (acting as a commission investigating under *BCO* 40-5). This confusion was compounded by GP’s failure to first cite the Session to appear and explain its actions as directed by *BCO* 40-5. The Session requested an informal meeting with the Committee/Commission, and the Committee/Commission declined that request.

Third, while a court or its commission may make a reasonable request for pertinent information in order to form a more complete picture of the situation which it is called to investigate or adjudicate, at no point, either with regard to investigations or trials does the *BCO* authorize a court to compel the submission of personal correspondence in any form (e.g. texts, emails, letters,

etc.). A court may request personal correspondence in the course of an investigation, especially in a case like this one, where specific charges have been filed and said correspondence is likely to bear directly on the accused's guilt or innocence. In addition, a party may willingly submit personal correspondence as evidence in an investigation or trial (see *BCO* 35). But no court has the right to compel or force the submission of such correspondence.<sup>2</sup> The Committee/Commission exceeded its authority when it issued its directive.

When a Session or Presbytery receives a report affecting the Christian character of one of its members, the court, “shall with due diligence and great discretion demand from such persons satisfactory explanations” (*BCO* 31–2), but such a demand is only a request, however strongly, authoritatively, or urgently it may be made. No court may force or compel an explanation. Two convincing reasons exist that lead to this interpretation of the term *demand*. First, this sense becomes clear when *BCO* 31–2 is read in the historical context of the proposed 1858 revisions to the Book of Discipline. The committee of ten members who worked on the revision (including Charles Hodge and James Henley Thornwell) originally proposed the text read as follows: “Nevertheless, each church court has the inherent power, to demand and receive satisfactory explanations from its members concerning any matters of evil report.” Though courts have the right to demand satisfactory reports, the phrase “and receive,” raised great concerns. The church’s power is “wholly” (*BCO* 3–2) and “exclusively spiritual” (*BCO* 3–4) and as such is “only ministerial and declarative” (Preliminary Principle 7) and can, in no sense, be coercive.

Second, the term *demand* must be read as a request because “the accused party is allowed, but shall not be compelled, to testify” in giving evidence (*BCO* 35–2). Members of the church are free from self-incrimination. If *demand* meant to compel or force satisfactory explanations, then one could be compelled to testify in violation of *BCO* 35–2 and thus forced into self-incrimination. The phrase “and receive” was, therefore, dropped from the proposed revision of 1858, and the essential reading of *BCO* 31–2 as we have it today was adopted.<sup>3</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> This decision does not involve and does not reach any questions related a court’s right to demand explanations or documents from individuals for issues not related to pending charges. Similarly, this decision should not be misunderstood to foreclose the possibility that a member’s declining to respond to such inquires or requests, in the absence of pending charges, could form the basis for further action by the court. See *BCO* 35-14.

<sup>3</sup> For helpful articles, see <https://www.pcahistory.org/bco/pcusa/1858/rod.pdf> (accessed 1 January 2024); <https://www.pcahistory.org/bco/articles/hodge-1858-revisedbook.pdf> (accessed 1 January 2024). J. H. Thornwell defended the inclusion of “demand and receive”

Courts can seek, request, and even demand information, but they cannot compel the submission of any documents other than those which rightfully compose the Record of the Case as defined by the *BCO* (32–18, 42–5, 43–6). Presbytery could have requested, but was in error to direct, the submission of additional documents, and its directive is vacated. As to this issue, the Complaint is sustained. This decision does not reach any questions related to whether such communications, if obtained by a prosecutor, could be used as evidence in a trial.

**Issue 4** - The GP directive for the Session to inform the congregation.

The Presbytery consists of the teaching elders and congregations accepted by it within its geographical bounds (*BCO* 13–1). The Presbytery has responsibility for said elders and congregations, and to carry out that responsibility, the Presbytery has certain powers which *BCO* 13–9 outlines. None of its powers, however, allow Presbytery to demand or compel Sessions under its care address their congregations.

As with Issue 3 above, the Presbytery may request and even urge the Session to inform the congregation of its activity, or the Presbytery may itself inform the congregation of its activity (*BCO* 13–9.f). But the Presbytery does not have the right to demand the Session communicate with the congregation. As to this issue, the Complaint is sustained.

**Issue 5** - GP’s appointment of a committee to review *BCO* 40-5 Reports

The Session in June 2022 requested assistance from GP’s standing Advisory Committee for three purposes, all related to conflict within the Church and its leadership. Based upon the information known to the Advisory Committee, the complaints lodged with GP, and the complexity of the situation, it was not unreasonable for GP to assign consideration of the “Requests” which were in the nature of “report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court” (*BCO* 40-5) to a committee. As of the January 10, 2023 Called Meeting of GP at which the Committee was appointed, GP did not have minutes of the Session for the

---

(see <https://www.pcahistory.org/HCLibrary/periodicals/spr/v13/13-1-1.pdf>) (accessed 1 January 2024), but it was R. L. Dabney’s view that prevailed (see <https://www.pcahistory.org/HCLibrary/periodicals/spr/v12/12-1-3.pdf>) (accessed 1 January 2024).

## APPENDIX Q

relevant meetings since those minutes were not sent until February 23 and March 2, 2023. [ROC 170] Those “Requests” and statuses as of the January 10, 2023 appointment of the Committee were:

Request 1 was filed December 10, 2022 and related to the dismissal of Charges #1 against nine of the REs of the Session. [ROC 83-84] On January 9, 2023, RE Grant Bennett complained against the Session “for the Session’s delinquency and failure to properly act in its meeting on December 7, 2022 in relation to charges filed by members ....” As of the January 10 Committee appointment date, there was no indication that any further action had been taken by the Session since the dismissal of the underlying charges on December 7 and there is no indication in the ROC that GP had any knowledge of the then recently filed complaint by RE Bennett. We note that Session minutes from a meeting on January 18, 2023 indicate that the Session initiated judicial process on these Charges #1 by appointing a prosecutor, ordering that indictments be drawn and served upon the accused men with lists of witnesses, and that each accused be cited to appear to enter his plea. Those actions were interrupted by the filings of 40-5 Reports, the actions of GP, and suspending of process pending rulings by the SJC.

Request 2 was filed by FPCH member Wade Walker on December 14, 2022, relating to the Session’s action ordering him to abstain from worship following his disruption of a worship service on November 27, 2022. Mr. Walker submitted an apology to the Session on November 27, 2022, requesting forgiveness by the Session. He had complained to the Session against this action on December 11, 2022. That Complaint was not included in the ROC, but reference to it appears in Session minutes of December 14, 2022. In the same meeting of December 14, the Session voted to sustain Mr. Walker’s December 11 complaint. There is no indication in the ROC that GP had knowledge of these facts or of actions by the Session as of January 10, 2023. Request 3 was filed by FPC member Charles H. Wilson and 24 others on December 22, 2022. This request related to the Session’s failure to act on Charges #2 brought against 11 ruling elders of the Session by Mr. Wilson and 24 others. Charges #2 were dated December 10, 2022 and received by the Session on December 13, 2022. The Session held a called meeting on December 14, 2022 to act upon other matters. There is no indication in the ROC that GP had knowledge of these facts or of actions in response by the Session as of January 10, 2023. As was the case with Request 1, Session minutes from a meeting on January 18, 2023 indicate that the Session initiated

judicial process on these Charges #2 by appointing a prosecutor, ordering that indictments be drawn and served upon the accused men with lists of witnesses, and that each accused be cited to appear to enter his plea. Those actions were interrupted by the filings of 40-5 Reports, the actions of GP, and suspending of process pending rulings by the SJC.

GP had a duty to examine the reports, an important aspect of which would have been determinations as to the appropriateness for GP to “take up” any action on the basis of the reports. It was entirely appropriate for GP to assign responsibility to examine to a committee. As of the date of the Complaint by FPC, neither GP’s FPC Committee nor GP had taken any complainable action such as a premature intervention in a matter properly before the Session.

For these reasons, as to this issue, this Complaint is denied.

**Issues 6 & 7** - The stay of trials scheduled in the lower court.

*BCO* 40-5 permits a higher court to stay the actions of a lower court when a 40-5 report is pending, but only after the higher court has cited the lower court to appear to answer the issues reported.

40-5. When any court having appellate jurisdiction shall receive a credible report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court, ***the first step shall be to cite the court alleged to have offended to appear before the court having appellate jurisdiction, or its commission, by representative or in writing, at a specified time and place, and to show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in question.*** (emphasis supplied)

The court thus issuing the citation may reverse or redress the proceedings of the court below in other than judicial cases; or it may censure the delinquent court; or it may remit the whole matter to the delinquent court with an injunction to take it up and dispose of it in a constitutional manner; or it may stay all further proceedings in the case; as circumstances may require.

## APPENDIX Q

The GP Committee/Commission failed to issue such a citation or afford the lower court an opportunity to be heard prior to entering its stay order. In staying the trials without following the procedures outlined in *BCO* 40-5, GP's Committee erred.

This decision does not require the SJC to rule on Issue 7 presented by the Complainants, since the GP Commission has no jurisdiction to conduct the trial of the cases. At the hearing, GP's representatives conceded that GP is not aware of grounds that would allow it to assume original jurisdiction over the pending trials at this time.

For these reasons, the Complaint is sustained and the "stay" is annulled. The trials should proceed in the court of original jurisdiction (FPCH) in accordance with the Constitution. Should any errors arise in the conduct or outcome of the trials, those may be addressed through the appeal or complaint process. Should any improper proceedings occur to which *BCO* 40-5 applies, those matters may be presented to GP by report or in the review of the Session's records by GP.

---

The Case Summary and Statement of Facts were drafted by Panel Chairman Bise. The Reasoning and Opinion was drafted by all Panel members, edited by the Panel, and adopted unanimously. The SJC reviewed each part of the January 30, 2024 proposed decision and approved the final version of the Decision by vote of **17-0**, with one disqualified, four recused, and two absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	Disqualified	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	Absent	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	<i>Concur</i>	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	Recused	Kooistra	Absent	Waters	Recused
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	<i>Concur</i>
M. Duncan	Recused	Lucas	Recused	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

RE Sam Duncan was disqualified because he is a member of a church in this Presbytery.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RE Mel Duncan indicated he recused "because of a close prior relationship to the former S Minister of FPC Hattiesburg. I was the Calvary Presbytery approved mentor to Rev. McCarthy and my children made professions of faith under his ministry as a Youth Director in my home church."

RE Donahoe indicated he recused because he was aware of facts not in the Record and did not believe he could be sufficiently impartial.

TE Lucas indicated he recused because he is the former senior pastor of FPC Hattiesburg.

TE Waters indicated that he recused from this case because of prior correspondence with a member of Grace Presbytery regarding a procedural question that TE Waters, in hindsight, believes touched on issues related to this Case.

### CONCURRING OPINION

Case Nos. 2023-06 & 2023-08: *TE Baird et al. v. Grace*  
TE David F. Coffin, Jr.,  
joined by RE Pickering, TE Greco, RE Neikirk, TE Bankson  
March 27, 2024

I concur with the decision of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) in this case, to sustain, in the main, the Complaint. That concurrence notwithstanding, I believe the SJC erred in failing to redact the Complainant's Brief for cause. In my judgment, the Brief should have been redacted, first by the Panel, and then, failing that, by the Commission, for the use of intemperate language and for failing the rules of decorum in debate. In each of six instances, veiled accusatory language or insinuations are gratuitously made with respect to the Clerk of Grace Presbytery. Whatever his failings may or may not have been, he should not be indicted or put on trial in a brief. The error is compounded in that this setting provides the Clerk no opportunity to respond to the claims and accusations.

In my judgment the material I object to does not in the least advance any legitimate purpose of the brief, i.e., to set forth sound and compelling

arguments demonstrating why a court did or did not err in a given matter. I am not asserting that each instance of objectionable language in the brief is separately and equally culpable, but rather that each one is tied to the other as a part of a narrative, a narrative that begins mildly in the first instance and then progressively builds to something more bold and intemperate, drawing the reader in by degrees. Thus, properly, they all should have been redacted. They all appear to be part of one strategy to gradually undermine the Clerk in a way that violated Roberts's Rules of decorum in debate, and the requirement that all debate be germane to the question at hand. For my part, I am confident, that should such a speech have been offered on the floor of the General Assembly, the moderator would have rightly ruled it out of order on those grounds.

The SJC has a responsibility to its mission—seeking truth and justice through a civil, adversarial process—to police strictly violations of order. In correcting violations of its deliberative code, the Commission works to prevent the breakdown of the whole. In so doing, the SJC sustains a culture among its members that upholds the Commission's values and prepares members to uphold the same in the heat of proceedings in cases. At its October 2023 meeting, the SJC redacted, for intemperance, parts of a Brief filed by the Representative of the General Assembly in another Case. This decision is one in a chain of unbroken precedents in such matters, a chain that encourages consistency and impartiality. A link is now missing. It is my hope that the Commission will be restored to its accustomed care to maintain exacting standards of decorum in all of the deliberations that are before it.

**CASE No. 2023-07**

***TE JOHN EVANS***

***v.***

***ARIZONA PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON APPEAL**

March 7, 2024

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

04/13/20 TE Evans responding to an inquiry from TE Phil Kruis, wrote: “You seem to be asking what expectations I may have of Presbytery in light of the SJC decision<sup>1</sup>... I believe that Presbytery should note in the minutes that I am a TE in good standing, dissolve any pastoral relationship with the Covenant congregation pending their acting on my resignation (*BCO* 23-1) and list my status on the Presbytery rolls as ‘without call.’”

TE Kruis responded, “I think you may have answered my question and we may not need to interact over the phone. Our report on the SJC ruling will include that the Presbytery’s action of April 2019 was annulled and that you are a member in good standing. I don’t think any of us were aware that you had tendered your resignation at Covenant.<sup>2</sup> ... I do not think we need any more clarification.”

04/12/22 TE Mark Lauterbach, chairman of the AZP Shepherding Committee, emailed TE John Evans asking his status since he is without call and advising that “According to *BCO* 13-2 we can only keep your ordination for 3 years from dissolution of your last call.”

04/13/22 TE Evans responded, “My state of being without call began in August 2020, after the SJC annulled the AZP judgment and censure (thus restoring me to my office and, formally at least, to my pastoral charge) and I submitted to AZP my resignation from

---

<sup>1</sup> See SJC Cases 2019-10 & 2019-12 in M48GA, pp. 771-779.

<sup>2</sup> In his email to TE Lauterbach, dated April 13, 2022, TE Evans said, “Richard will have a copy of my resignation, dated Aug 13 in his records.”

## APPENDIX Q

the Covenant pastorate.” TE Evans also noted his previous correspondence with TE Phil Kruis, dated August 13, 2020.

- 06/12/22 TE Evans joined Bethel congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW) in Cardiff.
- 07/21/22 TE Evans emailed AZP Stated Clerk RE Richard Wolfe to inform Presbytery that he had joined another church body, EPCEW, thereby withdrawing his membership in the PCA and requesting his name be erased from the roll of AZP (*BCO* 38-3(a)).
- 07/21/22 The Administrative Commission of AZP met and “MSC to approve the request from TE John Evans to withdraw his membership from the Arizona Presbytery, pending acknowledgment of his reception into new denomination.”
- 07/26/22 RE Wolfe, the AZP Stated Clerk emailed TE Falko Drijfhout of EPCEW asking for confirmation the TE Evans had “transferred into your denomination.”
- 07/27/22 TE Drijfhout responded “I have not heard anything about John Evans being affiliated to the EPCEW. He may have joined any of our congregations, but his credentials as minister (teaching elder) have not been transferred as far as I know.”
- 08/16/22 The AZP Stated Clerk emailed TE Evans requesting “...a copy of any document showing your reception into your denomination for our records for RPR.”
- 08/21/22 TE Evans responded, “I have informed Arizona Presbytery that I have withdrawn from the PCA... to affiliate with another branch of the visible church, that is all the provision requires to enable the Presbytery to take the three steps mentioned in the provision; no certificate is necessary for Presbytery to act.”

The Stated Clerk, RE Wolfe responded, “The Arizona Presbytery will acknowledge and act upon your withdrawal and affiliation with another branch of the visible church once you have provided me with documentation of your affiliation.”

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 09/07/22 TE Drijfhout, stated clerk of EPCEW, responded to RE Wolfe's July 26 email, "I can now confirm that the Rev Dr John F. Evans is newly a member of our congregation in Cardiff, Bethel Church. He is employed by the Union School of Theology at Bridgend."
- 09/08/22 Rev Andrew Graham of Bethel Presbyterian Church, Cardiff, emailed RE Wolfe, "I can confirm that Revd Dr John Evans has been worshipping regularly with our congregation for six months, and as he reported to your presbytery, became a member of our church which is a church of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales (EPCEW) on 12 June 2022."
- 12/13/22 The Administrative Commission of AZP discussed "TE John Evans' request to be removed from the rolls of Presbytery. Presbytery will be notified of his request and vote on this request. We will also communicate to Presbytery and TE Evans that in keeping with *BCO* 38-3 by joining a local church rather than a presbytery, he has demitted his office."
- 01/19/23 At its Stated Meeting of January 19-20, 2023, AZP received a report stating that "Presbytery was notified in a letter dated July 21, 2022 that John Evans has affiliated with another branch of the visible church."

In response, AZP adopted the following motions: "...to begin the proceedings in [*BCO*] 34-10 for TE John Evans, inquiring into the dereliction of his call. The grounds for following *BCO* 34-10 are that John Evans has been without call for a prolonged period of time."

AZP minutes of the meeting also record: "The Stated Clerk was thereby ordered and empowered by the Presbytery to follow procedures in *BCO* 34-10, notifying TE Evans in writing of the actions taken and that at the next Stated meeting of presbytery the question of his being so dealt with is to be considered. An invitation of his attendance shall be properly extended."

## APPENDIX Q

- 01/20/23 RE Wolfe, the AZP Stated Clerk emailed TE Evans, notifying him of Presbytery's actions and further added that Presbytery would consider, "... whether to divest you of your office as minister of the Gospel (Teaching Elder) as a result of a prolonged period without a call..."
- 01/23/23 TE Evans responded indicating his surprise at the 01/20/2023 email from Stated Clerk Wolfe stating: "As stated clerk you received my attached communication six months ago (July 21, 2022) informing AZP that I had withdrawn my membership from the PCA and affiliated with another branch of the Church, all under the provision of *BCO* 38-3(a)."
- TE Evans further noted: "You indicated last year (Aug 21) that you did not accept my letter and your office would not act on my letter unless I provided you with documentation of my affiliation. Drawing on expert counsel, I told you that no further documentation was necessary; my letter was adequate."
- 04/28/23 At its stated meeting of April 27-28 (with TE Evans not attending and having not submitted a statement) Presbytery adopted the following motions in sequence:
- 1) In accordance with *BCO* 13-2 and 34-10, we divest TE John Evans without censure due to his lack of call for a prolonged period of time, not exceeding three years. (28 for, 5 against, 5 abstain)
  - 2) In accordance with *BCO* 38-3, at his request, we acknowledge TE John Evans' new membership in a local church, record the irregularity, and remove his name from our rolls.
- 05/12/23 TE Evans appealed the action taken by AZP "To divest TE John Evans of his office without censure."
- 07/05/23 A panel consisting of RE John White, TE Rhett Dodson, TE Sean Lucas, TE Brad Evans (alt.). and RE Sam Duncan (alt) was appointed to hear the case.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 07/14/23 Panel held its Constituting Meeting and elected RE White as chairman and TE Dodson as secretary.
- 08/10/23 Panel met, found the case judicially in order and sets a hearing for August 17 to decide objections to the Record of the Case.
- 12/15/23 Panel hearing was held on the Case.

### II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

Did Arizona Presbytery (AZP) err when, on April 28, 2023, it voted to “divest TE John Evans without censure due to his lack of call for a prolonged period of time, not exceeding three years” (*BCO* 34-10) despite TE Evans’ notification to AZP (on July 21, 2022) that since June 12, 2022 he had affiliated with the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales?

### III. JUDGMENT

Yes. TE John Evans’ appeal of his divestiture is sustained and the action of AZP is reversed because, at the time of the action, TE Evans was no longer subject to the jurisdiction of AZP. (*BCO* 42-9 and *BCO* 38-3(a))

### IV. REASONING AND OPINION

Presbytery divested TE Evans of his office without censure (*BCO* 34–10) and then proceeded to remove his name from its rolls following the procedure of *BCO* 38–3a. The Presbytery proceeded to act under *BCO* 34-10 even though a) it failed to ascertain adequately whether the Appellant had “habitually failed to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions” and b) it failed to act on his “attempt to withdraw” from the PCA through his affiliation with another branch of the visible church or even investigate the nature of the denomination with which he affiliated.

Almost eighteen months had elapsed from the time the Appellant had resigned from his church to the first communication to him from the Presbytery’s representative. And yet, it is not clear from the record of the case that Presbytery ascertained whether “he was engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions.” By March 2022, however, the Appellant was in the

United Kingdom, teaching at Union School of Theology, presumably as a way of exercising his official ministerial functions. It would have behooved Presbytery's representative to have asked more questions or even suggest that Presbytery move to investigate the situation.<sup>3</sup> However, Presbytery does not appear to ascertain adequately the issues of the Appellant's "regular discharge of his official functions."

Arizona Presbytery argues that Evans lacks standing to appeal the actions taken by the Presbytery. By arguing Evans lacks the standing to appeal, Presbytery engages in a circular argument. On the one hand, it claims jurisdiction over Evans to divest him of his office but argues he lacks standing to appeal said action. Standing and jurisdiction in this instance, however, must stand or fall together. To deny Evans standing to appeal the Presbytery's action would be to deny him a fundamental right to fairness in this matter. In the end, what Presbytery should have done regarding *BCO* 38–3a ultimately makes the question of standing moot. Per *BCO* 38–3a, Evans withdrew from the PCA on June 12, 2022 and, therefore, Presbytery had no authority to divest TE Evans.

More importantly, Presbytery should not have moved to divest TE Evans of his office because six months prior to instigating process per *BCO* 34–10, he had already removed himself from the Presbytery's jurisdiction by affiliating with another branch of the visible church (*BCO* 38-3.a). The provisions of *BCO* 38–3a are clear.

38-3. a. When a member or officer in the Presbyterian Church in America shall attempt to withdraw from the communion of this branch of the visible Church by affiliating with some other branch (*BCO* 2-2), if at the time of the attempt to withdraw he is in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, his new membership acknowledged, and his name removed from the roll. But if at the time of the attempt to withdraw there is a record of an investigation in process (*BCO* 31-2), or there are charges (*BCO* 32-3) concerning the member or minister, the

---

<sup>3</sup> It should be noted that nowhere in the ROC was there evidence that the Presbytery cited the Appellant for "labor[ing] outside the geographical bounds of, or in a work not under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery" without "the full concurrence of and under circumstances agreeable to his Presbytery" (*BCO* 13-2). Perhaps the timeline was such that the Appellant had already decided to withdraw from the PCA when he accepted the call to labor in the United Kingdom; however, not communicating with the Presbytery exacerbated the conflict.



court of original jurisdiction may retain his name on the roll and conduct the case, communicating the outcome upon completion of the proceedings to that member or minister. If the court does not conduct the case, his new membership shall be acknowledged, his name removed from the roll, and, at the request of the receiving branch, the matters under investigation or the charges shall be communicated to them.

On June 12, 2022, TE Evans joined Bethel congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of England and Wales (EPCEW). The following month, on July 21, 2022, he informed RE Wolfe, Stated Clerk of Presbytery, of this affiliation and his withdrawal from the PCA per *BCO* 38–3a. On that same date the Presbytery’s Administrative Commission met and adopted the motion “to approve the request of TE John Evans to withdraw his membership from Arizona Presbytery, pending acknowledgement of his reception into new denomination.” Presbytery’s motion contains two misunderstandings of *BCO* 38–3a. First, the procedure is not a request. It is an act by a member or officer by which he or she voluntarily withdraws membership from the PCA. The freedom of voluntary association or voluntary withdrawal is a right which PCA members and officers possess. Much was made in the Appellee’s brief and oral arguments that *BCO* 38–3a only addresses an *attempt* (emphasis added) to withdraw from the PCA and affiliate with another branch of the visible church. The act of withdrawal is styled an attempt in the *BCO* because at the time of withdrawal, the member or officer must be in good standing and must not be under a formal investigation or have charges filed against him or her. If those conditions are met, however, then the attempt at withdrawal is successful, and a court is required to 1) record the irregularity, 2) acknowledge the member or officer’s new membership, and 3) remove his or her name from the roll. No other action of the member, officer, or court is required.

The second misunderstanding on the part of Presbytery is in supposing that *BCO* 38–3a requires acknowledgement by the receiving body of the member or officer’s new membership. This is not the case. Despite this misunderstanding of *BCO* 38–3a, Presbytery did receive acknowledgement of TE Evans’ reception into membership in an EPCEW congregation but did not follow through on the recommendation of its Administrative Committee to acknowledge this reception.

When TE Evans informed Presbytery that he had joined a congregation of the EPCEW, he was a member in good standing. No investigation was in process (*BCO* 31–2), and no charges had been filed against him (*BCO* 32–3). It was Presbytery’s responsibility to abide by the required steps of *BCO* 38–3a and 1) record the irregularity of TE Evans’ withdrawal, 2) acknowledge his membership in EPCEW, and 3) remove his name from the Presbytery roll. Presbytery failed to follow these required steps and instead, six months later, initiated process against TE Evans per *BCO* 34–10, and nine months after his withdrawal Presbytery divested him of his office.

The appellee also argued that Presbytery simply acted *explicitly* to divest TE Evans in light of his *implicit* divestiture by joining a local congregation outside the PCA. This argument reflects a fundamental and serious misunderstanding of the nature of ordination. Ordination to the Christian ministry is not the sole possession of the PCA or any other congregation or denomination. The PCA recognizes the legitimacy of ordination to the gospel ministry across denominations that uphold the fundamentals of evangelical religion. Ordained applicants coming from other denominations into the PCA do not have to be ordained again (*BCO* 13–6), and ministers in good standing who withdraw or transfer out of the PCA take their ordination credentials with them.

Because of these irregularities in the proceedings of the Presbytery in dealing with the Appellant, the SJC reverses in whole the proceedings of Arizona Presbytery with respect to the divestiture of TE Evans. The SJC further instructs Presbytery to follow the provisions of *BCO* 38–3a with respect to TE Evans, to wit: 1) record the irregularity of TE Evans’ withdrawal, 2) acknowledge his membership in EPCEW, and 3) remove his name from the Presbytery roll.

---

The SJC reviewed each part of the proposed decision and approved the final version of the Decision by vote of **22-0**, with two absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	Absent	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	<i>Concur</i>	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	<i>Concur</i>	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	<i>Concur</i>

M. Duncan    *Concur*       Lucas       *Concur*       Wilson       *Concur*

## CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-07: *Appeal of TE John Evans v. Arizona Presbytery*

TE Paul Bankson

March 25, 2024

I concur with the decision of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) in this case that TE John Evans was, to quote the approved decision, “no longer subject to the jurisdiction of AZP. (*BCO* 42-9 and *BCO* 38-3(a)).” My concurring opinion is very simple—it is for this very reason that I believe the case should have been ruled judicially out of order at the outset and never brought before the SJC. The approved decision itself appears to indicate as much in the amends of the decision which instruct the Presbytery “to follow the provisions of *BCO* 38-3a with respect to TE Evans to wit: 1) record the irregularity of TE Evans’ withdrawal, 2) acknowledge his membership in the EPCEW, and 3) remove his name from the Presbytery roll.”

Regardless of whether Arizona Presbytery (AZP) did or did not acknowledge TE Evans’ withdrawal does not negate the reality that he indeed was a member of the EPCEW per *BCO* 38-3a as the record shows he was a member in good standing at the time he left the PCA and joined that body. Thus, TE Evans lacked any standing to file an appeal in the first place and AZP lacked any jurisdiction.

Respectfully submitted,

TE Paul Bankson

## CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-07: *Appeal of TE Evans v. Arizona*  
RE Howie Donahoe  
March 15, 2024

I agree with the Decision that Presbytery erred. But I have a different concern. The Appeal should have been ruled administratively out of order for lack of standing.<sup>1</sup> The unanimous Decision found one Issue in this Case: *Did presbytery err on April 28, 2023, when it voted to divest the minister without censure?* But there was an administrative question for the SJC to answer first - Does the person have standing to file an appeal? More specifically: When did TE Evans cease being under the jurisdiction of Presbytery? It was either on June 12, 2022 (when he affiliated with EPCEW), or five weeks later, on July 21, 2022 (when he notified Presbytery he had done so). For the argument in this Concurring, it matters little which of those is correct. The Decision holds that on April 20, 2023: "TE Evans was no longer subject to the jurisdiction of AZP." But that also must mean he wasn't under PCA jurisdiction when he filed his Appeal to the SJC on May 12, 2023, and thus lacked standing to do so. He didn't gain standing by Presbytery's invalid action of April 20.

What could a minister do if a presbytery unconstitutionally "divests" him when he is no longer under its jurisdiction? He could send a *BCO* 40-5 letter to the PCA Stated Clerk alleging a "grossly unconstitutional proceeding" (which anyone can do, even a non-PCA-member). Or he could try to recruit someone with standing in that presbytery to file a *BCO* 43-1 complaint to presbytery seeking to have presbytery rescind the action. But if a person is no longer under PCA jurisdiction, regardless of reason, he cannot seek higher court review via complaint or appeal.

At the same time, I'll grant that *BCO* 38-3.a can be confusing when compared to the paragraph following it. *BCO* 38-3.a is automatic in a way that *BCO* 38-3.b probably isn't.

*BCO* 38-3.a. When a member or officer in the Presbyterian Church in America shall attempt to withdraw from the communion of this branch of the visible Church by affiliating

---

<sup>1</sup> I was one of four SJC Officers that rendered a preliminary ruling that the matter was administratively in order. I regret that oversight.

with some other branch (*BCO* 2-2), if at the time of the attempt to withdraw he is in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, his new membership acknowledged, and his name removed from the roll. But if at the time of the attempt to withdraw there is a record of an investigation in process (*BCO* 31-2), or there are charges (*BCO* 32-3) concerning the member or minister, the court of original jurisdiction may retain his name on the roll and conduct the case, communicating the outcome upon completion of the proceedings to that member or minister. If the court does not conduct the case, his new membership shall be acknowledged, his name removed from the roll, and, at the request of the receiving branch, the matters under investigation or the charges shall be communicated to them.

38-3.b. When a member or minister of the Presbyterian Church in America shall attempt to withdraw from the communion of this branch of the visible Church by affiliating with a body judged by the court of original jurisdiction as failing to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity (*BCO* 2-2), that member or minister *shall be warned* of his danger, and if he *persists*, his name shall be erased from the roll, thereby, so far as the Presbyterian Church in America is concerned, he is deemed no longer to be a member in any body which rightly maintains the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity, and if an officer, thereby withdrawing from him all authority to exercise his office as derived from this Church. When so acting the court shall make full record of the matter and shall notify the *offender* of its action. (emphasis added)

With reference to the facts in this present Case, the following is how *BCO* 38-3 probably would have been handled in a few presbyteries with which I'm familiar. After the presbytery clerk received a minister's July 12, 2022 notification, he would include it in his clerk's report at the next stated meeting. At that meeting, he would report that the minister communicated he had disaffiliated from the PCA on June 12, 2022, having affiliated with the XYZ Church. The clerk would report he administratively removed the minister from the rolls on June 12. There the matter would end unless some TE or RE commissioner made a motion like this: "Presbytery judges that the XYZ

Church fails to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity, and therefore, jurisdiction is retained to complete the process outlined in *BCO* 38.3.b.” I don’t know how else to understand these two provisions of *BCO* 38-3.<sup>2</sup> Perhaps a clarifying *BCO* amendment is in order.

/s/ RE Howie Donahoe

## CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-07: *Appeal of TE Evans v. Arizona*

RE Jim Eggert

March 27, 2024

This case involves the standing and jurisdiction of Presbyteries over ministers who have attempted to withdraw from the denomination. I concur in the judgment, but wanted to clarify my reasons for doing so, since they are not precisely the same as those expressed in the Decision.

The Decision states that a minister’s “attempt at withdrawal is successful” if at the time of withdrawal, he is “in good standing” is not “under a formal investigation” nor has “charges filed against him.” In such cases, the Decision adds, “No other action of the member, officer, or court is required.” I do not agree with the Decision’s interpretation of the phrase “the attempt at withdrawal is successful” nor do I agree that “No other action of the member, officer, or court is required.” In my view, *BCO* 38-3.a withdrawals are not self-executing, but are subject to a continuing limited jurisdiction of the Presbytery to review the notice of withdrawal, the good standing of the member or

---

<sup>2</sup> Here is an excerpt from the PCA Historical Center website: “The wording of the current PCA text dates to an amendment adopted in 1998 [*M26GA*, 26-17, Item 2, p. 57]. This amendment was the end result of efforts by the Committee on Constitutional Business to perfect the language of proposed amendments to *BCO* 38-3 that had first been presented in 1996 by Northeast Presbytery (Overture 6) and Potomac Presbytery (Overture 26).” Presbyteries had voted 38-6 in favor of the revisions to *BCO* 38-3.a and 38-3.b, which were enacted in 1998.

In 1998, the following italicized sentence in *BCO* 38-3.a was deleted, which was, at the time, the last sentence in that paragraph, which referenced (1) if an officer withdraws in good standing, or (2) if the court declines to prosecute: “... *In either case such removal from the roll shall thereby withdraw from him all authority to exercise his office as derived from this Church.*”

minister, and to form a judgment concerning the doctrinal integrity of the body with which the minister has affiliated.

*BCO* 38-3. provides:

a. When a member or officer in the Presbyterian Church in America shall attempt to withdraw from the communion of this branch of the visible Church by affiliating with some other branch (*BCO* 2-2), if at the time of the attempt to withdraw he is in good standing, the irregularity shall be recorded, his new membership acknowledged, and his name removed from the roll. But if at the time of the attempt to withdraw there is a record of an investigation in process (*BCO* 31-2), or there are charges (*BCO* 32-3) concerning the member or minister, the court of original jurisdiction may retain his name on the roll and conduct the case...b. When a member or minister of the Presbyterian Church in America shall attempt to withdraw from the communion of this branch of the visible Church by affiliating with a body judged by the court of original jurisdiction as failing to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity (*BCO* 2-2), that member or minister shall be warned of his danger, and if he persists, his name shall be erased from the roll, thereby, so far as the Presbyterian Church in America is concerned, he is deemed no longer to be a member in any body which rightly maintains the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity, and if an officer, thereby withdrawing from him all authority to exercise his office as derived from this Church. When so acting the court shall make full record of the matter and shall notify the offender of its action.

In ordinary usage, an “attempt to withdraw” requires an affirmative communicative act. The verb “attempt” alternatively means: (1) *to make an effort to do, accomplish, solve, or effect* (Synonyms include “try, endeavor, essay, and strive” which mean “to make an effort to accomplish an end” and “stresses the initiation or beginning of an effort or (2) *the act or an instance of attempting, especially an unsuccessful effort.* (*Webster’s Ninth New Collegiate Dictionary*, 1991). For example, a minister who joins another denomination, but keeps it a secret from or does not notify his Presbytery of the same has not

“attempted to withdraw ... by affiliating with some other branch.” The “attempt” is not realized unless and until the minister *communicates* his desire to withdraw to his Presbytery.

A *BCO* 38-3 “attempt to withdraw ... by affiliating with some other branch” entails the *possibility of failure*. If an “attempt to withdraw” were automatically realized without precondition and “no other action of the court is required” merely by virtue of a minister’s new affiliation (as the Decision seems to suggest), then every “attempt to withdraw” would be successful by definition. But the attempt cannot be successful by definition since we know, for example, from *BCO* 38-3 that an “attempt to withdraw” will *fail* if the minister is not “in good standing” at the time of the attempt.

*BCO* 38-3 is divided into two sections: (a) and (b). *BCO* 38-3.b prescribes that the Presbytery has an obligation to warn a minister attempting to withdraw if the Presbytery judges the new body as failing to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity. This implies a continuing jurisdiction in the Presbytery over a minister for this limited purpose. A minister who has notified a Presbytery of his withdrawal, and the Presbytery assesses the new body as failing to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity, the Presbytery is to warn him that “if he persists, his name shall be erased from the roll” and that “so far as the Presbyterian Church in America is concerned, he is deemed no longer to be a member in any body which rightly maintains the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity.” In such a case, the Presbytery is also to advise him that it is “withdrawing from him all authority to exercise his office as derived from this Church.” Therefore, Presbyteries must have as much continuing jurisdiction over a withdrawing minister to make this evaluation and warning possible. Presbytery’s power to take action under *BCO* 38-3.b is not circumscribed, as the Decision seems to suppose, because his “attempt to withdraw” was already “successful” merely by virtue of notifying Presbytery of his new affiliation such that “no other action of the member, officer, or court is required.”

In short, the phrase “attempt to withdraw” implies the possibility of failure, contradicting any supposition that a minister’s new affiliation is so perfectly self-executing that it requires Presbytery to remove the minister from its rolls as a mere perfunctory administrative act. It is this possibility of the failure of the withdrawal that necessarily implies residual jurisdiction of Presbytery to review both the withdrawal and the new affiliation. The act of withdrawal is



contingent upon Presbytery's satisfaction of the "good standing" of the minister at the "time of withdrawal" which should be understood as the time that Presbytery was provided notice of his new affiliation. The act of withdrawal is also contingent on Presbytery's residual power to warn the minister (and withdraw his credentials) if it concludes that he has affiliated with a body that fails to maintain the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity.<sup>3</sup>

I disagree with the following passage from the Decision for similar reasons:

The second misunderstanding on the part of Presbytery is in supposing that *BCO* 38–3a requires acknowledgement by the receiving body of the member or officer's new membership. This is not the case. Despite this misunderstanding of *BCO* 38–3a, Presbytery did receive acknowledgement of TE Evans' reception into membership in an EPCEW congregation but did not follow through on the recommendation of its Administrative Committee to acknowledge this reception.

I understand this passage to suggest that a Presbytery cannot insist on receiving an acknowledgement of the new affiliation because the attempt to withdraw is automatically put into effect by the withdrawing member's *claim* of new affiliation. I disagree. Whether an acknowledgment is required or not should be left to the reasonable discretion of a Presbytery as the circumstances indicate. In my view, a court in these circumstances possesses inherent jurisdiction to evaluate to its reasonable satisfaction whether the claim of affiliation is true or false. Every court must have power to explore its own jurisdiction, otherwise the power of jurisdiction will be delegated to those outside of the Church courts. Such a rule would deprive the Church courts of any power to assess their own power, which would effectively abdicate ecclesiastical power to others, relying on subjective rather than objective standards of "affiliation."

Lastly, I want to be clear that, in my view, there is only a limited residual jurisdiction of the Presbytery in cases of disaffiliation. Assuming the member

---

<sup>3</sup> Of course, Presbytery made no such finding regarding the Evangelical Presbyterian Church in England and Wales in this case, nor does the record indicate that it ever even entertained such a claim.

## APPENDIX Q

is in good standing at the time of the notice of affiliation, this limited jurisdiction is only as much as is needed to remove him from the roll after fulfilling the court's obligations under *BCO* 38-3.a & b. The court's loss of jurisdiction is not automatic at an "attempt." Obviously, in such cases as here where the minister is in good standing and the Presbytery has received notification that he has affiliated with a body for which the Presbytery has expressed no doubt but that it upholds the Word and Sacraments in their fundamental integrity, then the Presbytery's jurisdiction is limited to removing his name from the rolls and noting the irregularity. Therefore, in this case, the *BCO* 38-3 conditions having been met, Presbytery had no jurisdiction to commence or continue divestiture proceedings under *BCO* 13-2 and should have removed the minister's name from its roll.

**CASE No. 2023-09**

***APPEAL OF TE AARON MYERS***

**v.**

***ILLIANA PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON APPEAL**

March 7, 2024

**CASE SUMMARY**

This case involves the elevation of two different censures at the same time: (1) the elevation of suspension from office to deposition from office and (2) the elevation of suspension from the Sacraments to excommunication.

While both censures are weighty, excommunication is far more significant. J. Aspinwall Hodge rightly said, “Excommunication is the most severe penalty, and is inflicted only when all other methods have failed to reclaim the offender.” *What Is Presbyterian Law?* (1882), p. 119. In this case, it appears that the deposition was imposed as an ancillary consequence of the Presbytery’s finding excommunication to be appropriate. (Obviously, a man may not continue in office in the Church if he has been excommunicated.) Therefore, this decision examines the question of whether the Presbytery could elevate the censure of indefinite suspension from the Sacraments to excommunication without additional judicial process. We leave for another day whether the censure of suspension from office may be elevated to excommunication without further judicial process in the absence of excommunication.

For the reasons set out below, we hold that suspension from the Sacraments cannot be elevated to excommunication without additional process, reverse the judgment, and remand the matter to Presbytery for further proceedings.

**I. SUMMARY OF FACTS**

10/24/20    TE Myers was tried and found guilty of “maltreatment of his wife” and “fits of anger.”

## APPENDIX Q

- 11/21/20 Illiana Presbytery “imposed the censure of indefinite suspension from the office of Teaching Elder in the PCA until he demonstrates “satisfactory evidence of repentance” as exhibited by, “eminently exemplary, humble and edifying life and testimony.”
- 01/16/21 Motion passed to “prevent TE Myers from exercising all functions of his office including the sacraments until case is decided *BCO* 42-6.”
- 04/09/22 A committee was formed by Illiana “to shepherd TE Myers toward repentance and restoration to the Lord and to teaching elder.” (“the First Committee”).
- 06/15/22 TE Sean Radke emailed TE Myers asking when he is willing to meet with the Committee, and TE Myers responded that he believed it would be “unwise” for him to speak since his wife had filed divorce proceedings that remained pending, and asked for additional time before he meets with the First Committee.
- 06/22/22 Email from TE Myers to Radke: “There’s no way I’ve repented of 100% of what I’ve done wrong in my marriage only bc as you pointed out, I don’t know ALL the sin I committed (and never will in this life)- including not only sinful deeds and words, but thoughts and intentions (bc I lack the omniscience that only God possesses). But what I can say is that there isn’t one sin I’ve committed of which I’m aware that I have not confessed to the Lord (and to Danielle if it was against her) and sought by His grace to turn from and fight against. This would include pride, selfishness, anger, arguing, bitterness, lust, hypocrisy, covetousness, envy, and unforgiveness. I’m sure there are more. I know I’m a sinful man saved only by the mercy and grace of God through Christ.”
- 10/06/22 Radke proposed a meeting and asked, “since you are submitting to the censure of the presbytery (Lord's Supper), are you requesting that the censure be lifted?” TE Myers responded: “[S]ince I’ve submitted to Presbytery I am requesting the censure to be lifted.”

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

10/15/22 The First Committee made three recommendations:

1. The committee unanimously recommends that Iliana Presbytery be satisfied as to the reality of the profession of TE Myers' repentance and restore him to the Sacraments of the Church, that he may receive all the means of Grace that the gospel affords to him (BCO 37-3).
2. The committee unanimously recommends that Iliana Presbytery consider the mandate of this committee fulfilled and be disbanded.
3. Given that the committee unanimously agrees that our brother, TE Myers, is in a state of repentance, we recommend that Iliana Presbytery form a new committee with the mandate to work toward shepherding our brother and his family to restoration both personally and publicly.

10/22/22 Presbytery met and directed the First Committee to “correspond with TE Myers commending his repentance on certain sins but requesting clarification on his repentance regarding his sin of mistreating his wife. (“Fits of anger” is not mentioned.)

12/20/22 TE Myers sent the following email to the Presbytery:

Father and brothers, in 2020, I was accused and found guilty of offenses that the court claimed were substantiated by the specifications listed, but to which I could not (and still cannot) in good conscience concur. I explained this to the committee chaired by TE Radke, along with the fact that I have nevertheless recognized my responsibility to submit to Presbytery's censures by not engaging in any functions of the ministry nor partaking of the Sacraments. I believe I have demonstrated, both in my heart and my actions, the fruit of repentance.

## APPENDIX Q

However, since I am now fully satisfied in my own conscience that God is not calling me to the ministry, I believe the proper course of action is this: I request that Presbytery divest me of my office without censure (BCO 38-2). As I understand it, there are no longer any charges pending against me since judicial process against me was completed with the judgments and censures inflicted on me. And further, I request that per BCO 46-8, the Presbytery assign me to the membership of Calvin OPC in Phoenix, AZ. I understand that my assignment to the Calvin OPC Session will include the continuation of the censure of indefinite suspension from the Sacraments.

Respectfully,  
TE Aaron Myers”

01/21/23 Presbytery answered TE Myers December 20 written request in the negative. and formed a new committee “seeking to bring TE Myers to repentance, per 37-2 and report, if appropriate, at the April meeting.”

03/10/23 A newly formed committee (“the New Committee”) sent a letter to TE Myers including “a summary of the charges of which he was convicted, his lack of specific repentance for these sins, and a question on if he is willing to repent of those sins.”

? The New Committee sent a letter to TE Myers stating that it had “one question,” namely: “Are you willing to specifically repent for mistreating your wife and for your fits of anger?” The letter stated that the “first step in repentance involves acknowledging your guilt...”

TE Myers responded that he had “been through this with the previous committee over and over again, and I’ve got nothing to add.” “I’m not guilty of the charges,” he continued, and “I cannot in good conscience acknowledge that of which Illiana accused

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

me.” He stated that he would “not be responding anymore” and that he had “long since moved on” from the matter.

- 03/31/23 The New Committee met and noted that it “met two times, sent a letter to TE Myers, received a response and based on the response received, the committee believes it can no longer perform fruitful work with TE Myers.”
- 04/01/23 The New Committee reported: “Though we desired to frequently converse and pray with TE Myers, he made it very clear that this was his last communication with Illiana Presbytery. Based on TE Myers’ response, we believe we can no longer perform fruitful work with TE Myers.” The committee had no formal recommendations.
- 04/01/23 Presbytery deposed and excommunicated TE Myers stating that he had been “proved by sufficient evidence to be guilty of the sins of maltreatment of his wife and fits of anger.”
- 04/15/23 The Stated Clerk of Presbytery posted a letter via certified mail to TE Myers informing him of the action of Presbytery.
- 04/21/23 The Stated Clerk’s letter was delivered in person to TE Myers.
- 05/20/23 TE Myers filed his appeal with the SJC.

### I. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

Did the Presbytery err in elevating, without any additional process, the censure of suspension from the Sacraments and suspension from office to excommunication and deposition from office?

### II. JUDGMENT

Yes. In the absence of any specific procedure set forth in the *BCO*, due process principles must govern the elevation of indefinite suspension from Sacraments or from office, as a part of the court’s continued oversight and care (*cf. BCO* 37-2). Because of the previous finding of guilt and imposition of censure, however, the censured person is not

entitled to full process *de novo* for the court to find him “incorrigible and contumacious” (BCO 30-4).

Accordingly, Presbytery’s action is reversed in whole. This judgment returns the Appellant back to his previous disciplinary status: suspended from the Sacraments and suspended from office. The Presbytery may only increase the Appellant’s censure after complying with this Decision. Further, the mere fact that a man will not agree with a guilty verdict is not *per se* evidence of being incorrigible or contumacious.

#### **IV. REASONING AND OPINION**

In this case, Appellant argues that new steps for judicial process are required for “new censures” against the Appellant. Specifically, Appellant states:

This specific judicial case, concluded on November 21, 2020, with the pronouncement of judgments and infliction of censures, and as such no further censures could be pronounced or added against the Appellant based on the now concluded judicial process.

##### **With Respect to *De Novo* Judicial Process**

Appellant would have the court require an entirely new judicial process for any elevation of censure, which would include the protections of the Rules of Discipline (ROD) for one who is presumed innocent until proven guilty. Appellant’s theory is that the sin of contumacy is a completely different sin from that which Appellant has already tried, convicted, and censured. The error in this thinking is that the proposed contumacy of the Appellant is *not* completely different and distinct from his censured sin. In fact, an accusation of contumacy in this context (as opposed to refusing to obey a citation (BCO 32-6) and being found contumacious without a trial) is directly related to the censured sin. While a censured person is entitled to some rights, clearly he is not entitled to all rights under the ROD. One who has been judged *guilty* by the court does not have the right to a presumption of innocence, for example.



Secondly, the initiation of *de novo* judicial process would begin with *BCO* 32-2:

Process against an offender shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charge; or unless the court finds it necessary, for the honor of religion, itself to take the step provided for in *BCO* 31-2.

However, as envisioned by the language of the *BCO*, there are no persons to make out a charge for the elevation of censure, and there is no *BCO* 31-2 common fame reports to provoke an investigation (“demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character.”). The court itself has been intimately dealing with the accused for some time. The court’s judgment of guilt and imposition of the censure of indefinite suspension is only inflicted on an “impenitent offender” and it lasts until “he exhibits signs of repentance, or until by his conduct, the necessity of the greatest censure be made manifest” (*BCO* 30-3). By its previous action, the court has already found the censured person impenitent.

A judgment of incorrigibility and contumacy (*BCO* 30-4) does not present a new *matter* before the court. On the contrary, before the court is the same *matter*, the sin with respect to which the subject was found guilty, now in a new *manner*, i.e., contumaciously and incorrigibly.<sup>1</sup> The first censure with respect to the matter/sin was indefinite suspension, because the manner was unrepentance. It is unreasonable to suppose that the elevation of censure from indefinite suspension to the censure of excommunication would require the *full process* for a showing of guilt with respect to the original allegation (as noted above), now in a new manner. However, that is just what would be necessary for the process to begin *de novo* according to the ROD as they stand.

### **With Respect to the Elevation of Censure without any Process**

Alternatively, Appellee argues that it properly elevated Appellant’s censure from indefinite suspension from the Sacraments and suspension from office to

---

<sup>1</sup> One can see this distinction between *matter* and *manner* clearly at work *BCO* 33-2: “When an accused person is found contumacious (cf. 32-6), he shall be immediately suspended from the sacraments ... for his contumacy.... The censure shall in no case be removed until the offender has not only repented of his contumacy, but has also given satisfaction in relation to the charges against him.”

excommunication and deposition from office without any new finding of impenitence. There is precedent for this position.<sup>2</sup> Can a court elevate a censure without any mechanism for the censured person to present evidence to the court of his repentance? The current language of the *BCO* is ambiguous at best, and the elevation of censure does not comport well with an act by legislative fiat. In any other circumstance, a majority vote of the court to censure a person apart from due process (stated charges, plea, right to face accuser, right to a defense, right to a record that would provide the basis for an appeal to a higher court, etc.) would be *illicit* and *unjust*.

Just as the censured person is not entitled to all the rights of one not found guilty, it would be contrary to our judicial principles to allow a court, not having found the grounds of excommunication at trial and judgment (*i.e.*, “incorrigible and contumacious”), and, having found grounds for indefinite suspension (*i.e.*, lack of repentance), to conclude later by a legislative declaration, without further process, a judgment that they have not found by due process. Preliminary Principle 8 asserts that “... [E]cclesiastical discipline.... can derive no force whatever, but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church.” Such a legislative declaration would certainly be unjust. And as such, it could not be seen to be just by an impartial public. It would amount to a bill of attainder, by justice-loving folk a hated device.<sup>3</sup> No such act of a court of the church could know the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church.

## A Way Forward

This presents us with a conundrum: if *de novo* judicial process is not required, and *some* process would be required by our judicial principles, how should an increased censure be imposed? An exploration of how the intrinsic powers of our courts, as set forth in the Constitution, and guided broadly by our current rules and regulations, might supply a more just and reasonable course to settle

<sup>2</sup> See *Dallison v. North Florida Presbytery*, M30GA (2002), page 156, 160-161.

<sup>3</sup> A bill of attainder, legislation that imposes punishment on a specific person or group of people without a judicial trial, is twice forbidden in the United States Constitution, *i.e.*, Article 1 Section 9, and Article 1 Section 10. The Framers adopted the constitutional prohibitions on bills of attainder unanimously and without debate. In the *Federalist* No. 44, James Madison observed that bills of attainder are contrary to the first principles of the social compact, and that their prohibition was a “bulwark in favor of personal security and private rights”. [https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artI-S9-C3-1/ALDE\\_00013186/](https://constitution.congress.gov/browse/essay/artI-S9-C3-1/ALDE_00013186/)

the matter. In the increase of a censure from indefinite suspension to excommunication and/or deposition from office, the court takes up that same original matter/sin, and adds the manner of incorrigibility and contumacy, which requires a decision to end the censure of indefinite suspension and to begin the censure of excommunication. The court's judgment of guilt, presumably for a "gross crime or heresy" (*BCO* 30-4),<sup>4</sup> and finding unrepentance, now must progress to finding the convicted person "incorrigible and contumacious". This is a new finding, and must be supported by due process considerations, but the finding itself is completely dependent upon the process that has already begun and had reached an intermediate stage in its progression.

Where then, might this Court look for a sound basis for resolution to this conundrum? What guidance might the Court find in the parliamentary rules of procedure that typically govern the court's proceedings in such a circumstance?<sup>5</sup> The censure of indefinite suspension must have been the result of a motion. The parliamentary setting for the motion was the conclusion of a judicial procedure. That motion would have been out of order had it not come in that setting. Under parliamentary law, to undo a motion for indefinite suspension requires a motion to amend a matter previously adopted, and surely that cannot be accomplished apart from the motion coming at the conclusion of due process before the court, as in the first instance.

All the courts of the PCA have intrinsic powers granted by Christ the Head of the Church in the Scripture,<sup>6</sup> not granted, foundationally, by the *BCO*, nor by the members of the church. This truth is enshrined in *BCO* 11-3:

All Church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing [in their administration, *BCO* 11-4] only as the Constitution may provide.

---

<sup>4</sup> That presumption is vindicated in that the sin leading to indefinite suspension must be liable to elevation to excommunication.

<sup>5</sup> See "I. Government. 101- Rules of Order. The rules of parliamentary order shall be the standing rules herein and after provided. In matters not otherwise covered, Robert's Rules of Order (Revised) shall prevail." "Standing Rules of the Illiana Presbytery" (As of October 2022).

<sup>6</sup> See Preface to the *BCO*, "I. THE KING AND HEAD OF THE CHURCH".

These powers are summarized in *BCO* 11-4:

. . . . Every court has the right to resolve questions of doctrine and discipline seriously and reasonably proposed, and in general to maintain truth and righteousness, condemning erroneous opinions and practices which tend to the injury of the peace, purity, or progress of the Church.

Among those powers:

they possess the right to require obedience to the laws of Christ.... The highest censure to which their authority extends is to *cut off the contumacious and impenitent from the congregation of believers*. Moreover, *they possess all the administrative authority necessary to give effect to these powers*. (*BCO* 11-2, emphasis added)

The indefinitely suspended person has a right to a hearing in the matter: he must be charged by the court supervising the indefinite suspension with being “incorrigible and contumacious,” he must be presented with the evidence to that effect, he must be called upon to plead before the court, and he would have a right to a defense before the original trial court. The court, upon completing its hearing, would be called upon to consider a motion to amend a matter previously adopted, to elevate the indefinite suspension to excommunication. Passage would require a two-thirds majority (2/3), unless previous notice were given of an intent to offer a motion to amend a matter previously adopted,<sup>7</sup> the notice framed in such a way as to avoid undermining the impartiality of the maker and thereby disqualifying him from participation in the hearing. Only such a process, just in itself, and seen to be just, could obtain the countenance and blessing of the great Head of the Church.

---

The Summary of the Facts was written by Eggert and the Statement of the Issue, Judgment, and Reasoning was written by Greco. The SJC reviewed each part of the proposed decision and approved the final version of the Decision by vote of **21-1**, with 2 absent.

---

<sup>7</sup> RONR (12<sup>th</sup> ed.) 35:2 (7).

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Dissent</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Absent</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	<i>Concur</i>	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	<i>Absent</i>
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	<i>Concur</i>	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	<i>Concur</i>
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

### CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-09: *Appeal of TE Myers v. Illiana*  
TE Arthur Sartorius, joined by RE Dowling and RE Donahoe  
March 27, 2023

The SJC Decision in this case well defines the issue before it:

“Did the Presbytery err in elevating, without any additional process, the censure of suspension from the Sacraments and suspension from office to excommunication and deposition from office?”

The one-word initial answer to that stated issue is one in which I can fully concur: “Yes.” It seems to me that there is no doubt that the Presbytery erred. Additional process is indeed necessary. Yet, that being said, I write this Concurrence because I disagree with the SJC’s “Reasoning and Opinion” regarding which procedures should govern that additional process.

The conclusion of the SJC majority is that whatever additional process ought to be employed, when elevating a case from the censure of suspension from the Sacraments and suspension from office to excommunication, need not include all the protections of the *BCO* Rules of Discipline.

The SJC opinion even states that an Accused need not be afforded a presumption of innocence until proven guilty. If that is a part of the “due process” to be utilized – or if perhaps other due process rights are abrogated from what the *BCO* outlines, what will this due process look like that should now be followed? The answer to that question, in my opinion, because of the

SJC Reasoning and Opinion, has now been placed in a state of flux.

Is the Accused now required to testify against himself – though *BCO* 35-2 says he shall not be compelled? Shall testimony no longer be required to be recorded and transcribed – though *BCO* 35-9 states that it shall? Can the standards for who it is that might be a competent witness (*BCO* 35-1) change – or the number of witnesses required to substantiate a charge (*BCO* 35-4) be altered?

I could go on with other similar questions, but my point should be apparent. If new process is required for elevation of censure, but such process does not require the full protections of the *BCO*'s Rules of Discipline, what is that process?

Fortunately, the SJC Reasoning and Opinion gives some guidance in that regard. It is suggested in the section entitled “A Way Forward” that “intrinsic powers of our courts, as set forth in the Constitution, *and guided broadly by our current rules and regulations, might supply a more just and reasonable course to settle the matter.*” (Emphasis added) Yet – where I differ from that statement, is that I see the “current rules and regulations” to be very much requirements, rather than guidelines.

Again, this case involves the elevation of a censure from a prior judgment, but to require a court to follow *BCO* judicial procedures in order to elevate the censure *is necessary* because the Appellant is faced with what truly are new charges. The issues raised in this case are in fact new and different from the first case – the case that led to the censure which is now sought to be elevated.

To find TE Myers guilty of a charge which would lead his to excommunication, he must also be found guilty of additional matters not adjudicated in the initial case. There are new offenses alleged – offenses different from those raised in his prior case. The Opinion of the SJC in part seems to acknowledge this. It is stated in the Opinion that the Appellant must “be charged by the court supervising the indefinite suspension with being ‘incurable and contumacious,’” and “that he must be presented with the evidence to that effect. He must be called upon to plead before the court, and he would have a right to a defense before the original trial court.” And yet, at the same time, because the SJC also rightly sees that these new charges are not entirely unconnected to the first case, it is proposed that the means of presenting those charges and evidence need not be bound, but only guided, by the *BCO* procedures. I cannot agree.

Excommunication is a censure “to be inflicted *only* on account of gross crime or heresy *and* when the offender shows himself incorrigible and contumacious.” (Emphases added) Since excommunication was not imposed at the time of the initial trial of TE Myers, it could only follow that at the initial trial, the Appellant was not found guilty of committing a “gross crime”<sup>1</sup> and he was not found to be incorrigible and contumacious. The SJC Opinion has stated that a “gross crime” should be presumed. In a footnote of the Reasoning and Opinion it is stated that such a “presumption is vindicated in that the sin leading to indefinite suspension must be liable to elevation to excommunication.”

While I might not agree with that assessment, that point need not be argued here. Before a court elevates a censure to excommunication, it is abundantly clear that new evidence must show that the man in question is “incorrigible and contumacious.” This is, in fact, a new charge not dealt with in the prior case.

As such, that charge *must* now be substantiated with new facts – new facts which should be presented in a *full new trial* subject to *all* the Rules of Discipline of the *BCO*. To do otherwise – while attempting to follow the SJC Opinion in this and other cases -- could result in trial courts actually defining due process in manners that could then differ from court to court, rather than be uniform.

The “proposed way forward” of the Opinion, I would I argue, could easily be interpreted by differing church courts applying a court’s own due process standards, choosing only select parts of the *BCO*, or even devising new standards – again, all of which could easily differ from session to session and presbytery to presbytery.

Certainly, we are denomination governed from the “bottom up” rather than top down, but we still are a denomination. We are not a confederation of autonomous self-ruling church courts. Under the “way forward” proposed by the whole SJC – it would seem to me that denominational disunity could be fostered, thus making it so that the only future way to regain a broader renewed healthy unity would either be through the necessity of new *BCO* amendments or some sort of attempt at “judicial legislation” by the highest court. Neither seems wise.

---

<sup>1</sup> An allegation or charge of heresy has never been involved in this case.

It would seem to me that the best “way forward” would be one in which the added charges of incorrigibility and contumaciousness needed to elevate a censure – be treated as truly new charges – new charges subject to existing Rules of Discipline.

The reluctance expressed in the SJC Opinion to take this approach seems largely to be based upon a view that since any such new charges have a connection to the prior charges for which the Appellant was found guilty – that following BCO procedures as a requirement for elevation of a censure becomes a process *de novo*.<sup>2</sup> The Latin phrase “de novo” has an intrinsic meaning which suggests doing something entirely “anew” or “from the start.” It is a term fairly commonly used in the American civil legal system. The usage in the civil system often involves a situation where a higher court reverses a lower court for certain error(s). A remedy that could be imposed in such a case – at the higher court’s discretion – might include a “de novo trial” – a new trial conducted as if the first trial were a nullity.

Yet, the Appellant has not suggested that he should be tried anew on the original charges – only that he should be tried according to the BCO process in regard to the new and unique charges. Yes, the new charges grow out of a prior concluded matter, but the prior concluded matter need not be heard again. The only question at this time is one of whether or not – since the first conviction and censure – TE Myers has now shown himself, by latter conduct, to be incorrigible and contumacious.

Allow me to return back to a statement I already mentioned which was included in the Reasoning and Opinion of the SJC – the statement: “One who has been judged *guilty* by the court does not have the right to a presumption of innocence.” Really? Is TE Myers to come before his Presbytery on charges not previously litigated – those of being “incorrigible and contumacious” – and not be presumed innocent? Is he not presumed innocent of the new charges because he was once found guilty of “maltreatment of his wife” and “fits of anger?” While the guilt of the prior conviction may indeed be presumed when moving forward – that should *not* change the standard presumption of innocence in regard to alleged incorrigibility and contumaciousness. These

---

<sup>2</sup> “De Novo” is not a phrase found in any of our constitutional documents. It is found in the *OMSJC*, but there it is used in regard to the way the SJC commences a judicial trial coming before it “from the beginning” when a “judicial case is referred to and accepted by the Commission.” It then is to be tried – from the beginning.



new charges must be shown to have occurred, and to have occurred after the prior first conviction.

In the SJC Reasoning and Opinion, it is opined that “as envisioned by the language of the *BCO*” in the case of elevation of censure “there are no persons to make out a charge for the elevation of censure, and there is no *BCO* 31-2 common fame reports to provoke an investigation.” Certainly, if the majority of a presbytery is willing to elevate a censure to depose a minister with no process – one man of the presbytery might well be willing to level a charge of incorrigibility and contumaciousness. Certainly, if a second committee charged with the task of bringing a teaching elder to a sense of repentance concludes its work after sending just two emails and receiving two immediate responses from the Appellant over a period of time of a little more than one hour (ROC 21-22), and then surmise that it can do no further fruitful work in the matter – someone would be willing bring charges or make “common fame reports” so as to invoke *BCO* 31-2.

My conclusion is in agreement with the rest of the concurring members of the SJC that “additional process” is certainly required if this prior censure is to be elevated to deposition. But, in short, my difference with others, and which thus prompts this Concurrence, is that I see the due process principles of the *BCO* Rules of Discipline as being fully adequate, preferred, and required in such a matter. Process need not be subject to re-invention if the process stated in the *BCO* is simply applied and followed.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Arthur G. Sartorius

## DISSENTING OPINION

Case No. 2023-09: *Appeal of TE Myers v. Illiana*

RE Jim Eggert

March 25, 2024

### *Summary*

I dissent because I believe that suspension of TE Aaron Myers from the Sacraments cannot be elevated to excommunication without additional *judicial* process as prescribed by the *Rules of Discipline*.

My Dissent and the Decision gladly agree that some manner of process is needed in order to elevate censure; we differ, however, on what *sort* of process is due. I take the view that elevation of censure requires *judicial* process, or what I will refer to in this Dissent as “Traditional Process,” meaning a “case of process,” as described in *BCO* 31 (“The Parties in Cases of Process”) and as further articulated in *BCO* Chapters 32 through 37. In broad terms, Traditional Process requires an indictment, an appointment of a prosecutor, citation, and a trial. As I understand today’s Decision, something less than a Traditional Process (*how much less* is not always clear) is required in cases of elevating censure.

The Decision advances a process different from Traditional Process, grounding the same on the “guidance” that it finds “in the parliamentary rules of procedure that typically govern the court’s proceedings in such a circumstance,” the “circumstance” referring to cases involving the elevation of censure. For clarity, and because the Decision’s prescription does not appear to be strictly grounded in the *Rules of Discipline*, I will refer to the Decision’s process as a “Parliamentary Process.”

The Decision’s and this Dissent’s approaches are, I think, essentially different from one another, and are consequential to the fundamental rights of our members in elevation cases. In my view, elevation of censure in this case requires Presbytery to pick up where it left off in the judicial case that has already begun, resulting in the imposition of indefinite suspension. If it seeks to elevate censure, Presbytery must now allege and prove, via Traditional Process, such conduct that would now justify elevating Myers’ suspension to excommunication. Presbytery must appoint a prosecutor, prepare an

indictment with charges and specifications, serve a citation and conduct a trial.<sup>1</sup> In order to excommunicate Myers, Presbytery must establish through formal judicial process (1) that he has committed a “gross crime or heresy,” (2) that he “obstinately refuses to hear the Church, and has manifested no evidence of repentance,” and (3) that he has shown himself “incorrigible and contumacious” (See *BCO* 36-6 and 30-4). In the meantime, TE Myers would be returned to his previous disciplinary status: suspended from the Sacraments and indefinitely suspended from office.

### **I. Historical Review of our Polity Pertaining to Elevation of Indefinite Suspension.**

Whether elevating the censure of suspension to excommunication requires additional process is a subject of historical debate and seems to have exhibited different approaches at different points on Presbyterian history.

Prior to 1788 Steuart of Pardovan's *Collections of the Laws of the Church of Scotland* were accepted as authoritative in American Presbyterianism. In Book IV, title vi of that volume (“Of the Order of Proceeding to Excommunication”) we can still today read the procedures in effect in late eighteenth century Scottish (and American) Presbyterianism for the elevation of suspension from the Sacraments (what they called “the lesser excommunication”) to the “higher excommunication” (what we now simply call “excommunication”). Steuart at page 233. Those procedures provided that if a church Session desired to “proceed further” against a person who had lain “under the censure of the lesser excommunication for a considerable time,” it was required first to obtain the approval of Presbytery, having found the offender “frequently relapsing in these vices he was censured for” as evincing “such a degree of contumacy, and so aggravat[ing] the crime as to found a process of the higher excommunication, which is to be inflicted or not, as may most tend to the reclaiming of the guilty person, and edification of the church.” *Id.* at 233-234. Hence it appears that early American Presbyterianism required at least some kind of process before indefinite suspension could be elevated.

---

<sup>1</sup> *BCO* 32-2 says, “Process against an offender shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charge; or unless the court finds it necessary, for the honor of religion, itself to take the step provided for in *BCO* 31-2.” Therefore, either an individual can make out the charge that excommunication is warranted, or Presbytery itself may deem it necessary to appoint a prosecutor to proceed with the case.

We find that in 1825, the General Assembly reversed the Synod of Genessee because “they passed a new and severe censure on the appellant ... without a new and regular trial.” (Minutes of 1825, page 124, cited in *A Collection of the Acts and Deliverances and Testimonies of the Supreme Judicatory of the Presbyterian Church From its Origin in America to the Present Time*, Philadelphia: Presbyterian Board of Publication: 1856, Samuel J. Baird), page 142. This would appear to refer to Traditional Process.

By contrast, sixty years later, F.P Ramsay, commenting on a previous version of the rule governing indefinite suspension from the Sacraments, stated that the court may elevate censure “without another trial, whenever it shall seem necessary to the court to proceed so far” F.P. Ramsay, *Exposition of the Book of Church Order* (1898, p. 183), on RoD, IV-3. Ramsay makes no reference to what, if any, other type of process was required if not “another trial” in the sense of Traditional Process.

Yet contrary to Ramsay, Morton Smith’s *Commentary on the Book of Church Order* Section 30-3 states that a court must institute new process to elevate indefinite suspension to excommunication. “Such suspension,” he wrote, “should be reviewed periodically,” and, “[i]f the offender remains unrepentant, then the court should bring additional charges, and impose the greater censure of excommunication.” Smith’s phrase *bring additional charges* would seem to imply a trial under a Traditional Process.

To this we must add that the Standing Judicial Commission has in the past reasoned along the lines of Ramsay’s approach, treating Presbytery’s decision to elevate censure as a matter of its discretion without the necessity of further process. See *Dallison v. North Florida Presbytery*, M30GA 2002, page 156, 160-161. *Dallison* flatly denied that the Constitution requires a “new trial for new charges” for elevating censure. *Id.* at 161. *Dallison* held, “If the court determines in its mercy that it is going to inflict the lowest censure possible in the beginning and move to higher censures only if necessary, that discretion is within their authority and should not be overturned by the higher court ‘unless there is clear error on the part of the court’ (BCO 39-3).” Today’s Decision mentions *Dallison* in a footnote, insisting on a Parliamentary Process prior to a court’s elevating censure, a process that *Dallison* never mentioned and that seems inconsistent with the wide discretion afforded by *Dallison*.

I maintain that, for the reasons set out in this Dissent, Traditional Process is and should be required to elevate censure, and *Dallison* was wrongly decided.

## **II. Traditional Process is Required to Elevate Suspension to Excommunication.**

*BCO* 30-1 identifies the four discrete censures the Church courts may impose.

The censures, which may be inflicted by church courts, are admonition, suspension from the Sacraments, excommunication, suspension from office, and deposition from office. The censures of admonition or definite suspension from office shall be administered to an accused who, upon conviction, satisfies the court as to his repentance and makes such restitution as is appropriate. Such censure concludes the judicial process. The censures of indefinite suspension or excommunication shall be administered to an accused who, upon conviction, remains impenitent.

The sentence, “Such censure concludes the judicial process” invites further examination. Its placement in the section suggests that the imposition of the censures of admonition and definite suspension “conclude the judicial process,” whereas the imposition of indefinite suspension and excommunication do not.

What does *BCO* 30-1 mean by “judicial process?” This becomes clearer when one considers the whole of the *Rules of Discipline*, and particularly the relation that “indefinite suspension from the Sacraments” bears to “excommunication.”

### ***A. How Indefinite Suspension and Excommunication Are Similar.***

Suspension from the Sacraments and excommunication are the same in that they cut off an offender from the Sacraments. They are also the same in their duration, and the conditions for their removal.

Regarding duration, *BCO* 37-4 states, “When an excommunicated person shall be so affected with his state as to be brought to repentance” he is to be restored. Likewise, *BCO* 30-3 states, “Indefinite suspension is administered to the impenitent offender until he exhibits signs of repentance...” *BCO* 37-3 affirms

the same idea: “When the court shall be satisfied as to the reality of the repentance of an indefinitely suspended offender, he shall be admitted to profess his repentance...” The duration of both censures being *indefinite*, depending in both cases upon the spiritual condition of the offender, indefinite suspension from the Sacraments as well as excommunication are in these essential aspects the same as the other.

### ***B. How Indefinite Suspension and Excommunication Are Different.***

However, while *BCO* 30-1 tells us that suspension may be imposed upon “an accused who, upon conviction, remains impenitent,” we discover that excommunication is imposed on different grounds. Excommunication is administered only where the offender “obstinately refuses to hear the Church and has manifested no evidence of repentance” (*BCO* 36-6). Furthermore, excommunication “is to be inflicted only on account of gross crime or heresy and when the offender shows himself incorrigible and contumacious” (*BCO* 30-4). From these provisions we derive a three-fold justification for excommunication: (1) that the offender has committed a “gross crime or heresy,” (2) that the offender “obstinately refuses to hear the Church, and has manifested no evidence of repentance,” and (3) that the offender has shown himself “incorrigible and contumacious.” All three conditions must be satisfied before a court may impose excommunication.

As noted above, a court’s finding at conviction that an offender “remains impenitent” is the only stated ground provided in the *Rules of Discipline* for imposing indefinite suspension (*BCO* 30-1). Therefore, the infliction of indefinite suspension adjudicates only that an offender is “impenitent” at that time, leaving *unadjudicated* the three-fold justification for excommunication.

The different grounds for the imposition of indefinite suspension and excommunication are relevant in considering whether further process is required to elevate suspension to excommunication.

### ***C. Restoration Does Not Require Traditional Process.***

*BCO* 30-1 implicitly tells us that excommunication does not “conclude the judicial process.” This is curious since, obviously, where Traditional Process has ended in excommunication, there is no further “judicial process” that even *can* occur when an offender is excommunicated at the time of conviction (other

than to file an appeal). While in one sense we might say that the court of original jurisdiction repeatedly inflicts the censure of excommunication against an excluded offender who serially claims penitence and seeks readmission but fails to satisfy the court of his repentance, it is more accurate to say that his excommunication remains in place as a standing judgment of the Church, the burden thereafter resting on the offender to satisfy the court of the authenticity of his repentance.

Of course, a “judgment” of excommunication is never *final* in the sense that it cannot be revisited, one of the designs of this censure being “to operate on the offender as a means of reclaiming him” (*BCO* 30-4). Therefore, the court of original jurisdiction remains open to receive and restore the offender upon its satisfaction that he is repentant. Thus, while a court of original jurisdiction testing the authenticity of the repentance of the excommunicated offender does not proceed in the form of a Traditional Process, it is still right and fair to deem such evaluation as part of an “unconcluded judicial case” (*BCO* 30-1) in the sense that, should the court be satisfied of the offender’s repentance, the standing judgment of excommunication will be lifted, and the offender will be restored to fellowship, bringing the “judicial process” to a glad conclusion. This is the only sense in which the “judicial process” is not “concluded” in the case of an excommunication for purposes of *BCO* 30-1.

***D. Elevation of Censure Requires Traditional Process, which is a Continuation of “Judicial Process.”***

*BCO* 30-1 likewise tells us that the “judicial process” is not “concluded” in the case of *indefinite suspension from the Sacraments*. When an offender is indefinitely suspended from the Sacraments that censure is to be “administered to the impenitent offender until he exhibits signs of repentance, or until by his conduct, the necessity of the greatest censure be made manifest” (*BCO* 30-3). Clearly, the “unconcluded judicial process” in the case of suspension includes at least the same informal evaluation that the court of original jurisdiction undertakes to *restore* an excommunicated offender. Such restoration does not involve Traditional Process.

On the other hand, indefinite suspension leaves the judicial business of the court unconcluded in a way that excommunication does not. *BCO* 30-3 prescribes that suspension of an offender may be elevated to excommunication only when “his conduct” has made the “necessity of the greatest censure

manifest” (*BCO* 30-3). Clearly, it is the offender’s conduct *after* imposition of suspension that may subject him to excommunication. And as explained above, excommunication, having different grounds for its imposition than suspension, those grounds must be evident (“manifest”) before the court of original jurisdiction may elevate the censure. After all, if the grounds for imposing excommunication had been “manifest” by the evidence adduced at trial, then the court of original jurisdiction would have been bound to impose excommunication in the first instance. Therefore, after first imposing indefinite suspension, it must be assumed by the court of original jurisdiction (together with the higher courts) that the grounds for excommunication did not exist at the time of the original censure and remain unproven and adjudicated until a “case of process” has settled the question.

The *informal* machinations of a “case under judicial consideration” described in *BCO* 37-8, while useful to consider the question of restoration, are wholly insufficient to justify imposition of the harshest sentence the Church can impose. For that, the “case under judicial consideration” may only elevate the censure in the same way that excommunication may have been imposed in the first instance: via Traditional Process, not by a Parliamentary Process. As it is still a “case under judicial consideration,” if the court believes there is a ground to elevate the censure to excommunication, Traditional Process must continue from where it left off with an indictment, specifications, and a Prosecutor adducing such evidence at trial sufficient to justify the imposition of excommunication.

Therefore, I cannot agree with the Decision’s claim that the “current language of the *BCO* is ambiguous at best” regarding the “mechanism” for elevating censure. There can be no reasonable doubt but that before a member of the PCA may be excommunicated -- which is the “greatest censure” that the Church of Jesus Christ can impose against an individual -- he must first be afforded Traditional Process to establish the warrant for its imposition. Whatever warrants first justified the imposition of indefinite suspension will *not* justify the imposition of excommunication without Traditional Process establishing the three-fold justification for excommunication, which is an entirely different censure.

The Parliamentary Procedure for adjudicating Myers’ contumacy proposed by the Decision falls outside of our Constitutional norms without any Constitutional warrant. Our *Rules of Discipline* know how to prescribe such exceptional cases where parliamentary procedure may be substituted for



Traditional Process. For example, Presbyteries may divest a minister who habitually fails to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions. (BCO 34-10). It may do so via “judicial proceedings” if the cause of his dereliction is his “breach of his covenant engagement.” By contrast, “if it shall appear that his neglect proceeds only from his lack of acceptance to the Church” the Presbytery may proceed by parliamentary procedure rather than a “case of process” by which a “majority of two-thirds (2/3)” of his Presbytery may divest such a man from office, “even against his will.” A minister divested through this parliamentary process is nevertheless permitted to appeal “as if he had been tried after the usual forms.” Today’s Decision rejects the “usual form” of a case of process in favor of an *unusual* Parliamentary Process for the elevation of censure but does so with no Constitutional warrant at all. I see no reason why Mr. Myers’ alleged contumacy and proposed elevation of censure should not be “tried after the usual forms” (Traditional Process) rather than the *unusual* form advanced in the Decision.

### ***III. A “Case Under Judicial Consideration” Is A Continuation of Traditional Process, Not a “De Novo” Process.***

I agree with the Decision that in proceedings to elevate censure the case “before the court is the same *matter*, the sin with respect to which the subject was found guilty, now in a new *manner*, i.e., contumaciously and incorrigibly.” But the Decision mistakenly claims that affording Traditional Process for elevation would require a “*de novo* process” (i.e., “from the beginning” or “anew”).

The Decision rejects what it calls Myers’ suggestion that “the court require an entirely new judicial process for any elevation of censure, which would include the protections of the *Rules of Discipline* (ROD) for one who is presumed innocent until proven guilty,” calling such a procedure a *de novo* process. The Decision seems to assume that affording *de novo* process for elevation of censure would require that the charge of “maltreatment of his wife and fits of anger” would have to be proven against Myers again, but I do not believe that is the case.<sup>2</sup>

---

<sup>2</sup> To the contrary, BCO 35-15 specifically provides a mechanism to challenge an underlying conviction: “If after trial before any court new testimony be discovered, which the accused believes important, it shall be his right to ask a new trial and it shall be within the power of the court to grant his request.”

In my view, proceedings to elevate censure (in the end, whether we call them *de novo* or simply Traditional Process doesn't matter) would necessarily begin with an offender's original trial and conviction as an established fact of record of which the court can (and should) take judicial notice - "the same matter." Whether it is the original court or a new court that takes up the question of elevating censure, the original record must serve as a point of beginning and context for evaluating any proposal to elevate censure.<sup>3</sup> In this case, the record of the trial is well over three years past, and therefore it would seem to be incumbent upon anyone participating in the decision who has not read the same (or was not present at the initial trial) to read the transcript and evidence in its entirety. In any given Presbytery, members come and go, and it is possible that some members of Presbytery asked to vote on the question of elevation may not have been one of those who heard the case personally or had the opportunity to read the record of the trial and therefore fully understand the *matter*. Since, as the Decision rightly insists, it is indeed the same *matter* presented in a new *manner*, the judges should familiarize themselves with the trial transcript so that they can rightly judge the *matter* in light of its new *manner*. And it is precisely because the same matter is before the court in a new manner that Traditional Process is required, for it is the character of the "new manner" that must be proved before the Church may impose its highest censure, just as would have been the case had excommunication been imposed as the initial censure.

The *new manner* is the heart of the case for excommunication. Myers' prior conviction for "maltreatment of his wife and fits of anger" is not the most relevant consideration as to whether his censure should be elevated because the justification for his excommunication cannot be grounded solely on the *matter* of the prior verdict against him or even based on his prior censure. I think all would agree that other than *incorrigible contumacy*, no sin whatsoever justifies excommunication. As scandalous as it may seem to the world (and daresay sometimes even to the Church), if they have been washed, sanctified, and justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Holy Spirit, the Church of Jesus Christ opens her arms wide to sinners, whether the

---

<sup>3</sup> BCO 37-7 provides: "When a person under censure shall reside at such a distance from the court by which he was sentenced as to make the continued exercise of spiritual oversight impractical (cf. BCO 37-2), it shall be lawful for the court, with the acquiescence of the offender and the concurrence of the receiving court, to **transmit a certified copy of its proceedings** to the court where the delinquent resides, which shall assume jurisdiction, take up the case, and proceed with it as though it had originated with itself." (Emphasis added.)

sexually immoral, homosexuals, idolaters, adulterers, thieves, the greedy, and all other sort, just as it does to angry men who have mistreated their wives. (See 1 Cor. 6:10-11). Our churches are stuffed to the rafters with redeemed offenders, only a fraction of which the Church courts have ever had the occasion to adjudicate. A man may be convicted of the worst of sins, but if he believes on the Lord Jesus Christ and is found repentant, grieving for and hating his sin “as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavoring to walk with Him in all the ways of His commandments” (WCF 15.2), then he is deemed a part of the body of Christ.

“Purposing and endeavoring to walk with Christ in all the ways of his commandments,” even if imperfectly, is the antithesis of an “incorrigible and contumacious” person, and it is the happy business of the Church to shepherd such souls, not cast them out. Excommunication cannot stand against those who show they have been washed by the Lord Jesus Christ and as a result are “purposing and endeavoring” to walk with Christ, however grievous their prior offenses, and despite their imperfect repentance. Hence, those “having a new heart and a new spirit created in them, are further sanctified, really and personally, through the virtue of Christ’s death and resurrection, by His Word and Spirit dwelling in them; the dominion of the whole body of sin is destroyed, and the several lusts thereof are more and more weakened and mortified, and they more and more quickened and strengthened, in all saving grace to the practice of true holiness...” (WCF 13.1).

The Christian life inevitably produces forward progress, even if halting. That is why to be excommunicated, one under indefinite suspension from the Sacraments must show himself both “incorrigible and contumacious.” Contumacy is stubborn resistance and willful contempt for the authority of the Church. To show that Myers is “incorrigible and contumacious” requires the court to demonstrate both that he is incapable of being corrected or amended *and* that he holds the Church in contempt. *TE Rhett Dodson, et. al. v. Ohio Presbytery*, M48GA 2021, 2019-01, Page 649, at 663 (“The finding of contumacy as a basis for excommunication requires separate evidence in the Record at or before the point at which the decision is made to excommunicate the individual.”)

If Myers had been found “incorrigible and contumacious” from the start, then Presbytery would have imposed excommunication at the first. Therefore, it is Myers’ conduct *after* his conviction and censure that is now under scrutiny,

and in settling that question he is entitled to: (1) present a defense to the claim that the evidence adduced against him at trial demonstrated a “gross crime or heresy” justifying excommunication, (2) a presumption of innocence with respect to any claim that he, since being censured, “obstinately refuses to hear the Church, and has manifested no evidence of repentance,” and (3) a presumption of innocence with respect to whether he has, since being convicted, shown himself “incorrigible and contumacious.”

While the Decision is correct to note that “[b]y its previous action, the court has already found [Myers] impenitent,” this cannot fairly be understood as a determinative *condemnation* of Myers since indefinite suspension is only imposed upon an “impenitent” until he “exhibits signs of repentance” (*BCO* 30-3), which *assumes* that he might repent at any time after the initial infliction of the censure. Indeed, since a person under indefinite suspension has not been cast out of fellowship by excommunication, shouldn't a court of the Church assume a posture of hopeful expectancy that he *will* repent, graciously expecting the Holy Spirit to realize the censure's intended effect of reclaiming the sinner? After all, the discipline of the Church “is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath,” the Church acting “the part of a tender mother, correcting her children for their good, that every one of them may be presented faultless in the day of the Lord Jesus.” (*BCO* 27-4).

Moreover, the indefinite suspension can only be elevated if “by his conduct, the necessity of the greatest censure be made manifest” (*BCO* 30-3). This “conduct” is different from the “impenitence” found at the first. “*Conduct*,” just as it was in the first imposition of censure, is exactly what must be proven to *elevate* censure, and by definition the conduct in view must have occurred *after* the infliction of the censure.

Surely before a man is excommunicated, the burden of proof is on the *court* to demonstrate via Traditional Process when and in what manner such conduct has been discovered since the time the court imposed the initial censure (in this instance more than three years ago). To excommunicate the man, the conduct must “be made manifest,” not by Parliamentary Procedure, but by the Traditional Process prescribed by our *Rules of Discipline*.<sup>4</sup> We surely would

---

<sup>4</sup> Sometimes the contumacious will refuse to appear for a citation at all, and if he fails to appear twice he is subject to excommunication for his contumacy without further trial. (*BCO* 32-6; 33-2; 34-4). There is no reason this rule would not apply in the case of elevation. This is not a heavy burden for a court to bear. On the other hand, if a man does appear to contest the claim of his contumaciousness and obstinacy he is entitled to see and test the evidence against

have insisted that such conduct was proven by Traditional Process had excommunication been imposed at the first, so why should we stop insisting on proof via Traditional Process before a court later imposes the greatest censure?

The Decision's claim that there "are no persons to make out the charge" is not plausible. Obviously if, as the Decision proposes, there is any person or persons to compose a "motion to amend" the indefinite suspension previously adopted, then there is most certainly someone to "make out the charge."<sup>5</sup> Presumably the Presbytery would have articulable, substantial, and justifiable *grounds* to move to amend the indefinite suspension to elevate the same to excommunication. If they do, then such would easily frame an indictment via Traditional Process. But if there are no such grounds, then what could possibly justify the motion? Indeed, the Decision insists that in its Parliamentary Process that Myers must be "*charged* (emphasis added) ... with being incorrigible and contumacious" and be "presented with the evidence to that effect." If that be true, how can it plausibly be claimed that there is "no person to make out the charge" in exactly the same way that would satisfy Traditional Process?

Some might contend that requiring Traditional process for the elevation of censure is too onerous, burdening the courts with a "second trial," cynically suggesting that our courts will thereby be incentivized to impose excommunication rather than assume the risks and burdens of a later formal proceeding that might arise out of indefinite suspension. By that logic, I suppose one might argue that even the Decision's Parliamentary Procedure, arising as it does out of "parliamentary law" might be regarded as too burdensome. But I think better of our courts, fully expecting that they will not calculate the appropriate measure of censure based on their own convenience, but as guided by the Scriptures, the wisdom of the Holy Spirit, and the *Rules of Discipline*, all as applied to the particular circumstances of each case, gladly assuming the risks and burdens of such proceedings for the good of the Church, the offender, and the glory of God.

---

him in a case of process before he is excommunicated, and the process is salutary because, if the claim of obstinacy be demonstrated, it affords the court a pointed opportunity to demonstrate the fact and call him to repent, which is one of the fundamental purposes of discipline.

<sup>5</sup> What is more, even without a person to make out the charge, *BCO* 32-2 authorizes the court to "take the step provided for in *BCO* 31-2" on its own recognizance if it "finds it necessary, for the honor of religion."

#### ***IV. The Murky Path Forward.***

Today's Decision insists that "further process" for Mr. Myers is ultimately grounded not strictly in our Constitution, but in a hazy penumbra of "parliamentary law" arising out of our Constitution. The Decision summons an "exploration of how the intrinsic powers of our courts, as set forth in the Constitution, and guided broadly by our current rules and regulations, might supply a more just and reasonable course to settle the matter." The Decision extrapolates these "intrinsic powers" from the "administrative authority" proclaimed in *BCO* 11-2 to "cut off the contumacious and impenitent from the congregation of believers." The noun "exploration" invokes images of an expedition into the unknown. The Decision insists that our Constitution is "ambiguous at best" as a chart and compass through the "conundrum" of what sort of process should govern the elevation of censure, reassuring us that "parliamentary law" marks our path rather than the *Rules of Discipline*.

I disagree. It seems to me that the "just and reasonable course" is simply to follow Traditional Process as set forth in the *Rules of Discipline*, the only rules that the Church has ever clearly agreed to follow before "the contumacious and impenitent" are "cut off from the congregation of believers."

##### ***A. The General Assembly Has No Clear Authority to Police Undefined "Parliamentary Rules."***

The Parliamentary Procedure proposed in the Decision raises more problems than it solves.

As a reviewing court, the SJC is called upon to interpret and enforce the *Constitution* of the PCA, not *Robert's Rules of Order* or nascent parliamentary law. Being solely a court of review, it is doubtful that the SJC is or should be the final arbiter of the interpretation and application of local parliamentary law serving to fill in the alleged gaps left by our Constitution in the procedure for elevating censure, particularly as against a lower court's interpretation and exercise of its own administrative authority, exercised, as the Decision insists, pursuant to the lower court's "intrinsic powers."

Today's Decision assumes that the SJC has a warrant on behalf of the General Assembly to invoke, declare, and enforce against a lower court "parliamentary

rules of procedure that typically govern the court's proceedings in such a circumstance." The Decision states:

The indefinitely suspended person has a right to a hearing in the matter: he must be charged by the court supervising the indefinite suspension with being "incorrigible and contumacious," he must be presented with the evidence to that effect, he must be called upon to plead before the court, and he would have a right to a defense before the original trial court. The court, upon completing its hearing, would be called upon to consider a motion to amend a matter previously adopted, to elevate the indefinite suspension to excommunication. Passage would require a two thirds majority (2/3), unless previous notice were given of an intent to offer a motion to amend a matter previously adopted, the notice framed in such a way as to avoid undermining the impartiality of the maker and thereby disqualifying him from participation in the hearing.

But, given the rationale of the Decision, the General Assembly (through the SJC) cannot possibly authoritatively declare that the above procedure must govern the way the case against Myers shall proceed. If we take the Decision's fundamental premise as true, unless prohibited by the Constitution, Presbytery has "intrinsic power" to shape its own self organization, including the adoption, amendment, or suspension of any standing rules governing the elevation of censure where the Constitution's prescription is supposedly "ambiguous at best." "Intrinsic power" means belonging to the essential nature or constitution of the body in question, in this case the Presbytery. But when any court acts pursuant to its "intrinsic powers," by what warrant can any other court review that exercise? If, for example, a Presbytery or Session writes its own rule (or even adopts an unwritten practice) to prescribe the mechanism for the escalation of censure in those gaps that our Constitution has allegedly left open, by what authority does any higher court interpret that local rule or practice, especially where the lower court never agreed that another Church court could enforce a contrary rule or interpretation to that adopted by itself? The General Assembly has never adopted any "parliamentary rules of procedure" for the SJC to interpret as governing our Presbyteries and Sessions, and the Presbyteries and Sessions of the PCA have never agreed to be governed by such "rules of parliamentary procedure" pursuant to a

Constitutional amendment process (*See BCO 26-2*). It seems, therefore, that the Decision's mandated procedure is no more than judicial fiat. Is the SJC's "intrinsic power" to interpolate alleged Constitutional gaps better or more binding than that of the lower courts, particularly where it is asserted that the Constitution provides no clear answer?

***B. The Implementation of the Parliamentary Process Dangerously Consolidates Power in the Higher Courts, and Especially the SJC.***

And this leads to yet another conundrum: the Decision's commitment to the "intrinsic powers" of the courts in theory permits as many different procedures for elevating censure as there are Sessions and Presbyteries in the PCA, opening the door to a lack of uniformity in the standards for imposing the Church's highest censure in elevation cases.

It is also concerning that the SJC's invocation of its "exploration" of "parliamentary rules" seems to promise a future where the SJC will hold itself out as the final arbiter of such "parliamentary law" in cases that may arise before it. But the PCA has never adopted a definitive written body of "parliamentary law" to govern the elevation of censure, leaving a vacuum of authority.

The SJC will fill this vacuum, promising as it does to be "guided broadly by our current rules and regulations," thus issuing itself a license (perhaps grounded in its own "intrinsic power") to regulate the lower courts at or beyond the border of our Constitutional boundaries. *BCO 42-3* lists the first ground for an appeal as "any irregularity in the proceedings of the lower court," which I have always presumed referred to the regulations afforded by our *Rules of Discipline* in Traditional Process. Today's Decision opens wide the field of "irregularities" to include the breach of uncodified "parliamentary rules," anything that the SJC deems a breach of "parliamentary law" in the elevation of censure. As it reviews the decisions of lower courts, the SJC assumes to itself the power to declare whether a procedure utilized was a "just and reasonable course," whether it sufficiently satisfied amorphous "due process considerations," and was "guided broadly" -- be sure to emphasize *broadly* -- "by our current rules and regulations." I am very concerned that, unshackled from any rules adopted by the Assembly, the vague rules announced today leave the SJC vulnerable to judicial activism under the



umbrella of undefined and extra constitutional “parliamentary law” in its review of elevation cases.

Apart from Traditional Process under the *Rules of Discipline*, future parties (including Mr. Myers) will struggle to anticipate what will pass as adequate grounds for appeal should they be excommunicated by the elevation of censure. For example, if the offender must be “charged by the court” as the Decision prescribes, should the court be bound to apply the rules governing citations and indictments (*BCO* 32-4 & 32-5) as well as the rules governing citing the offender two times, affording a prescribed number of days for notice (*BCO* 32-6 & 32-7)? The Decision seems to conclude that such protections do not apply since Traditional Process does not apply.

Consider also, for example, whether breach of any of the following *BCO* rules clearly prescribed in cases of process could lead to a successful appeal under today’s new Parliamentary Procedure guided by undefined “due process considerations”:

- 32-13. Requirement that the witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused (as permitted by *BCO* 32-8), or at least after he shall have received due citation to attend. Witnesses may be cross-examined by both parties, and any questions asked must be pertinent to the issue.
- 32-15. Prescribing the order of the trial.
- 32-18. Prescribing how records are to be kept of the proceedings. (This is particularly interesting, since it will be difficult indeed for a higher court to review an appeal of an excommunication where no transcript of the proceedings was kept -- does “parliamentary law” require it?)
- 35-2 The accused party is allowed, but shall not be compelled, to testify; prohibition of compelling a spouse to testify against the other spouse. Are these protections erased in the Parliamentary Process? Can TE Myers be compelled to address the court regarding the claim that he has become “incorrigible and contumacious?”
- 35-6. The exclusion of a witness from being present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party objects unless a member of the court.

- 35-10. The requirement that all testimony be transcribed so that the higher courts have it available for their review.

Will the SJC, being “guided broadly by our current rules and regulations” find that omitting any of the above (or other provisions of the *Rules of Discipline*) was a “just and reasonable course,” satisfying “due process considerations?” Will a breach of any of them be an “irregularity” sufficient to overturn a censure? Who can say? And if they are, then why shouldn’t elevation of censure simply be governed by Traditional Process as I propose?

***Conclusion***

In sum, contrary to the Decision, I understand the *Rules of Discipline* to require the courts of the Church to follow the prescriptions of Traditional Process when elevating censure from indefinite suspension to excommunication.

Considering today’s decision, I would expect and encourage our Presbyteries to propose amendments to our *Rules of Discipline* to bring clarity and uniformity to this area, especially in light of the uncertainties and local variations inevitably resulting from the “intrinsic powers” of the courts advanced by today’s Decision.

I respectfully dissent.

**CASE No. 2023-10**

***RE JOHN MARTINEZ & RE JESSE COOK***

***v.***

***PACIFIC PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON COMPLAINT**

March 7, 2024

**CASE SUMMARY**

This Case initially arose from a divided vote of the Session of Valley Presbyterian Church ("VPC") on the question of whether doxologies would be permitted at the close of the weekly worship service (in addition to allowing benedictions). In July 2022, the Session adopted a policy disallowing doxologies at the close of worship. REs Riedinger and Shaw, members of VPC, filed a complaint with the Session against that decision. The Complaint was denied, they carried it to Presbytery, and Presbytery sustained the Complaint in January 2023, ruling the Session erred in adopting that policy. Thereafter, two of the Church's other elders, REs Martinez and Cook, who had been its commissioners to the January 2023 meeting when Presbytery sustained the Reidinger/Shaw Complaint, filed two Complaints with Presbytery - (the "Doxology Complaint" and the "Visitation Complaint.") They contended (1) Presbytery erred by sustaining the Reidinger/Shaw Complaint and ruling the Session erred in adopting the no-doxologies-for-closing-worship policy, and (2) Presbytery erred by tasking its Shepherdng Committee to "follow-up" with the Session on the matter. Presbytery sustained the Martinez/Cook Doxology Complaint, reversing its prior ruling, now allowing the no-doxologies-for-closing-worship policy. But Presbytery denied their Visitation Complaint and they carried it to the SJC. The SJC sustained that Complaint in part and denied it in part.

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

07/11/22     Stated Meeting of the Session of Valley Presbyterian Church, North Hills, CA. ("VPC") In a divided vote, the Session adopted the following: "To have God's blessings as formal benedictions to conclude the service and not doxologies."

## APPENDIX Q

- 08/09/22 REs Jack Riedinger and Larry Shaw (members of the Session) filed a Complaint with Session regarding its decision of July 11. (The "Riedinger/Shaw Complaint") It was cosigned by TE Ron Svendsen, Senior Pastor of VPC.<sup>1</sup>
- 09/08/22 Session Stated Meeting. Denied the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint.
- 10/06/22 Riedinger and Shaw carried their Complaint to Pacific Presbytery. ("Presbytery") It was cosigned by TE Svendsen.
- 01/19/23 Nine days before the Presbytery meeting, Presbytery Clerk TE Heard distributed the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint and the Session's response to Presbytery members.
- 01/28/23 Presbytery Stated Meeting. Presbytery sustained the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint, ruling "the Valley Session erred in restricting the end of public worship services to formal benedictions and not using doxologies." Presbytery also adopted the following motion:
- The Shepherding Committee is tasked with following up with the Valley Presbyterian Church Session.
- 03/12/23 REs Martinez and Cook, who were VPC Commissioners to that January 28 Presbytery meeting, filed a Complaint with Presbytery ("Complaint 1") against its sustaining of the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint. Presbytery sustained Martinez/Cook Complaint 1 thereby reversing its decision in the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint. This allowed the Session to continue with its no-doxologies-for-closing-worship policy.
- 03/13/23 Session Stated Meeting. TE Myers and RE Hoard, representing the Shepherding Committee, were seated at the meeting, and their visit was docketed as Item 3. At the Panel Hearing, REs Martinez

---

<sup>1</sup> We note that a Teaching Elder does not have the right to file a complaint against an action of a Session because, as a member of Presbytery (*BCO* 13-1), he is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Session (*BCO* 43-1). However, as the complaint was made by two Ruling Elders who were members of the Congregation, the complaint was valid.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

and Cook indicated they were unaware that Shepherding Committee members would attend the Session meeting until a few days prior, after seeing the docket prepared by TE Svendsen.

Martinez and Cook filed a second Complaint with Presbytery ("Complaint 2") asking Presbytery to reverse its previous decision which "tasked" the Shepherding Committee "with following up with the Valley Presbyterian Church Session." Below are excerpts from that part of Martinez/Cook Complaint 2:

Pursuant [*sic*] BCO 11-4 and 13-9, the [Presbytery] has acted beyond its power and jurisdiction by sending delegates from Presbytery's shepherding committee to "follow[ing] up" with the VPC session.

BCO 13-9 contains no express provision, which meaning is clear and undebatable, as would permit a presbytery to require the receiving of a presbytery committee's visit without a request by a specific problem in the session or congregation. (Footnote: Morton H. Smith, *Commentary on The PCA Book of Church Order*; Page 93. Constitutional Inquiry, 1982, p. 107, 10-77. Digest, I, P.261.)

[P]ursuant [*sic*] BCO 13-9 section f, there are no reports of evils that have arisen in VPC.

05/02/23 Presbytery Stated Meeting. Presbytery sustained Martinez/Cook Complaint 1, thereby reversing its January 2023 decision that had sustained the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint against the Session's July 2022 decision disallowing doxologies. Thus, Presbytery now allowed the Session to disallow doxologies.

Presbytery denied Martinez/Cook Complaint 2, which left in place its January 2023 decision, i.e., "The Shepherding Committee is tasked with following up with the Valley Presbyterian Church Session."

Presbytery minutes contained the following:

## APPENDIX Q

"Notation, with this decision, the court, in reflection upon the action taken at the January 28, 2023, Stated Meeting directing the Shepherding Committee to follow up with the Valley Presbyterian Session, emphasized that the motion passed on that day was brought in light of TE Ron Svendsen's previous personal request (off the floor) to the Shepherding Committee for assistance, and his agreement to receive it when assistance from the committee was proffered at presbytery. Hence, the presbytery, TE Alex Watlington had argued, was not in violation [*sic*] BCO 11-4 or 13-9."

05/11/23 Session Stated Meeting. According to Complainants' Brief, the "Session requested that all communications on this matter pass through the Clerk of the VPC Session in light of the fact that TE Svendsen was the chair of the Shepherding Committee and was the only one speaking to the Shepherding Committee."

05/30/23 REs Martinez & Cook carried their Complaint 2 to the SJC. Below is an excerpt from the cover letter dated May 17, 2023.

Complainants contend that Pacific Presbytery erred when it acted to send the Shepherding Committee, of Pacific Presbytery, without the request of the Session Valley Presbyterian Church (BCO 13-9). Furthermore, the committee was tasked to follow up with the Session of Valley Presbyterian Church, however with no clear intention. The sending of the Shepherding Committee, of the Pacific Presbytery, had no bases [*sic*] to follow up and conduct an inquiry.

09/22/23 Panel Hearing via videoconference. Panel included TE Bankson, RE Carrell and RE Donahoe with TE Kooistra and TE Pickering as alternates. Complainants Martinez and Cook were present, as were Presbytery's Representatives TE Myers and TE Watlington. Prior to the Hearing, the Complainants filed an 11-page

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Preliminary Brief and Presbytery Representative filed a one-page Preliminary Brief.

09/26/23 Panel members Bankson, Donahoe and Pickering adopted Proposed Decision.

### II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

1. Did Presbytery misinterpret the *BCO* and thereby err on January 28, 2023 when it adopted a motion "tasking [its] Shepherding Committee to follow up with the Valley Presbyterian Church Session"?
2. Did Presbytery clearly err in not providing more specific direction of the Shepherding Committee and the Session when it simply tasked the Committee to "follow-up"?

### III. JUDGMENT

1. No. Therefore, this part of the Complaint is denied.
2. Yes. Therefore, this part of the Complaint is sustained.

### IV. REASONING AND OPINION

*BCO* 39-3.1 stipulates: "A higher court, reviewing a lower court, should limit itself to the issues raised by the parties to the case in the original (lower) court." Therefore, this Decision does not touch the matter of benedictions vs. doxologies. Nor does it touch the matter of who has final authority over the parts of the weekly Sunday worship service. Those were not issues raised by the Martinez/Cook Complaint, presumably because Presbytery sustained their other Complaint on those matters on May 2, 2023.

Standard of Review - Complainants contend the primary issue is a matter of constitutional interpretation and therefore the SJC should not feel obligated to give "great deference" to Presbytery's decision per *BCO* 39-3.4. However, Issue 1 involves constitutional interpretation *and* a matter of judgment and discretion, so both *BCO* 39-3.3 and 3.4 apply to that part. Issue 2 is a question of judgment and discretion, so *BCO* 39-3.3 applies.

#### Issue 1 - Impermissible Visitation?

The Complainants contend this case presents a constitutional issue for which no deference to the lower court's decision is required because Presbytery violated the *BCO*:

Pursuant *BCO* 11-4 and 13-9, the Pacific Presbytery has acted beyond its power and jurisdiction by sending delegates from Presbytery's shepherding committee to "follow[ing] up" with the VPC session. [ROC 4:26]

The Complaint contends the task assigned to the Shepherding Committee is not something envisioned in the general jurisdictional paragraph of *BCO* 11-4, nor is it a presbytery power delineated in *BCO* 13-9:

*BCO* 11-4. For the orderly and efficient dispatch of ecclesiastical business, it is necessary that the sphere of action of each court should be distinctly defined. The Session exercises jurisdiction over a single church, the Presbytery over what is common to the ministers, Sessions, and churches within a prescribed district, and the General Assembly over such matters as concern the whole Church. The jurisdiction of these courts is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution.

Every court has the right to resolve questions of doctrine and discipline seriously and reasonably proposed, and in general to maintain truth and righteousness, condemning erroneous opinions and practices which tend to the injury of the peace, purity, or progress of the Church. Although each court exercises exclusive original jurisdiction over all matters especially belonging to it, the lower courts are subject to the review and control of the higher courts, in regular gradation. These courts are not separate and independent tribunals, but they have a mutual relation, and every act of jurisdiction is the act of the whole Church performed by it through the appropriate organ.

*BCO* 13-9. The Presbytery has power to receive and [settle the] issue [in] appeals, complaints, and references brought before it in an orderly manner. In cases in which the Session



cannot exercise its authority, it shall have power to assume original jurisdiction. It has power: ...

- f. ... to visit churches for the purpose of inquiring into and redressing the evils that may have arisen in them; to unite or divide churches, at the request of the members thereof; ...
- g. ... in general, to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches under its care.

The lower court answered the constitutional question correctly; its decision presumes that presbyteries may visit sessions in at least some circumstances. Whether a visit was justified in this circumstance is a question of judgment and discretion, on which we must defer to Presbytery's judgment if it can be reasonably supported by the record.

Complainants maintain that a GA decision from 38 years ago is dispositive and should settle this matter - *Complaint of TE Preg et al. v. Missouri*. (M13GA, pp. 127-30) However, while that case involved the issue of presbytery visitation, facts were substantively different from our present case. In 1985, Missouri Presbytery enacted a standing rule tasking its Committee on Care of the Churches to "conduct yearly visits to each church including at least one visit with the session for discussion of the welfare of the church, such discussion to follow an outline made in advance to the session. Visits to deacons meetings, congregational meetings, worship services, etc. are also encouraged."

Westminster Reformed Presbyterian Church, pastored then by TE Mike Preg, complained against that provision. Below are excerpts from the Statement of the Issue, the Judgment, and the Explanatory Opinion of the GA's ad hoc Judicial Commission. All emphasis is added.

At the heart of the issue is whether a higher court has taken action affecting a lower court in areas not expressly authorized by the *BCO*. The question in the complaint is whether the presbytery may *require* a visit by a presbytery committee on pastoral concern to a session and a congregation *against the wishes of the session and in the absence of any evident problem*.

The Commission voted (16-0) to sustain the complaint and to instruct the presbytery by its normal process to bring its Standing Rules and procedures into conformity with *BCO*, as interpreted by this ruling. Grounds: *BCO* 11-4 clearly limits the authority of the higher court to specific areas listed in the *BCO*.

In the opinion of the Commission, *BCO* 13-9 contains no express provision, which meaning is clear and undebatable, as would permit a presbytery to require the receiving of a presbytery's committee's visit *without a request by or a specific problem* in the session or congregation in question.<sup>2</sup>

The decision in *Preg v. Missouri* established that mandatory visitation *without cause* is outside the powers of a presbytery. But the question of whether a presbytery has cause, or whether a matter rises to the level of something warranting an unrequested visit, is a matter of discretion and judgment.

What might justify a presbytery in visiting a session meeting uninvited? Neither the decision in *Preg* nor *BCO* 13.9.f require a presbytery to obtain permission to "visit" a church if the presbytery deems some "evil" has arisen. But the *BCO* does not define the verb "visit" or the noun "evil." The word "evil" only appears in this one place in the constitutional portion of the *BCO*.<sup>3</sup> Complainants grant that an uninvited visitation can occur "for the purpose of inquiring into and redressing the evils that may have arisen in" a church. (*BCO* 13-9.f). But they argue that no such "evil" had arisen in their church, and Presbytery's Brief admits the nature of the visit was *not* to investigate reports of evil.

Presbytery's Brief and its oral argument at the Hearing contend the visit was permissible via *BCO* 13-9.f, which it states a presbytery has the power "to unite ... churches, at the request of the members thereof." That provision is an odd one to cite, unless perhaps the Presbytery was interpreting "unite" to mean something like "help unify." That Presbytery interpretation is implied when its Brief notes that because "the VPC moderator asked for help in dealing with division, the presbytery sought to help bring unity amongst the VPC session

---

<sup>2</sup> In 1985, there was no SJC. Ad hoc judicial commissions were formed for each separate case, onsite at GA, and comprised of eight TE and eight RE commissioners.

<sup>3</sup> Also appears in *BCO* 52-2, but that paragraph is not part of the Constitution.

and her church.” However, as F.P. Ramsey observes in his commentary on this same text in the PCUS Book of 1879, that provision refers to the power of *uniting two churches* into a single church.

Despite Presbytery’s failure to emphasize it in its Brief or at oral argument, the Record does contain a reasonable justification for Presbytery to have made a visit to the VPC Session. Along with two REs, the 28-year Senior Pastor of VPC co-signed a complaint to Presbytery regarding a Session decision about an element of the worship service, and the associate pastor and two ruling elders opposed it! It was neither unreasonable nor a “clear error” for presbyters to conclude the “peace” and “spiritual welfare” of VPC might be at risk in such circumstances. It is possible, of course, that the parties were not antagonistic towards each other, and that they sought to use the *BCO*’s complaint mechanism merely to resolve a matter of conscience between them. Support for this interpretation may be found in the initial complaint filed against the Session’s decision and in some of the statements made at oral argument. However, it was still reasonable for Presbytery to send representatives to VPC’s Session to verify whether such was the case, and it would have been uncharitable and a violation of VPC’s obligation to submit to Presbytery’s review and control to turn away those representatives. For these reasons, we defer to Presbytery’s judgment that the decision to send the Shepherding Committee to the VPC Session did not violate the *BCO* in this instance.

## **Issue 2 – The Question of “Follow up”**

It is unclear what presbyters might have expected when the Shepherding Committee was tasked to “follow up.” It is understandable why some might have understood that vaguely worded instruction differently. Indeed, its ambiguity has presented a challenge for us in deciding Issue 1; was the visit compulsory, or not? If it was compulsory, what were the grounds supporting it? If it wasn’t compulsory, why wasn’t that made clear to the VPC Session? The Complainants, and perhaps other members of the VPC Session, perceived the visit as an uninvited and unwarranted investigation, while Presbytery’s Representatives deny it was an investigation at all and stated in oral argument in response to a question from the Panel that the visit was not even compulsory.

In its Brief, Presbytery’s Representatives contend the “follow-up” was not an investigation, but rather, “the shepherding committee was simply sent to

extend care and counsel at the request of one of her members." However, that request came only from TE Svendsen, who was the Shepherding Committee Chairman, the Senior Pastor of VPC (and therefore the moderator of the VPC Session), and one of the three men who co-signed a Complaint to Presbytery against the Session's decision to disallow doxologies at the close of worship. (Presbytery sustained the Riedinger/Shaw Complaint on January 28, 2023 and later reversed that decision when it sustained the first Martinez/Cook Complaint on May 2, 2023.) In short, TE Svendsen was more than just "one of her members," and it should have been clear that he represented one side of a contentious issue among the VPC Session members and therefore should not be understood to represent the entire Session in making his request unless he had been formally asked to do so by the VPC Session.

Nothing prohibited the Shepherding Committee from communicating with the Session *through the Session's clerk*. But, even so, the Shepherding Committee only communicated with the Pastor/Shepherding Committee Chairman/Complainant. As we concluded above in our discussion of Issue 1, the Presbytery may have had the constitutional power to "visit," doing so with just a few days' notice and no effort at seeking an invitation was a clear error of judgment. This matter might never have arisen if the Shepherding Committee had communicated directly to the Session's clerk and not just to the Pastor. If there was a problematic division in the Session, this communication decision exacerbated it. On the other hand, the Session could have communicated directly with the Shepherding Committee to seek clarification, or even to request that the Shepherding Committee not visit.

Finally, this case demonstrates the consequences of adopting unclear motions. Robert's Rules stipulate the chair has responsibility to ensure motions are clear:

[Before stating the question] the chair must be confident that all members understand it. (RONR (12th ed.) 4:15.e)

In principle, the chair must state the question on a motion immediately after it has been made and seconded, unless he is obliged to rule the motion is not in order or unless, in his opinion, the wording is not clear. (RONR (12th ed.) 4:16)

If a motion is offered in a wording that is not clear or that requires smoothing ... it is the duty of the chair to see that the motion is put in suitable form - preserving the content to the satisfaction of the mover - *before* the question is stated. ... The chair - either on his own initiative or at the secretary's request - can require any main motion, amendment, or instructions to a committee to be in writing before he states the question. (RONR (12th ed.) 4:18)<sup>4</sup>

For these reasons, we conclude that Presbytery erred in in a matter of judgment by sending its Shepherding Committee on a “following up” mission without clearer instructions regarding its objectives.

## Conclusion

We do not sustain the Complainants' contention that the *BCO* was violated. At the same time, we find that Presbytery made clear errors of judgment in omissions and communications that contributed to this Complaint coming to the SJC.

---

The Proposed Decision was drafted by the Panel together. The SJC reviewed each part of the proposed decision and approved the final version of the Decision by vote of **22-0**, with two absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	Absent	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	<i>Concur</i>	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	<i>Concur</i>	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	<i>Concur</i>
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

---

<sup>4</sup> See also RONR sections 47:14 through 47:19: "Suggestions for inexperienced presiding officers."

**CASE No. 2023-11**

***MR. TIMOTHY PSIAKI***

**v.**

***PACIFIC NORTHWEST PRESBYTERY***

**DECISION ON COMPLAINT**

March 7, 2024

**I. SUMMARY OF THE FACTS**

- 02/05/23      Annual officer elections took place at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Issaquah, WA. Complainant alleged that communing members under the age of 18 were present at the meeting but excluded from voting at the meeting, per the Congregation's by-laws.
- 02/17/23      Covenant Church Session notified the Congregation of the results of the officer election, identifying officers elected and announcing their ordination and installation during the morning worship service of 2/26/23.
- 02/26/23      At the Covenant Church morning worship service, the Session proceeded to ordain and install the previously elected officers.
- 04/17/23      Complainant filed his complaint with the Session alleging that the Session erred in installing officers who were elected in an unconstitutional manner through the exclusion of minor voters who were communicant members.
- 04/20/23      Session voted that the Complaint be rejected, following advice from a Presbyterian from their Presbytery.
- 04/23/23      Session subsequently rules the Complaint out of order, claiming that it involved the same essential matter as *SJC 2022-20 Wilson v. Pacific Northwest Presbytery*.
- 05/2023      Complainant carried his complaint to Pacific Northwest Presbytery.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- 05/18/23 At the Stated Meeting of Presbytery, the Complaint was ruled out of order. No grounds were given for this action.
- 06/02/23 Complainant carried his complaint to the General Assembly.
- 08/09/23 The Complaint was assigned to a panel, consisting of TEs Sean Lucas (chairman), David Garner, and Paul Lee (alternate), and REs John Pickering (secretary) and John White (alternate).
- 12/13/23 The hearing was held via GoToMeeting before the panel. Mr. Psiaki represented himself. Presbytery was represented by TE Brant Bosserman.

### II. STATEMENT OF THE ISSUE

Did the Session err when they installed officers elected at a February 5, 2023, congregational meeting, despite the exclusion from voting at the congregational meeting of communicant members under the age of eighteen?

### III. JUDGMENT

Yes.

### IV. REASONING AND OPINION

This Case centers around the action of the CPC Session to ordain and install officers previously elected at a CPC congregational meeting. Complainant maintains, and Respondent does not dispute, that communicant members under the age of eighteen were barred from voting in the election of those officers. In a previous Case, another Complaint was raised against the action of CPC congregation to elect men to office. The SJC ruled this previous Complaint (SJC 2022-20 *Wilson v. Pacific Northwest Presbytery*) judicially out of order because it was a complaint against an action of a *congregation* and not an action of a *church court*. This Complaint, however, is against the action of CPC Session and not against any action of CPC congregation. The Complaint is, therefore, judicially in order.

Complainant rightly maintains that the Constitutional rights of certain communing members of CPC (that is, those under the age of eighteen) were violated when these members were prevented from voting in this officer election. The Constitution declares, “Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and admitted by the Session to the Lord’s Table, are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the Church” (*BCO* 6-4). The only express provision in the Constitution for the suspension or removal of any existing ecclesiastical right or privilege is the particular censures imposed upon a church member found guilty of some offense (*BCO* 36). The Record gives no indication that the communing members who were prevented from voting at this congregational meeting had been so censured as to deprive them of the right to vote at a congregational meeting.

The Record indicates, rather, that this prevention came not from any express provision of the *BCO* but from a provision of CPC Bylaws that limits voting in congregational meetings to those communing members aged eighteen and above (ROC 4). But the bylaws of a local congregation cannot be the final word on ecclesiastical matters. This point is clearly stated in *BCO* 25-7, “if a particular church is incorporated, the provisions of its charter and bylaws must always be in accord with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America” (emphasis added). In light of this provision, no congregation or court of the Church may use its bylaws to set aside the Constitution or violate church law, for whatever reason. Thus, this provision of the CPC Bylaws can pass constitutional scrutiny only if it is rooted in some provision of *BCO* that gives sessions or congregations discretion over who may vote in congregational meetings. Not only is there no such provision, but nothing in the *BCO* indicates that sessions and congregations have such discretion.

### **The Testimony of the *BCO***

Our polity is clear that the authority and right to choose officers is a critical piece of the power Christ has given to His Church. Thus *BCO* 3-1 states “The power which Christ has committed to His Church vests in the whole body, the rulers and those ruled, constituting it a spiritual commonwealth. This power, as exercised by the people, extends to the choice of those officers whom He has appointed in His Church.” *BCO* 16-1 reiterates this principle in holding that “Ordinary vocation to office in the Church is the calling of God by the Spirit, through the inward testimony of a good conscience, the manifest approbation of God’s people, and the concurring judgment of a lawful court of



the Church.” This doctrine of vocation, as well as the right and responsibility of God’s people to provide outward confirmation of a man’s call, is central to our polity.

*BCO* 16-2 then underscores the centrality of this doctrine and applies it to particular congregations when it asserts “The government of the Church is by officers gifted to represent Christ, and the right of God’s people to recognize by election to office those so gifted is inalienable. Therefore no man can be placed over a church in any office without the election, or at least the consent of that church.” The only mechanism whereby a local church can elect or consent to a man being placed in office over them is through a congregational meeting (see *BCO* 5-9(f); 20-2 through 20-5; and 24-1 through 24-5). Further, the *BCO* clearly delineates what “the congregation” is in 25-1 (the chapter dealing with Congregational Meetings) when it states “[t]he congregation consists of all the communing members of a particular church, and they only are entitled to vote.”

Respondent Presbytery argues, however, that “Being a communicant member is a *necessary*, but not a *sufficient* condition for voting (*BCO* 6-4; 25-1)” (emphasis added), and that PCA congregations have the right “to evaluate minor communicants as lacking the ‘regular standing’ (*BCO* 20-3; 24-3) necessary to elect officers.” We disagree.

*BCO* 4-1 defines “a particular church” as consisting of “a number of professing Christians with their children....” *BCO* Chapter 6 then makes clear that the crucial distinction in 4-1 is not in any way based on age but on whether one is a communing or non-communing member, and that this distinction is based entirely on whether one has made a profession of faith and has been admitted by the Session to the Lord’s Table. *BCO* 6-4 then states “Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and admitted by the Session to the Lord’s Table [*i.e.*, communicant members], are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the church.” The word “all” in 6-4 is critical. Given the principles set forth in *BCO* 3-1 and 16-1,2 it is unreasonable to think that the word all in 6-4 is somehow meant to exclude some communicants from the right to vote in congregational elections unless there is a clear provision somewhere else in the *BCO* that leads to that conclusion.

In fact, however, what we find in the remainder of the *BCO* are consistent, unqualified, references to all communing members being allowed to

participate in critical aspects of congregational meetings. A review of *BCO* 5-10(i)(3); 20-3; 24-1; 24-3; 25-1; 25-2; and 25-3 clearly demonstrates that one's right to participate at every key juncture of the process of organizing a church (choosing her officers and affirming the covenant of organization) and of congregational meetings (joining the call for a meeting, being part of the quorum (and being counted in the determination of the number required for a quorum), and voting) is tied to whether one is a communing member, not to age.<sup>1</sup>

### **The Meaning of “Good and Regular Standing” (*BCO* 20-3; 24-3)**

Respondent makes much of the phrase “in good and regular standing” in *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3, arguing that this phrase gives the Session the right to “evaluate minor communicants as lacking ‘the regular standing’ (*BCO* 20-3; 24-3) necessary to elect officers.” It is unwise to read a phrase such as “in good and regular standing” that appears infrequently in the *BCO* as establishing an exception to clear provisions of the Constitution unless either the clear language of the provision or a clear legislative history requires us to do so. In this situation, neither of those requirements holds.

The phrase “good and regular standing” is used only in *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3. The phrase, “good standing,” and the word, “regular,” however, are used in other places in the *BCO* and those uses are instructive. The references to “good standing” never appear to have in view age (or any other demographic characteristic). Rather, this phrase consistently has in view whether one is under censure. Thus, for example, *BCO* 58-4 states that the minister may “invite all those who profess the true religion, and are communicants in good

---

<sup>1</sup> We note that a similar pattern exists with the other major right of members of the church - the right to discipline. *BCO* 27-3 holds: “All baptized persons, being members of the Church are subject to its discipline and entitled to the benefits thereof.” The remainder of “The Rules of Discipline” then draws a crucial distinction, not on the basis of age, but on the basis of whether one has made a profession of faith and has been admitted to the Lord’s Table. Thus, Chapter 28 deals specifically with the “Disciplining of Non-communing Members” while the remainder of “The Rules of Discipline,” while surely still recognizing the rights and responsibilities of parents, deals with discipline of communing members. It would be untenable to argue that a Session could not apply one of the censures discussed in Chapter 30 to a minor member of their Congregation, if warranted by process or a case without process, even as that Session would and should still respect the right of the parents to take their own discipline of the minor.

standing in any evangelical church” (cf. *BCO* 14-2, 19-1, 24-7, 25-2, 38-3, 43-1, 43-5, and 46-7). Further, while the phrase “regular standing” does not appear in the *BCO*, the word “regular” is used as a modifier in a number of places (e.g., *BCO* 10-1, 13-3, 19-1, 21-4a, 24-7, and 42-2). In each of these instances, the word “regular” typically carries the sense of “according to rule,” that is, the rules and standards of the Constitution. It is not reasonable to conclude that these uses of “regular” in the *BCO* are intended in some way to convey a grant of discretion to the courts of the Church to establish or prescribe rules and standards at those points. And so, for example, when *BCO* 24-7 and 42-1 speak of “regular trials,” it is untenable to conclude that this provision somehow allows churches or sessions to develop their own definitions of what constitutes a “regular trial.” Therefore, the way in which the phrase, “good standing,” and the word, “regular” are used separately in the *BCO* does not provide a basis for concluding that *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3 are intended to confer on local sessions or congregations the authority to set restrictions on voting in congregational meetings beyond those specified in the *BCO*.

The question, then, is whether the coupling of this phrase and this word (“good and regular standing”) can be shown to confer such authority. The history of the interpretation of the phrase, “good and regular standing,” in the PCUS and PCA indicates that the answer to that question is “No.” The phrase, “good and regular standing,” at least with regard to the election of pastors, goes back to the 1879 PCUS *Book of Church Order*.<sup>2</sup> F. P Ramsay’s comments on this phrase in 1898 are instructive.

Those not members of the Church are excluded from voting for its officers, as a matter of course; for nothing can entitle him who will not acknowledge Christ to the right of participating in the government of his Church. Those not members of the particular church are excluded, for otherwise the individuality of the particular church would perish. Those not communicants are excluded, for the reason that only those who are themselves endeavoring to obey Christ can be qualified to act as his agents in pointing out what men he

---

<sup>2</sup> While the placement of the phrase in the provisions for the election of pastors has changed over the years, the language of the phrase has not changed. The PCUS Constitution did not have a passage equivalent to *BCO* 24-3 in 1879, although such a provision, including the language “in good and regular standing,” was added in 1925.

would put over his people. For the same reason, none under censure can be allowed to vote.<sup>3</sup>

Mapping Ramsay's comments back on the provisions of the paragraph on election of pastors tells us that he understood "good and regular standing" to mean that the communicant member of the local congregation could not be under censure. There is nothing in his discussion that suggests age could be considered in determining if one is in "good and regular standing."<sup>4</sup>

Moreover, we find that Ramsay's conclusion was consistent with various actions of the PCUS as recorded in *A Digest of the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States 1861-1944*. With regard to the question "Who may vote in a congregational meeting?" the reader is directed to the comment on Paragraph 123 of the *Form of Government*. In commenting on the definition of members "in good and regular standing" in Paragraph 123 (which has the same language as *BCO* 20-3 except for the change in the name of the denomination), the editors of the *Digest* quote an act of the 1861 PCUS General Assembly that stated, "Every member of our Church is entitled to a dismission in good standing, unless process be commenced against him." Further, the *Digest* records that in 1940 the Presbytery of Mobile overtured the General Assembly "asking for construction of 'voters' in new Par. 124" (which has the same language as *BCO* 20-4). The Assembly's answer was "'voters' means members in good and regular standing, present and voting," after which the editors provide a cross reference to the discussion of Par. 123).<sup>5</sup> In short, it is clear that the PCUS, from whose Constitution much of the language of our *BCO* came, understood "good and regular standing," when used in the context of a right to vote in congregation meetings, to refer to whether one was under discipline. There is no evidence that this language was intended to allow sessions or congregations to set additional, extra-constitutional limits on voting, whether by reason of age or some other category.

---

<sup>3</sup> F.P. Ramsay, *Exposition of the Book of Church Order* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1898), pp. 129-130.

<sup>4</sup> Respondent's brief cites Ramsay as indicating "that lack of adult sovereignty may justifiably prevent a communicant from exercising certain church rights," but the pages cited (43-44) deal with baptized non-communicant members, not communicant members.

<sup>5</sup> *A Digest of the Acts and Proceedings of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in the United States 1861-1944* (Richmond, VA: Presbyterian Committee of Publication, 1945), pp. 206, 214.

Interpretations of *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3 in the PCA have consistently reflected the same understanding as that of the PCUS - that is, that these provisions must be understood as allowing minor communicant members to vote in congregational elections of officers. Thus, Morton Smith, one of the drafters of the PCA's *Book of Church Order* and the first Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, wrote the following about *BCO* 24-3 (and, by extension 20-3):

This paragraph defines the voters. It indicates that all communing members in good standing are eligible to vote. This includes children, who have been admitted to the Lord's Table. The argument for this practice is that, if they are able to make this major decision that affects them for all eternity, they are certainly able to make lesser decisions, such as those involving the church.<sup>6</sup>

Smith makes the same point in his commentary on *BCO* 25-1: "The voting membership of the congregation is here defined. Note that all communicant members are entitled to vote. Thus, when young children are admitted to the Table on the basis of their profession of faith, then they are granted voting privileges in the congregation."<sup>7</sup> The fact that Smith draws the same conclusion about the right of minor communicants to vote from *BCO* 25-1, which does not include the phrase "in good and regular standing," as he does from *BCO* 24-3, which does include that phrase, underscores the fact that he did not understand the phrase "in good and regular standing" to convey any right to sessions or congregations to bar minor communicants from voting in elections of officers.

Further, the 12<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the PCA dealt with a Constitutional Inquiry that raised the very question that is before us in this case:

1984 - Constitutional Inquiry #9. From Texas Presbytery.  
Question: That the Presbytery ask the General Assembly's Permanent Committee on Judicial Business if a congregation may be permitted to set a minimum age for voting in view of *BCO* 6-2, 6-4, 24-3, 25-1 and 25-3.

---

<sup>6</sup> Smith, Morton H., *Commentary on the Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in America*, 3rd ed., (Greenville, SC: Southern Presbyterian Press, 1998), p. 251.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 261.

Answer: The *BCO* does not provide for the setting of minimum age for voting in congregational meetings even when constituted as a meeting of the corporation, except when the state provides for a minimum age for those voting in the corporation. [Clerk's Note: *BCO* 25-11 indicates that congregations must act in accord with applicable civil laws.] Adopted.<sup>8</sup>

The clear language of this response demonstrates that the answer is not to be read as “there is nothing in the *BCO* on this matter and thus churches may do as they wish,” but as “the *BCO* does not allow for the establishment of a minimum voting age except in corporate matters where required by the state.”

Just over 10 years later, the 23<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly received both a personal resolution and an overture from a Presbytery asking that the *BCO* be amended to allow sessions to establish minimum voting ages. Those requests were referred by the General Assembly to the Committee on Constitutional Business to draft appropriate language.<sup>9</sup> The “whereas’s” in the overture and the action of the Assembly in asking CCB to draft appropriate language certainly indicate a general understanding that the *BCO*, as then written (with the same language as that in use today), did not allow sessions the freedom to set minimum voting ages. The CCB reported proposed language to the 24<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, and the Assembly voted that the personal resolution and overture be answered in the affirmative, as amended by the language proposed by CCB, and sent to the presbyteries for advice and consent.<sup>10</sup> While the proposed amendment was supported by the bare minimum of presbyteries needed to consent, the 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly voted against adding the amendments to the *BCO*.<sup>11</sup> Our point here is not to argue why the 25<sup>th</sup> Assembly voted against adding the proposed amendments, nor is it to argue what the 25<sup>th</sup> Assembly should have done. Our point is simply that the attempt to amend the *BCO* to allow sessions to establish minimum voting ages in congregational meetings reinforces the conclusion that any attempt to read the current provisions of the *BCO* as allowing sessions to set such minimums

---

<sup>8</sup> *M12GA*, p. 140. In 1984, the answers to Constitutional Inquiries were proposed by the Judicial Business Committee but had to be adopted by the General Assembly. Thus, this was an action of the Assembly.

<sup>9</sup> *M23GA*, pp. 244-245.

<sup>10</sup> *M24GA*, pp. 312-313.

<sup>11</sup> *M25GA*, p. 114.

would be a novel reading that is inconsistent with how the relevant provisions of the *BCO* have been understood historically.

As noted above, *BCO* 25-11 draws a distinction between “matters ecclesiastical,” where “the actions of such local congregation or church shall be in conformity with the provisions of this *Book of Church Order*” (emphasis added), and other actions, including those dealing with property, or whether the church will affiliate or withdraw from the PCA, that may be taken in accordance with “applicable civil laws.” Thus, this paragraph draws an important distinction between ecclesiastical matters where civil laws, including church bylaws, cannot trump the *BCO*, and civil matters where the church can and should follow applicable civil laws. There is no indication in the Record that the meeting being held was a corporate meeting under the laws of the State of Washington. Rather, it was a congregational meeting, an ecclesiastical gathering subject to the provisions of the *BCO*. Any allowable civil law restrictions are not applicable. Thus, *BCO* 25-11 offers no warrant for the restriction of voting by communicant members under the age of eighteen in elections of pastors, ruling elders, or deacons.

Dr. L. Roy Taylor, the third Stated Clerk of the General Assembly, provided a cogent summary of the Constitution’s position on the question of whether churches and sessions can set minimum voting ages in congregational meetings. In reflecting on the material we have discussed in this section, he wrote, “In short, the Book of Church Order does not provide for the setting of a minimum voting age except in cases where the civil law requires a specified age of majority for one to vote on legal matters (the purchase or sale of church property, for example). Therefore, Sessions should bear in mind that, when they admit young children to communion, they are also admitting them to voting privileges in congregational meetings in all matters except in cases where the civil law requires a specified age of majority for one to vote on legal matters.”<sup>12</sup>

### **The *BCO* and Voting Restrictions**

It is certainly within the power of the Church to place restrictions upon the rights and actions of its communicant membership. But the setting of such restrictions is not the prerogative of a single congregation or court. It must be

---

<sup>12</sup> [https://www.pcahistory.org/mo/taylorLR/taylor\\_minimum\\_voting\\_age.pdf](https://www.pcahistory.org/mo/taylorLR/taylor_minimum_voting_age.pdf).

by the action of the whole Church, acting through the regular procedures set forth in the *BCO* to amend the Constitution. If there were interest in restricting the rights of communicant members to vote in officer elections, then the Constitution would have to be amended to reflect in express fashion that restriction. Absent such amendment, the Constitutional right of any communicant members to vote in an officer election may not be abridged or denied, even by church bylaws.

It is important to underscore the important principle that is at stake in this case. Respondent argues that “Being a communicant member is a *necessary*, but not a *sufficient* condition for voting (*BCO* 6-4; 25-1)” (emphasis added), and that PCA congregations have the right “to evaluate minor communicants as lacking the ‘regular standing’ (*BCO* 20-3; 24-3) necessary to elect officers.” But, even if we grant that assertion (which, as shown above, we do not) nothing in the text of these provisions, nor in their legislative history, gives any indication that voting is the only action that is in view, or that age is the only “sufficient” condition that must be considered. If, therefore, this Commission were to accept Respondent’s argument, there is no clear basis by which to determine which extra-Constitutional restrictions on the rights of communicant members are allowable and which ones are not. Thus, for example, could a congregation refuse to allow communicant members to be counted toward the required percentage of membership for calling a congregational meeting in *BCO* 25-2? Could congregants of a certain age be denied access to the courts of the Church by a bylaw provision forbidding them from filing complaints under *BCO* 43? Further, what would prevent a church in its bylaws from denying women the right of voting in a congregational meeting under a theory of “household voting,” or from saying that only persons of a certain race or ethnicity could vote for church officers, or from saying that only members of Session could vote in congregational elections?

In short, accepting Respondent’s argument would either leave churches free to restrict communicant members’ voting rights without restriction or could lead to unnecessary, protracted, and repeated litigation, without clear direction from the Constitution, to determine which restrictions are reasonable and which are not. Thankfully, neither of these possibilities is before us. The language, context, and history of the *BCO* provisions under consideration all demonstrate that a church may not restrict the voting rights of communicant members of their congregation on the basis of age, or for any other reason, except where there is a clear Constitutional warrant for so doing (*e.g.*, the



member is not in good standing or is not present at the meeting where the election is taking place).

## Conclusion

For all of these reasons the Complaint is sustained. This Decision does not annul the action of CPC Session in ordaining and installing these particular officers to church office. But in any subsequent action respecting the election, ordaining, and installation of men to church office, CPC Session must ensure that its actions, and those of the Congregation, comply with the Constitution in keeping with this Decision.

---

The Panel proposed the Complaint be denied. A substitute motion was adopted to replace the Panel's Statement of the Issue, Judgment, and Reasoning. The SJC reviewed each part of the proposed amended decision and approved the final Decision by vote of **15-5**, with 3 absent, and 1 disqualified.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	<i>Dissent</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Dissent</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	Absent	Pickering	<i>Dissent</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	<i>Dissent</i>	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	Disqualified	Kooistra	<i>Concur</i>	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Dissent</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

RE Donahoe was disqualified because he is a member of a church in this Presbytery.

## CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-11: *Mr. Psiaki v. Pacific Northwest*

TE David F. Coffin, Jr., joined by RE Wilson

March 27, 2024

I concur with the decision of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) in this case, to sustain the Complaint, finding that a provision of church Bylaws that limits voting in congregational meetings to those communing members aged eighteen and above, is unconstitutional. Nothing in the *BCO*, or the acts and deliverances of the General Assembly, indicates that sessions and congregations have such discretion. *BCO* 25-7 is clear: “if a particular church is incorporated, the provisions of its charter and bylaws must always be in accord with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America”.

Yet as upholding our polity in this case, I must further bear witness, for the sake of conscience, that I disagree with this state of affairs. I think that the PCA has erred in this matter, and that the error ought to be corrected by an adjustment to the *BCO*.

Historic Presbyterian doctrine holds that children of believers are members of the church by birthright. As such, they *have* all the rights and responsibilities of church members, these rights are not a grant of our *BCO*. However, the *exercise* of these rights and responsibilities is rightly related to their intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual maturity. A child of believers has a right to baptism. But that right is not exercised in the delivery room; it is exercised when the child has physically matured enough to be publicly exposed to others without a threat to its health. This truth is implicitly recognized in our practice of “communicant” membership. A child member has the right to communion, but does not have the exercise of that right, until the child can make a credible profession of faith. We grant that a child member might have been subject to the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit from a very young age. Yet to make a credible profession of faith, and to participate at the Table responsibly, the child must have matured intellectually, emotionally, physically, and spiritually.

However, there is nothing about making a credible profession of faith that signals the proper exercise of other rights of membership, rights that typically take further maturation before reasonable competence—intellectual,

emotional, physical and, spiritual—has been achieved. Voting for church officers, serving as a church officer, exercising the right to complain of Session actions, bringing charges against an allegedly erring brother or sister, being yourself subject to formal disciplinary procedures, all require a maturation that a young communicant typically does not have, particularly while living in the household of one's parents. There is nothing about a credible profession of faith that implies competence, or necessitates the exercise of these rights, and they may well be reasonably regulated by age regulations.

This should not surprise us. Confession of Faith 1.6. teaches us that,

The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man's salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture: unto which nothing at any time is to be added . . . Nevertheless, we acknowledge . . . that there are some circumstances concerning the worship of God, and government of the church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, according to the general rules of the Word, which are always to be observed.

What do circumstances concerning the government of the church, common to human actions and societies, ordered by the light of nature, and Christian prudence, teach us? Children are by birthright citizens of the country of their parents. As such, they *have* all the rights and responsibilities of citizens, these rights are not a grant of the civil government. However, the *exercise* of these rights and responsibilities is rightly related to their intellectual, emotional, physical, and spiritual maturity. And all good governments set age-appropriate restrictions on the exercise of those rights (e.g., voting, driving, subjection to draft, taxation, subjection to criminal prosecution, right to work, service in military, running for office) for the sake of the child and the good of the community. I further note that the fact that *BCO* allows for age restrictions if the state requires it, demonstrates that the question is one of prudence, not principle.

I look forward to a day when I can vote to deny a complaint alleging that limits voting in congregational meetings to those communing members aged

eighteen and above is unconstitutional because the PCA will have reformed its polity according to the sound outworking of her fundamental principles.

## DISSENTING OPINION

Case No. 2023-11: *Mr. Psiaki v. Pacific Northwest*

TE Sean Lucas

March 8, 2024

This case turned on two key phrases: “rights and privileges” and “good and regular.” First, in *BCO* 6-4, “Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and admitted by the Session to the Lord’s Table, are entitled to all the *rights and privileges* of the church.” Of what do the rights and privileges consist? And does “all the rights and privileges” mean “every single right and privilege extended to every single person from the moment he or she is admitted by the Session to the Lord’s Table”?

The parallel case to associate membership is instructive. In *BCO* 46-4, associate members “shall have all the rights and privileges of that church, with the exception of voting in a congregational or corporation meeting and holding an office in that church.” This helpfully includes voting in a congregational meeting and holding church offices as part of the “rights and privileges of the church.” And yet, not every single person is allowed to hold church office. Our Assembly exercised its authority to limit church office to men only (*BCO* 24-1). It exercised its prohibitive authority to limit “rights and privileges.”

But does this mean any male communicant member can seek to exercise his “right and privilege” to serve as a church officer? No. *BCO* 24-1 gives to the Session the power to exercise its discretion by rendering “a decision on Christian experience at any point in the process, and based on that decision, may judge him ineligible for that election.” Such a decision may not rise to the level of a disciplinary offense; it may involve vagaries of Christian maturity that are hard to tease out. Yet, such a limit on a right and privilege exists.

What about a limit on the right and privilege of being an officer based on age? A Session would be within its purview to limit church office to men who have at least reached their majority in years and demonstrates the requisite spiritual

and emotional maturity for church office. No court of the church would be willing to have a teenager as an elder or deacon. And even though the Constitution does not provide for this, either by way of permission or prohibition, a Session for prudential reasons would rightly restrict certain male communicant members from office because of age.

Likewise, if Presbytery were to receive a petition of an independent gathering of believers to become a mission church who are all under the age of 18, though they may be PCA Communicant members, Presbytery would rightly urge such a group to wait until there is more years and wisdom before they seek to plant a church. Even though the Constitution does not specifically provide for this, a Presbytery for prudential reasons would rightly restrict communicant members from planting a church because of age.

In a similar fashion, there may be prudential reasons for a Session or a Congregation to restrict communicant members from exercising their “right and privilege” to vote in congregational meetings until a certain point in time. Such a restriction might be different from congregation to congregation. Likewise, a Session or Congregation would be within its purview to have no restriction at all. However, to limit a Session’s prudential judgment as they work with parents to exercise oversight over those minors who are communicant members (*BCO* 28-1) would be a misuse of church power from a court of the church.

The second phrase is “good and regular.” In *BCO* 20-3 (cf. *BCO* 24-3), “all communing members in *good and regular* standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the churches to which they are respectively attached.” Good standing focuses on those who are free from disciplinary action (*BCO* 14-2, 19-1); whether members or ministers, they are entitled to letters of dismissal to other congregations or presbyteries (*BCO* 13-10(2); 13-13; 46-7; 38-3a). Likewise, only members in “good standing” may file complaints against the actions of a Session (*BCO* 24-7, 25-2, 43-1). Those who are in “good standing” at a PCA church or any other evangelical church may come to the Lord’s Table (*BCO* 58-4).

But what is “regular” standing? In this instance, it refers to those who are members “according to rule” (cf. *BCO* 19-16; 46-3). Certainly, those rules would include those requirements expressly provided for in *BCO* 6-4: profession of faith in Christ, baptism, and admission to the Lord’s Table by

the Session. But *BCO* 28-3 (cf. *BCO* 6-2) allows prudential discretion to the Session how and when these “rules” are applied: both in terms of whether such profession of faith is credible and in terms of when a minor has come to “years of discretion.” Beyond that, there might be other “rules” that could be established for when a minor’s “rights and privileges” might be exercised—such as those discussed above, in terms of holding church office, participating as members of a church plant, or voting in congregational meetings.

One such rule might come from civil authorities. *BCO* 25-11 recognizes that there might be “civil laws” to which a local congregation or church submits by their “action.” One such civil law might include the setting of a minimum age for actions of the corporation. It may be the case that the Congregation’s election of officers doubles as the Corporation’s elections as its officers; thus, the State’s restriction has the net effect of restricting the minor communicant’s ability to elect elders (*BCO* 25-7). Surely, though, if the State can restrict a minor’s “rights” as a communicant member, the Church has the prudential ability and right do the same. From this we conclude that a minor communicant member’s voting rights are not inalienable; they are directed by prudential discretion of a Session or Congregation.

In fact, the history of the PCA suggests that there has been a great deal of liberty extended to Sessions and Congregations in determining “regular” standing. In 1984, in response to a Constitutional Inquiry from Texas Presbytery, the General Assembly said that “the *BCO* does not provide for the setting of a minimum age for voting in congregational meetings even when constituted as a meeting of the corporation, except when the state provides for a minimum age for those voting in the corporation” (*M12GA*, p. 140). By noting that the *BCO* “does not provide for setting a minimum age,” the Assembly was saying there was no provision one way or the other. It may be that one lived in a State where such provision was made; otherwise, there is no provision, one way or the other. In the same way that the *BCO* does not “provide for” (and so does not either prohibit or mandate) a “rotating session,” so the *BCO* does not provide for—either by mandate or prohibition—a minimum age. The Assembly’s unwillingness to accede to overtures through the years to clarify this issue, either by setting or prohibiting a minimum age, demonstrates its wisdom in leaving this matter to the prudential discretion of local church sessions.

In the light of these things, I believe that the Commission erred in their decision.

TE Sean M. Lucas

## **DISSENTING OPINION**

Case No. 2023-11: *Mr. Psiaki v. Pacific Northwest*

RE Jim Eggert, TE David Garner,

RE John Maynard, and RE John Pickering

March 26, 2024

We write to dissent from today's Decision. We do not believe that our Constitution, as presently framed, supports an unqualified right to minor communicant members to vote in congregational meetings.

### ***The Absence of Biblical Prescription***

It always behooves us to first consider the Scriptural example regarding the right and practice of voting for officers. Acts 2 references Peter standing up “among the brothers (the company of persons was in all about 10)” and “they put forward” two men, choosing them by lot. The “they” presents some challenges of interpretation since there is textual evidence in Acts 1:13-14 that the company seems to have included the eleven, “the women” as well as “Mary the mother of Jesus and his brothers.” Yet Peter's proposal in Acts 1:16, addressed as it is to the “Brothers” raises reasonable questions about who the selecting “company” was. Did “Brothers” include the entirety of the group? “Sisters” are not mentioned but it might be reasonably supposed that they would be included by that appellation and, particularly in light of the instant matter, one might also wonder whether children would be in view. Would the appellation “Brothers,” typically include younger communicant children? It is not possible to conclude with certainty.

By comparison, in Acts 6, we find the twelve instructing the “full number of the disciples” to “pick out from among you seven men of good repute, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we will appoint to this duty,” meaning ordination to the office of Deacon. The text says that the group “chose” seven

men and “these they set before the apostles, and they prayed and laid their hands on them,” again indicating that the “full number” agreed on a mode of selection. Again, we may fairly ask who exactly composed the “full number of disciples” in this context, bearing in mind that Acts 2:41 records that Jerusalem had at least “3,000 souls” who had become part of the body of believers in that city, which raises interesting challenges for understanding the exact mechanism for their choice. Acts 2:46 says that the church met in the temple courts (where there would have been many meeting spaces) but also “broke bread in their homes,” suggesting a plurality of congregations in the single city. (Compare e.g. Paul traveling from “house to house” in Ephesus in Acts 20:20). Did the “full number of disciples” who “picked” the seven include communicant children? It is not possible to discern for sure.

Reasonable persons may differ about whether children admitted to the Lord’s Supper participated in the selection of officers described in the above texts, and thus it is difficult to derive a strict Biblical prescription commanding a Scripture-grounded right in minor communicants to vote for church officers. Because our form of government is in conformity with the “general principles of Biblical polity,” we recognize that not every detail of our polity is Scripturally decreed. (BCO 21-5) Minor communicant voting appears to be such an issue. Therefore in order to settle the question presented in this case, we are left to humbly contend with the words and meaning of our Constitution, recognizing that where the Scripture leaves liberty, our Constitution may grant liberty as well, while remaining ever subject to amendment to reflect such additional wisdom and correcting insight the Spirit of Christ grants the Church via Constitutional amendment to implement the best and most agreeable administration of our Biblical polity.

### *The Testimony of Our Constitution*

Only two sections of our *Form of Government* demarcate the *grant* of congregational voting entitlement in our polity and therefore these two provisions are the polestar for navigating any conclusion about minor communicant suffrage rights in PCA congregational meetings:

- BCO 20-3 -- “All communing members in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the churches to which they are respectively attached” [this provision governs the election of pastors] and



- *BCO* 24-3 -- “All communing members in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the election of church officers in the churches to which they respectively belong” [this provision governs the election of ruling elders and deacons]

Amidst all the provisions of our Constitution, only these two unequivocally declare who is “entitled” to vote “in the churches to which they are respectively attached” and “the churches to which they respectively belong” regarding the election of officers.<sup>1</sup> Therefore if entitled communicant minor suffrage is to be framed by our Constitution, we must reckon with the phrase “good and regular standing.” We will see below that this qualifying phrase has circumscribed the right to “entitled” suffrage in our polity since the nineteenth century.

“Good standing” means that the member under consideration is not under censure.<sup>2</sup>

“Regular” in this context is just the adjective for the noun *regulation* and means *constituted, conducted, or done in conformity with established or prescribed usages, rules, or discipline; conformable to some accepted or adopted rule or standard*. Our *Book of Church Order* uses the word “regular” this way in *BCO* 10-1: “The Church is governed by various courts, in regular gradation.” In other words, the relationship of the various courts of the Church are regulated in accordance with a prescribed rule or standard.

---

<sup>1</sup> Whether these provisions govern voting entitlement in other types of matters that congregations might take up is possible, but less clear (dissolution of the official relationship between the church and the officer without censure per *BCO* 24-7; the selection of corporate officers or buying, selling, and mortgaging real property per *BCO* 25-7; affiliation with the PCA or a Presbytery or withdrawal from the same per *BCO* 25-11; request for dissolution per *BCO* 25-12. On the other hand, a congregational meeting to vote on the dissolution of the pastoral relation shall be “called and conducted in the same manner as the call of the pastor” (*BCO* 23-1).

<sup>2</sup> Ten sections of our *Book of Church Order* use the phrase “good standing,” without the additional phrase *and regular*. It is only in connection with voting rights that we find this compound expression, making it unique to the suffrage question. (For the use of the phrase “good standing,” see *BCO* sections 13-3, 14-2, 19-1, 24-7, 25-2, 38-3, 43-1, 43-5, 46-7, and 58-4.

Therefore “regular standing” means that the member under consideration conforms to some accepted or adopted rule or standard that qualifies him to vote. Since, as we have already noted, *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3 are the only places in our Constitution endowing “entitlement” to vote as such, any regulations giving rise to entitlement to *regular standing* must be found, if at all, *outside* of the Constitution. After all, if being a communicant member “in good standing” (not under censure) gives an unqualified right to vote, then the addition of the adjective “regular” would be rendered inoperative and idle. Since scouring the Constitution in search of further “regulations” governing who has standing to vote at congregational meetings turns up nothing, it follows that such regulations, if any, must arise from the local church.

To illustrate another such use of the adjective “regular” where an external standard is in view, consider *BCO* 21-4.a which prescribes that an intern applying for ordination may present authentic testimonials of having completed a “regular course of theological studies.” To say that the course of theological studies is “regular” means that the course of instruction was regulated by an educational institution where the details of the course of instruction were entrusted solely to that institution rather than to the Assembly. Or consider *BCO* 13-3 which states that every ruling elder not known to the Presbytery shall produce a certificate of his “regular appointment” from the Session of the church whom he represents. That is to say that Sessions have their own regulations for selecting their commissioners to Presbytery, such regulations being entrusted solely to those Sessions. Therefore, Presbytery may require a certificate of his “regular appointment” to Presbytery by the local rules of his Session. Similarly, a member of a congregation seeking *regular standing* to vote at a congregational meeting is one who is in conformity with that congregation’s regulations governing who has standing to vote, a standard entrusted to the local churches by our Constitution.

Therefore, according to the testimony of our Constitution, “regular standing” for voting entitlement means regulated by local practice.

### ***BCO 25-11 is a Limitation on, not a Grant, of Voting Entitlement***

*BCO* 25-1 is, we believe, misunderstood to grant universal entitlement to vote for all communicant members. *BCO* 25-1 says, “The congregation consists of all the communing members of a particular church, and they only are entitled to vote.” Because this provision contains the phrase “entitled to vote” it is

tempting to interpret this provision as a full grant of voting entitlement, but this is not the case. In fact, the opposite is the case because *BCO* 25-1, properly understood, is a *limit* rather than a *grant* of voting entitlement.

*BCO* 25-1 was added by the PCUS in 1925 together with the entire chapter now governing “Congregational Meetings.” Before 1925, the *Form of Government* had no independent section regulating congregational meetings or generally addressing the corporate aspects of the church congregation. For example, before 1925 there were no Constitutionally mandated quorum requirements for a congregational meeting (*BCO* 25-3) and no regulations concerning how the Moderator of a congregational meeting should be selected (*BCO* 25-4),<sup>3</sup> such matters being left to local regulation and practice, just as voter eligibility long had been. However, among the provisions that were *not* changed with the adoption of the new chapter on “Congregational Meetings” in 1925 were those long-standing articles referenced above which the PCA has inherited in the form of *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3 declaring that only those communing members who are “in good and regular standing” are “entitled to vote,” a standard that had long been governed by local, rather than constitutional, regulation. It is not reasonable to understand the 1925 addition of an article on “Congregational Meetings” as an abandonment of deference to local congregational practice in voter eligibility.

Moreover, taken on its face, *BCO* 25-1 does *not* say that all communicant members of a congregation are unqualifiedly entitled to vote; it states merely that “*they only*,” meaning communing members, are entitled to vote. The regulation or restriction of voting within the class of “communing members” in “good and regular standing” expressly prescribed in *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3 is entirely unaffected by *BCO* 25-1, which effectively provides that being a communicant member is a *necessary* but not a *sufficient* qualification to vote at a congregational meeting. In other words, unlike *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3, *BCO* 25-1 is not a *grant* of suffrage rights, but a *limitation* on them.

Distinguishing between necessary and sufficient qualifications is not mere gamesmanship or special pleading but has a theological foundation. *BCO* 25-1 certainly excludes non-communicant and non-members from voting, but more fundamentally, it is written the way it is because Presbyterians would otherwise assume for theological reasons that the reference to the

---

<sup>3</sup> You can find the referenced parallel provisions in *The Book of Church Order*, Presbyterian Church in the United States, Revised Edition (1925), XXVII, §154 and §155.

“congregation” in *BCO* 25-1 would certainly *include* its children, both communing and non-communing alike. Therefore, the clause “and they only are entitled to vote” was added not to grant a newfangled and unqualified voting entitlement for all communing members, including minor communicants, but to interrupt the theological presumption of minor children's inclusion in the “congregation” for the purpose of congregational meetings. Therefore, the origin and best explanation for the addition and framing of the clause “and they only are entitled to vote” are the different considerations attending the eligibility and suitability of a congregation’s communicant children to participate in the sort of business taken up at congregational meetings despite their unquestionable theological inclusion in “the congregation.”

If the grant of an *unqualified* right of suffrage to all communicant members of a congregation (children or otherwise) had been intended, then *BCO* 25-1 would have simply been written this way: “The congregation consists of all the communing members of a particular church, *all of whom are entitled to vote.*” So the fact that *BCO* 25-1 acts as a *limitation* on the types of members who are entitled to vote only serves to highlight that the right to vote at congregational meetings may be qualified or regulated *within the class of communing members* just as *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3 (and their predecessor provisions) have long expressly prescribed. When we consider that non-members and persons under censure pose fairly straightforward cases for voter exclusion, it would seem that local discretion in regulating communicant minor voting is particularly what the limitation of *BCO* 25-1 has in view.

### ***The Origin of the Phrase “Good and Regular Standing”***

From 1788 to 1867 the *Form of Government* provided that a pastor must be voted upon by the congregation’s “electors,” with the added qualification that “no person shall be entitled to vote who refuses to submit to the censures of the church regularly administered; or who does not contribute his just proportion, according to his own engagements, or the rules of the congregation, to all its necessary expenses” (*A Draught of the Form of the Government and Discipline of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America*, Printed by S. and J. Loudon, No. 5 Water Street, 1787 and adopted in 1788, page 21-22). By comparison, ruling elders and deacons, who were presumably not compensated by their congregations, were to be elected “in the mode most approved and in use in that congregation” (*Id.* at page 16). These

provisions evidence the instantiation of congregational preference and local regulation of congregational voting stretching back to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in American Presbyterianism.

This context also informs the development of the *Form of Government* in the PCUS in the years following the Civil War as the Southern Church sought to affect a major revamping of the *Book of Church Order*. Thus, we find in the 1867 draft:

All communicating members of the church, in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the election of church officers in the congregations to which they are respectively attached. In the election of a pastor, when a majority of the electors cast their votes for a candidate, he shall be considered elected; but a separate vote shall also be taken of the non-communicating adult members of the church, who are regular in their attendance on the common ordinances in that congregation, and of all other persons who regularly contribute to the support of the pastor, in order to be laid before the presbytery as a representation of their desire in the premises.

(*Form of Government, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.* 1869, Chapter VI, Section IV). This draft first introduced the phrase “good and regular standing.” The 1869 draft was the same as its 1867 counterpart except that it proposed to make the vote of non-communicating adult members discretionary rather than mandatory, again showing a tendency to widen deference to local practice in congregational elections.

After more than a decade of work, the new *Form of Government* was adopted in 1879, and the section demarcating voting entitlement took substantially the form of our current book:

All communicating members in good and regular standing, but no others, are entitled to vote in the election of church officers in the churches to which they are respectively attached; and when a majority of the electors cast their votes for a person for either of these offices, he shall be considered elected.

(*Form of Government, Presbyterian Church in the U.S.* 1869, Chapter VI, Section III, IV). This grant of the entitlement to vote only to those communing members who are in “good and regular standing” has persisted in our polity -- now codified in *BCO* 20-3 and *BCO* 24-3 -- since its final adoption in 1879, now some 145 years in continuous use. The PCA has never changed it, having carried that phrase over from the PCUS in 1973.

As a matter of Constitutional interpretation, it is our view that we should not read this phrase in a way that our forefathers, who passed it on to us, did not. It is hard to accept that this phrase has been understood to grant a universal right of suffrage to minor communicants over the past 150 years of Presbyterianism, especially in light of clear evidence of such varied Presbyterian practice regarding minor voting rights. As we shall see below, it appears that our forefathers read it as permissive of local regulation of congregation voting, including minor communicant voting.

### ***The History of Local Regulation of Voting Entitlement***

When we study the history of Presbyterian polity, we discover that congregations have long regulated eligibility to vote in congregational meetings. The Presbytery in its brief to the SJC provides a lengthily cited survey of pre-1879 practice cataloging a “wide variety of additional rules for voters,” including (1) Minimum period of church attendance, (2) Consistency of attendance for a number of successive Sundays or communion services, (3) Monetary contribution sufficient to hold/rent a pew, (4) Monetary subscription to defray minister’s annual salary or other church expenses, (5) Right to wield more votes depending on how many feet of pew one rented, (6) Right to allocate votes to family members and other regular occupants of one’s pew, (7) Confinement of all voting matters (not just officer elections) to regular contributors, (8) Confinement of voting for pastors and deacons, but not ruling elders to contributors, (9) Confinement of voting to men, (10) Minimum voting age between 16 and 21, sometimes different for men and women.

In its brief, the Presbytery also recounts convincing evidence of how deference to local voting practice persisted past the 1879 revisions:

[C]ongregational voting rules, including minimum voting age, were observed in the PCUS well after the 1879 voter conditions had been adopted. In 1894 Second Presbyterian

Church in Charleston published its *Manual for the Use of Members*. Second Presbyterian had been pastored by the widely read ecclesiologist, Rev. Thomas Smyth (1808-1873), and was notable for its size and history. Its Manual cannot, therefore, be mistaken as containing obscure or contrarian practices. Next to its avowed conformity to the PCUS Constitution, it asserts the “Necessity for these rules” laid down by the congregation. “There are several matters in the mode of government and discipline left...undetermined” in the Constitution, with the result that it allows for a “variety of practices. “Predictably, the profile of eligible voters was one such matter. Since it involves adoption of financial burden, the church understood minister-election to belong to its “Temporal Government.” In “all elections of a pastor,” voters had to be a: “male pew-holder, not under twenty-one years of age, who has signed these rules and held a pew, or half pew, for twelve months, and whose pew rent is fully paid up to the first day of the six months in which the meeting is held.”

Second Presbyterian was in the same Presbytery as the Rev. John B. Adger (1810-1899), who chaired the committee that oversaw the creation of the new *BCO* after James Henley Thornwell (the first chairman) died in 1862. Adger served his last several years in the same Presbytery as Second Presbyterian Church. As the Presbytery noted in its brief, “If Second Presbyterian’s elector conditions contradicted the *BCO*, it could not have escaped Adger’s notice and commentary, or the rebuke of presbytery.”

We find additional evidence for the longstanding practice in in favor of local voting regulation from no less than the Princeton theologian Charles Hodge who, although divided from his southern Presbyterian brothers by the Civil War, was both an interested observer of Presbyterian practice and erudite commentator concerning Presbyterian polity for a better part of the nineteenth century. In a chapter titled “Who May Vote in the Election of Pastor,” Hodge wrote:

In the Presbyterian Church, great diversity of usage has prevailed. Perhaps the most common method is for heads of families, and they only, whether communicants or not, to vote in the choice of pastor. In other cases, all communicants, male

and female, adults and minors, and all contributors vote. In others again, the elective franchise is confined to adult members of the congregation.

*The Church and Its Polity* (New York: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1879), page 244. This testimony from Hodge supports the conclusion that local diversity of electoral practice prevailed in both the Northern and Southern Church throughout the nineteenth century and that the restriction of the franchise to adults was a familiar voting limitation for at least some congregations.

It seems therefore that the 1879 language “good and regular standing,” rather than introducing a rule guaranteeing suffrage for minors (and others), both abbreviated and instantiated the longstanding custom of deference to local electoral regulatory practices already long recognized under the former rule.

Thus, we find that, historically speaking, Presbyterian congregations, under the umbrella of the very phrase we are interpreting today, were understood to be Constitutionally at liberty to impose various voting regulations fully adaptable to changing local norms, practices, expectations, convictions, and preferences, including local preference regarding minor communicant voting.

We would add that the latitude granted to congregations under this rule of deference is not categorically unreviewable by the courts. We are not being asked today to adjudicate a parade of horrors resulting from deferential local regulation. The only question posed to the SJC by this case is whether minor communicant suffrage can be regulated under the longstanding rules articulated in *BCO* 20-3 and *BCO* 24-3. Given that regulating minor communicant suffrage is not clearly prohibited by Scripture, was apparently accepted practice in Presbyterian churches since at least 1788, and has apparently persisted in some congregations for at least 145 years under the language of the *BCO* today under consideration, we dissent from today’s Decision, rejecting as it does the longstanding locally permissive interpretation of the phrase “good and regular standing.”

### ***The Persuasiveness of the Decision is Only Apparent***

The Decision promotes an apology for minor communicant suffrage derived inductively from provisions *outside* of *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3, the only provisions of our Constitution that actually demarcate voting entitlement. The arguments



are grounded in important principles that animate our ecclesiastical convictions, such as:

- The right of the people to elect the officers that rule over them (*BCO* 16)
- The definition of “the congregation” as consisting of “all communing members” (*BCO* 25-1)
- Those who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and admitted by the Session to the Lord's Table, “are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the church” (*BCO* 6-4)
- Communing members should be allowed to “participate in critical aspects of congregational meetings.”

No doubt, there is a reasonable and principled case to be made for minor communicant suffrage. Our own respective congregations practice it, and were it not for the phrase “regular standing” in *BCO* 20-3 and *BCO* 24-3 together with the long history of local regulation of congregational elections in American Presbyterianism, the inductive arguments advanced would persuade us.

But the immediate task for the SJC in any given case is not to resolve “important principles” in the abstract so much as to “judge according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America” as our oaths demand as applied to the case before us.

Perhaps most telling is the Decision's concession that “[i]t is certainly within the power of the Church to place restrictions upon the rights and actions of its communicant membership.” But why should that be the case? If the opportunity to cast a vote for or against those who will rule over you is truly a “right,” how can the Church possibly possess the power to take that right away, even by Constitutional amendment? And if the careful inductive reasoning of the Decision, based as it is on all the argument that when one considers the whole of our Constitution one must conclude that minor communicants *must* have a right to vote, how could the Church justify adopting a change to our Constitution that would effectively nullify these “important principles” supposedly embedded therein and render our Constitution internally incoherent?

Recounting the debates of past Assemblies on the question, the Decision declines to “argue” about what the 25th General Assembly should have done when presented with an amendment that would have expressly permitted Sessions to regulate minor voting, which is to say that it would have been just as right and proper for the Assembly to have adopted an express warrant to Sessions to regulate minor voting as its doing nothing at all. But if the Assembly could regulate minor voting, or “allow” Sessions to regulate minor voting, then why wouldn’t the present restriction of voting entitlement to those in “regular standing” *already* permit that result?

The proposal insists that such regulation “must be by the action of the whole Church,” and “the Constitution would have to be amended to reflect that restriction.”

But, in an ecclesiastical sense, is the Assembly inherently in a better position than a Session to judge whether the minor communicants in a Session’s congregation should be permitted to vote, or to determine under what conditions they should be permitted to do so? We believe “[a]ll Church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing only as the Constitution may provide” (*BCO* 11-3). If the 23rd, 24th and 25th Assemblies debated and ultimately declined to pass a provision unequivocally prescribing the particulars of regulating minor communicant voting, and if it is really true that church Sessions and General Assemblies alike are “possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers,” why would those Assemblies’ failure to pass a clear resolution about how to regulate minor communicant voting close the path the instant Session reached regarding the same issue? Under the circumstances, is the “decision” of the General Assembly to fail to agree upon any particular action inherently any more valid than the decision of any given Session in the PCA about the issue?

In this case we were asked to review a Session’s decision to permit the regulation of minor communicants voting in its congregation. Whenever “according to Scriptural example, and needful to the purity and harmony of the whole Church, disputed matters of doctrine and order arising in the lower courts are referred to the higher courts for decision, such referral shall not be so exercised as to impinge upon the authority of the lower court.” (*BCO* 11-3). How could the proposal *not* be such an infringement, particularly if the matter in question was debated and then effectively laid aside by the continued

deliberations of no less than three General Assemblies? Is a Session not permitted to pick up and resolve the matter that those three General Assemblies laid aside without a clear resolution?

The only way to overcome this objection is to insist that our Constitution *already* clearly prohibits the regulation of minor communicant voting, which is the position presented by the Decision. But our Constitution does *not* clearly prohibit the regulation of minor communicant voting not only for the reasons previously explained, but also precisely because three different General Assemblies (and the Presbyteries that reviewed their proposals) reached no firm consensus regarding the question.

Reasonable minds may differ as to whether minor communicant children must be afforded a right to vote in congregational meetings. If the Assembly would like to make a rule that guarantees communicant minor suffrage, it may certainly do so through a Constitutional amendment. It is not wise for the SJC to announce such a rule from the bench considering the long history of a contrary practice and conflicting opinions, particularly when we consider that we have no clear idea of how many congregations this ruling may impact, or in what fashion.

This Dissent was drafted by RE Jim Eggert and edited by TE David Garner and RE John Pickering.

## DISSENTING OPINION

Case No. 2023-11: *Mr. Psiaki v. Pacific Northwest*

RE John Maynard

March 25, 2024

I concur with RE James Eggert's well-reasoned apologetic that local churches in the PCA today are free to set minimum limits on the voting age of church members. In support of his dissent, I would like to offer some additional arguments which support limitations on minor communicant voting.

In the PCA today some contend that we have what amounts to a mandate applied to all local churches which requires them to allow every communing member to vote regardless of their age. This would mean that an 8-year-old

child (and sometimes even younger) could be the deciding vote on whether a church calls a senior pastor or not, or whether the church purchases a \$5 million dollar property. Is there any Scriptural support for such a mandate? Does God's Word provide any suggestion of support for the rationale of setting age limits for voting?

There is a wise and rational argument to be made that local churches are free to regulate voting age if they choose to do so. As already mentioned, RE Eggert has shown that the history of the church and its secondary standards support this freedom. I would like to add the perspective that there is a clear acknowledgment of the wisdom of age restrictions in Scripture and the same rationale for such restrictions would apply to limiting who may vote on issues of vital importance to the church.

First, note the limits that God himself establishes limits on the age of military service in OT Israel. (Numbers 1:3, 32, 45; 26:2; 1 Chronicles 23:27, etc.) It's easy to understand why. Military service requires mental, physical and even spiritual maturity which comes only with years. Enlisting children to fight in hand-to-hand combat with Canaanites, Hittites and Amorites hardly made sense. There were obvious wisdom principles at work here which undergirded the rationale for limiting by age those who were eligible to serve in the military.

Second, the book of Proverbs repeatedly calls attention to the developed wisdom of those with the maturity which comes with age along with the lack of developed wisdom that is associated with the young. At least 26 of the verses in Proverbs begin with the phrase, "My son," as a father passes along wisdom gained by years of life to his young son. "Hear, O sons, a father's instruction, and be attentive, that you may gain insight, for I give you good precepts; do not forsake my teaching. When I was a son with my father, tender, the only one in the sight of my mother, he taught me and said to me, 'Let your heart hold fast my words; keep my commandments, and live. Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth.'" (Proverbs 4:1-4) Based upon the wisdom of Proverbs, is it reasonable to assert that an eight-year-old communing member has the same developed wisdom, insight and experience of a 60-year-old (or even a 16-year-old) member?

Third, it is said in Luke 2:52 that even "Jesus increased in wisdom and stature." As a child who was "fully man," he progressed in learning like every other

child and thus his wisdom grew over time. In the same passage in Luke, “when he was twelve years old, they went up (to the Feast of Passover) according to custom.” (Luke 2:41-42) Josephus tell us, “Up to this age (twelve years old) a Jewish boy was called ‘little,’ afterwards he was called ‘grown up,’ and became a ‘Son of the Law,’ or ‘Son of the Precepts.’ At this age he was presented on the Sabbath called the ‘Sabbath of Phylacteries’ in the Synagogue and began to wear the phylacteries with which his father presented him.” (Jos. Antt. ii. 9. 6, v. 10. 4.) Different levels of age and maturity were required by law or convention for one to be eligible to exercise the privileges of participation in Old Testament rituals.

Fourth, this is more of an argument from silence, but the drinking of alcoholic beverages is present in Scripture (usually in positive terms) but there is no mention of age restrictions. Does that mean that there is no place for wise and reasonable restrictions? Although the Scriptures appear to be silent on this question, it is entirely reasonable and rational considering the warnings in Scripture against drunkenness (Proverbs 20:1) that communities were free to set limits and did so whether by law or social convention. And again, the principle that would guide these restrictions are the same ones that have operated in societies throughout the ages – younger people generally lack the judgment and wisdom that will come with age to make the choice to drink or not.

Our confessional statements assert, “The whole counsel of God concerning all things necessary for his own glory, man’s salvation, faith and life, is either expressly set down in Scripture, or by good and necessary consequence may be deduced from Scripture.” (WCF 1.6) Turning from special revelation to general revelation, we consider it rational and reasonable for the USA and all other democracies in the world today to establish by law age limitations on the exercise of the right to vote in civil elections. With respect to voting age, different nations have different laws, but ALL nations restrict voting by age. Should the church ignore the wisdom of Scripture and the testimony of general revelation as it applies to this issue? Limitations on voting age in the US is not even debated today because having such a limitation is logical, reasonable, rational, even wise. It’s a generally accepted principle that citizens of the United States should not have the right to vote until they reach an age when they can make an informed and rational choice among competing candidates or issues. Other conventional age restrictions that seem to flow from general

revelation include the purchase of alcoholic beverages, tobacco products, prescription drugs and the signing of legal documents.

Much like the limitations which govern the voting of citizens in different countries in the "free world" today, it is entirely reasonable and wise from a Scriptural perspective that local churches are free to establish standards which limit the age of those who are entitled to vote in congregational meetings. RE Eggert's dissent asserts that local churches in the PCA indeed have the freedom to set age limits on voting for church matters. This should be seen as logical, reasonable, rational, and even wise in the PCA much as it is in every democracy in our world today. The PCA as a body could pass legislation on this question which would apply to every local church, but we have not chosen to do so because local churches, much like different nations, are free to establish their own standards on this issue. The PCA has by implication chosen to remain silent and as Eggert has argued, left this issue to the local church. There is no universal age restriction for voting in the PCA and there is no mandate which prevents local churches in our "grass roots" denomination from setting such limitations.

## OBJECTION <sup>1</sup>

Case No. 2023-11: *Mr. Psiaki v. Pacific Northwest*  
RE Howie Donahoe  
March 26, 2024

Along with the five dissenting SJC members, I agree the *BCO* already allows congregations to establish a reasonable minimum voting age - something that's been allowed throughout American Presbyterian history and our PCA history. I understand the SJC Decision ruled that the *BCO* currently prohibits a congregation from establishing a minimum voting age, but not necessarily that it *should* be prohibited. Hopefully, a *BCO* amendment will be proposed next year to clarify that PCA churches have freedom to establish reasonable minimum voting ages. The SJC Decision affects *hundreds* of PCA churches. There has never been an SJC Decision that affects anywhere near the number of churches this one will, and thus, a lengthy Objection.

---

<sup>1</sup> As a member of the Presbytery from which this Complaint arose, I was disqualified from participation.

Following are brief summaries of nine reasons why the SJC should have denied the *Psiaki* Complaint. These are also reasons presbyteries should revise the BCO to ensure congregations regain this freedom.

- |                     |                                |                          |
|---------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Regular Standing | 4. Korean Churches             | 7. Past Overtures        |
| 2. RE Term Limits   | 6. 1984 Constitutional Inquiry | 8. Lack of Independence  |
| 3. RPCES J&R        | 5. GA Commissioner Voting Fee  | 9. Requisite Discernment |

**1. "Regular" Standing** - The two Dissenting Opinions effectively explain how the Decision fails to adequately interact with the critically important historical category of "regular" standing in *BCO* 20-3 and 24-3, and the grammar involved in the phrase "those only" in *BCO* 6-4. I agree with the arguments therein and refer the reader to those.

The interpretation of "regular" standing was also addressed last year in my other Objection. (*Wilson v. Pacific NW, M50GA*, pp. 940-59) That Objection presented six arguments from Presbytery's Brief filed by Dr. Brant Bosserman in *Wilson*, a link to which can be found at the end of this Objection. His two Briefs present extensive and substantial evidence that throughout the history of American Presbyterianism, and especially in the Southern churches, congregations have had freedom to set reasonable voting age requirements.

**2. Elder Term Limits** - It's presently a well-known, widespread practice for congregations to elect REs for set terms, requiring reelection after the term expires. But we cannot find a hint for that allowance in the BCO. The opposite is assumed - ordained active service until honorably retired. A hermeneutic that allows a congregation to set term limits for elders should also allow a congregation to set reasonable voting age restrictions for minor communicants.<sup>2</sup>

**3. Reformed Presbyterian Church Evangelical Synod Joining & Receiving**  
- Three years before the 1982 J&R with the PCA, the PCA had 22 presbyteries

---

<sup>2</sup> *BCO* 34-10 stipulates that if an RE "fails to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions" and if it is "due to his lack of acceptance to the Church" a session should divest that RE rather than let him continue indefinitely as an RE without call.

and 460 churches, and the RPCES had 17 presbyteries and 190 churches.<sup>3</sup> During J&R, many of those RP churches (probably most) had voting age restrictions. Those RP churches brought Covenant College and Covenant Theological Seminary with them into the PCA. But nowhere in our 1979-1982 GA Minutes do we read that they joined the PCA with the understanding that they would be required to eliminate their voting age restrictions. Nowhere in our GA Minutes do we read that the 416 RP ministers and the 719 RP elders were told or expected to do so. Both denominations had Assembly Committees that worked together on the J&R. The issue of voting age restrictions doesn't appear to ever have been an issue. Every one of the 22 PCA presbyteries voted in favor of receiving the RP churches, without any clear indication that it was contingent on the RP churches deleting their voting age restrictions. In reference to J&R, the PCA Clerk at that time, Dr. Smith, published a paper titled, "Some of the Characteristics of the Polity of the PCA." (*M10GA*, pp. 339-343) The paper never mentioned voting age restrictions, even though it was relatively well known that the RPCES allowed such. The church in this *Psiaki* Case was one of those 190 RP churches that came into the PCA in 1982. That church has had a voting age restriction in its bylaws since it was it was RPCES. It comes as a surprise to them now to be told they have acted unconstitutionally for the last 42 years in the PCA. So, either the PCA intended for the RP churches to drop those restrictions without clearly telling them, or (more likely) the PCA never expected or required them to do so.<sup>4</sup>

**4. Korean Churches** - I understand that many - perhaps most - of our Korean churches have either formal or informal voting age restrictions. In 1982, the PCA formed the first Korean language presbytery, composed of churches in 5 states: PA (3), IL, GA, FL and CA. In doing so, conditions and requests were stipulated by the 12th GA, but there was no mention of these Korean churches being required to eliminate minimum voting age restrictions. The PCA now

---

<sup>3</sup> The 17 RPCES presbyteries at that time were: E. Canada, Northeast, Philadelphia, New Jersey, Delmarva, Pittsburgh, Southeast, Florida, Southern, Illiana, Midwestern, Great Lakes, Great Plains, Rocky Mountain, Southwest, California, and Pacific Northwest. (*M9GA*, 1981, p. 338)

<sup>4</sup> To be clear, the PCA did not grandfather an allowance to RPCES churches. When the PCA wants to grandfather a provision, it does so explicitly. For example, consider this grandfathering note attached to *BCO* 24-10: "Editorial Comment: The General Assembly explicitly provided that those Elders and Deacons granted emeritus status prior to June 22, 1984, retain the privilege of vote. (By order of the Fifteenth General Assembly 15-83, III, 31)." The RPCES churches did not need to change their practice because *the PCA* already allowed voting restrictions when the RP's arrived.



has nine Korean Presbyteries with 215 churches (11% of the PCA) and 717 TEs (13% of the PCA). (See *M10GA*, 1982, p. 92 and <https://www.pcaac.org/resources/korean-resources/>)

**5. GA Commissioner Voting Fee** - The Decision offers the following broad statement in the final paragraph before its Conclusion:

The language, context, and history of the BCO provisions under consideration all demonstrate that a church may not restrict the voting rights of communicant members of their congregation on the basis of age, or for any other reason, *except where there is a clear Constitutional warrant for so doing* (e.g., the member is not in good standing or is not present at the meeting where the election is taking place). (emphasis added)

However, restrictions are sometimes placed on things that appear to be a fundamental right, without a clear constitutional warrant for doing so. The GA registration fee is one example. You cannot vote unless you've paid it. This Objection does not oppose the fee. There just isn't any "clear Constitutional warrant" to require a fee to vote. And it demonstrates that no man is in "regular" standing to vote at GA (and can't get a voting device) unless he's paid the fee.

Let's say a small church in Idaho wants to send two of its REs to GA in Richmond as its commissioners, as "entitled" by BCO 14-2. The registration fees would be \$600. In addition, their airfare, shared lodging, and meals would be about \$4,000. And if they were employed, they might also need to use vacation time. Some churches (perhaps many) can't send an RE commissioner because none of their REs can take a week off from work. If a church's right to vote is an un-constrainable right (as minor communicant voting is alleged to be), upon which no restrictions can be placed *for any reason*, then why not allow a church's GA commissioners to pay their registration fee, and then join the meeting, hear the debates, and vote live online?

Let me press further. BCO 14-2 every congregation is "entitled" to two RE representatives (and more for larger churches) and stipulates the Assembly consists of all TEs in good standing and REs "as elected by their session." Therefore, if an RE is elected by his session to be a GA commissioner, the *only*

thing the BCO requires is that he "produce appropriate credentials" at the GA "before his name shall be enrolled as a member of the Assembly." (*BCO* 14-4) Nothing is said about any other requirement.

In addition to the fee, there's a problem with intentionally differentiating among voters. On what *constitutional* basis can a single GA approve charging a higher voting fee for TEs than it does for REs? At the 46<sup>th</sup> GA in 2018 Calvary Presbytery's Overture 7 sought (unsuccessfully) to reduce the RE registration fee to \$100. (*M46GA*, pp. 35, 75, 112, 680) Three years later, at the 49<sup>th</sup> GA in 2022, while the AC Permanent Committee recommended registration fees for TEs and REs remain at \$450, the AC Committee of Commissioners substituted a recommendation that TE fees be increased to \$525 and RE fees reduced to \$300 (i.e., 57% of the TE fee). The Committee of Commissioners reported it was designed "to encourage Ruling Elder participation in our courts." The 49<sup>th</sup> GA adopted it. (*M49GA*, p. 71)

The most common rationale given for this change is to increase RE attendance. But why, without any *constitutional* warrant, would it be permissible for a single GA to revise the registration/voter fee to increase participation of one group of voters? Could a congregation decide to afford two votes to communing adult males to increase adult male attendance at congregational meetings? To repeat a question from the SJC Decision, "*where is the clear Constitutional warrant for so doing?*" Where does the BCO even hint that a single GA can act to affect the voter turnout ratio by varying the fee it charges to vote? <sup>5</sup>

Granted, a registration/voting fee is stipulated in our Assembly standing rules (*RAO* 10-4). Apparently, our Assemblies have found it exegetically permissible to create such a voting impediment from what the *BCO* says about GA commissioners. But if the Assembly has exegetical liberty to do that, then why wouldn't the BCO allow a congregation to have the same constitutional freedom to adopt a reasonable voting age restriction in *its* standing rules?

Similarly, let's say a presbytery wanted to hold future meetings in a venue that required extra expenditures. Would it be constitutionally permissible for the presbytery to adopt into its standing rules a "registration fee" for TE and RE voting at those presbytery meetings?

---

<sup>5</sup> Honorably retired TEs and REs pay a lower registration fee, as do REs from churches with small budgets.

Near the bottom of page 3, the Decision offers this argument:

*BCO 6-4* then states “Those only who have made a profession of faith in Christ, have been baptized, and admitted by the Session to the Lord's Table [i.e., communicant members], are entitled to all the rights and privileges of the church.” The word “all” in 6-4 is critical.

Given the principles set forth in *BCO 3-1* and *16-1,2* it is unreasonable to think that the word “all” in 6-4 is somehow meant to exclude some communicants from the right to vote in congregational elections *unless there is a clear provision somewhere else in the BCO that leads to that conclusion.* (emphasis added)

An analogous principle to the first sentence from *BCO 6-4* above might be this: “*Only those churches that have affiliated with the PCA are entitled to all the rights and privileges afforded by the BCO.*” But not all PCA churches are entitled to an *unencumbered* right to vote in a GA. And if the Decision's hermeneutic is applied to churches voting in GA, the following would seem to be a fair parallel statement to the second paragraph above.

Given the principles set forth in *BCO 14-2* and *14-4*, it is unreasonable to think that the phrase “*entitled to two ruling elders representatives*” is somehow meant to exclude some churches from the right to vote in GA simply because they don't pay the registration fee, unless there is a clear provision somewhere else in the BCO that leads to that conclusion.

In the middle of page 2, the Decision suggests, “*The only express provision in the Constitution for the suspension or removal of any existing ecclesiastical right or privilege is the particular censures imposed upon a church member found guilty of some offense (BCO 36).*” But there are no express provisions in the Constitution for making a congregation's right to vote in the Assembly contingent on paying a registration (voting) fee. and there are no express provisions in the Constitution for varying registration fees to affect the turnout of one category of voters.

To conclude, being elected by one's session to be a GA Commissioner is a *necessary* condition for voting at GA, but not a *sufficient* condition for doing so. And likewise, being a communing member is a necessary condition for voting in congregational matters, but not a sufficient one.

Again, this Concurrence doesn't recommend abolishing GA registration fees. I agree that allowing a GA to adopt a rule requiring TEs and REs to pay a registration fee is a prudent and necessary thing. But allowing a congregation to adopt a rule requiring a communing member to reach a certain age before voting also seems a very prudent thing to do. And neither are prohibited by the BCO.

**6. Constitutional Inquiry** - At the bottom of page 6, the Decision cites a 22-year-old constitutional inquiry. But the answer to a constitutional inquiry is not binding exegesis of a constitutional provision - even if adopted by the 12th GA. There have been instances where a subsequent Assembly or SJC held different interpretations than previous ones. Sometimes one GA approves a BCO amendment, but the following GA does not. And sometimes the SJC renders a decision in one case that at least seems to reverse an SJC ruling in a prior case.<sup>6</sup>

In 1984 at the 12<sup>th</sup> GA in Baton Rouge, there were 13 constitutional inquiries. A different constitutional inquiry, #2 from Gulf Coast, asked about referencing of an indictment to a higher court for trial. The Judicial Business Committee and 12<sup>th</sup> GA answered in a way that's *contrary* to our interpretation and practice today. So, citing a 22-year-old answer to a constitutional inquiry is not as significant as it might appear.<sup>7</sup>

**7. Past Overtures** - On page 7, the Decision seemed to suggest the PCA expressed opposition to allowing voting age restrictions when, in 1997, the 25<sup>th</sup> GA in Colorado Springs declined to adopt a change. But that would

---

<sup>6</sup> As an example, this happened at the same March 2024 meeting at which the SJC cited the Constitutional Inquiry in the *Psiaki* Decision. Compare this year's SJC Decision in Case 2023-09 *Appeal of TE Myers v. Illiana* with the SJC Decision 22 years ago in Case 2001-25 *Appeal of TE Dallison v. North Florida* (M30GA, 2002, pp. 156 ff.) I was an SJC member for both Cases.

<sup>7</sup> In 1984, JBC included TEs Joe Gardner, Rodney King, Vaughn Hathaway, Dave Linden, Russell Toms, and REs William Buiten, David Fox, Henry Smith, John Van Voorhis and Stanley Wells. M12GA, pp. 137, 288.

conclude too much. Here's a fuller explanation. An Overture was adopted in 1996 by the 24<sup>th</sup> GA in Ft. Lauderdale and approved by presbyteries over the subsequent year. The Overture proposed adding a new *BCO* 6-5, to provide (among other conforming changes) the following:

*BCO* 6-5. A congregation may, at its discretion, set the minimum voting age for its communing members, provided it is not greater than eighteen (18) years of age. The congregation may also, at its discretion, set a different voting age for different matters provided it is not greater than eighteen (18) years of age.

The SJC Decision is grammatically accurate when it reports the proposed addition was "supported by the bare minimum of presbyteries needed to consent." At the time, adoption required approval from 38 of 56 presbyteries. The amendment was approved by presbyteries voting 39-11 in favor (i.e., supported by 78% of the presbyteries voting, with 6 abstaining). Furthermore, none of those six abstaining presbyteries reported votes on *any* of the several amendments that year, so it would be wrong to conclude that any of the six abstained because they did not support the proposed change.<sup>8</sup>

It would be mistaken to assume a defeated overture can be interpreted to mean the men who voted against it preferred the opposite of what it was proposing. In 1980 for example, Overture 3 from Southern Florida Presbytery sought to codify the allowance of term limits for REs. The Overture recognized "the widespread use within our denomination" and that "many of our particular churches using limited terms of active service also desire that there be no doubt or questioning as to whether the procedure they are using is allowed by the *Book of Church Order*." The Overture was answered *in the negative* by the 8<sup>th</sup> GA in Savannah, but nobody concluded that meant congregations could no longer utilize term limits. (M8GA, p. 37)

Consider another example. Two years ago, Pittsburgh Presbytery filed Overture 30 to the 49<sup>th</sup> GA in Birmingham, and after 15 Whereas clauses, it proposed GA add a new *BCO* 6-5, to provide (among other conforming changes) the following:

---

<sup>8</sup> The abstaining presbyteries were Korean Eastern, Korean NW, Korean Southern, Korean SW, SW Florida, and TN Valley. See M24GA, 1996 Ft. Lauderdale, pp. 312-13 and M25GA, 1997 Colorado Springs, p. 114.

BCO 6-5. A congregation may, at its discretion by a vote of 2/3, set the minimum voting age for its communing members, provided it is not greater than eighteen (18) years of age. The congregation may also; at its discretion, set a different minimum voting age for different matters provided it is not greater than eighteen (18) years of age.

The CCB expressed two concerns about the Pittsburgh Overture, including a concern about the vague phrase "different matters." However, the Overtures Committee did not recommend the GA answer it in the negative. Instead, by a 79% majority (106-27) the OC recommended it be "referred back to Pittsburgh Presbytery *without prejudice* yet paying particular attention to the concerns in the CCB report." (emphasis added) That recommendation was included in the OC's omnibus recommendation, and without *any* GA commissioner making a motion to split it from the omnibus, it was adopted without debate by vote of 2062-33. (*M49GA*, Assembly action p. 77; OC report p. 108; CCB p. 425; Overture in full pp. 1345-48)

**8. Lack of Independence** - The rights and responsibilities of minor communicants are "irregular" in numerous ways. Unlike adults, minors cannot exercise the independency ordinarily required for fair voting. For example, non-driving minors can't vote unless their parents or someone else brings them to the meeting. And even if he could take the bus, most of us would grant that his parents have the biblical authority to prevent him from attending the meeting. We don't ordinarily afford voting rights to individuals with such a lack of independency.

**9. Requisite Discernment** - In constitutionally acknowledging the civil government's right to debar communicant minors from voting in certain church corporation matters (*BCO* 25-11), the *BCO* presupposes, and seemingly grants, that minors lack the requisite discernment, judgment, and independence that society assumes is needed for adult decisions. This fact is also recognized in ecclesiastical trials. *BCO* 35-1 begins: "All persons of *proper age* and intelligence are competent witnesses ..."

But some suggest that all communing minors have the requisite mental competence and discernment to make reasonable judgments in all congregational votes because they "understand the Gospel" (*BCO* 57-2) and

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

have affirmed the five questions of *BCO* 57-2 and 57-5 (the constitutional prerequisites for admission to the Lord's Supper). But that is not a sound assertion. Does a 10-year-old, communing, fifth grade, covenant child - who has an age-appropriate understanding of the Gospel, who knows and confesses himself to be a sinner, knows and confesses Jesus to be his Savior, and has an age-appropriate understanding of the Lord's Supper - have the requisite discernment to intelligently vote on whether his church should dismiss an elder, or petition presbytery to dissolve the minister's call, or incur a mortgage, or leave the PCA to join the OPC, RCNA, ARP, EPC, RCUS, etc.? Highly unlikely.

/s/ RE Howie Donahoe

The Rev. Dr. Brant Bosserman was PNW's representative in *Wilson v. PNW* and in *Psiaki*. My Objection in *Wilson*, reflecting his research, can be found **here** and at the link below.

Dr. Bosserman's Brief in *Psiaki* can be found **here** and at the second link below.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hsYrEMVV36CVj6mul3-tKx5FlvpnuA-8/view>

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1fmEl6Je5EIOFWbYeP5NdHJKq7e5CT5Kb/view>

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

**CASE No. 2023-13**

***BCO 40-5 MATTER***

***re:***

***METRO NEW YORK PRESBYTERY***

***RULING ON REPORT***

January 12, 2024

The SJC cited Metro New York Presbytery to appear at the Commission's Fall Stated Meeting as directed by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in the following resolution:

That the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly:

- a. Find that the minutes of Metropolitan New York Presbytery (September 20, 2022; pp. 69–71) constitutes a “credible report” of “an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings” (*BCO 40-5*) in Presbytery's delinquency to redress a Session who admitted to unconstitutional proceedings of: (1) permitting a woman to expound the Scriptures during a worship service on the Lord's Day; (2) holding many worship services without preaching; and (3) serving the Lord's Supper at many services without a preceding sermon. Furthermore, Presbytery was delinquent in failing to redress the views of a Teaching Elder who stated his approval of said proceedings.
- b. Cite Metropolitan New York Presbytery to appear, per *BCO 40-5*, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission which the 50th GA constitutes its commission to adjudicate this matter, by representative or in writing, at the SJC's fall stated meeting, to “show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in question,” following the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15.

The party representatives provided documents bearing on the matter pursuant to *OMSJC 15.2*. The representatives of the General Assembly filed a brief outlining their position. The representative of Metro New York Presbytery



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

chose not to file a brief, stating that Presbytery's position was outlined in the minutes of Presbytery's called meeting of August 8, 2023, which minutes were provided to the Commission. On October 19, 2023, representatives of the General Assembly and the Presbytery appeared for hearing before the Standing Judicial Commission.

Having considered the record, briefs, and arguments presented by the party representatives, the Standing Judicial Commission enters the following decision to "redress the proceedings of the court below" (*BCO* 40-5 and *OMSJC* 15.6):

The SJC remits this matter to Metro New York Presbytery with the injunction that they take up and dispose of the matter in a constitutional manner. (*OMSJC* 15-6.c) Metro New York Presbytery has addressed this matter as indicated in Minutes of August 8, 2023 and September 19, 2023. The Presbytery shall complete its work of dealing with TE Higgins and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Rye, NY, and report the results of that work to the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records for the 51st GA.

The minutes of the August 8, 2023, meeting of Presbytery make clear that Presbytery has taken some action on this matter. Those minutes record that Presbytery found that it erred when it "failed to redress unconstitutional proceedings at a church within its bounds when it allowed a woman to teach in its public worship service in place of the preaching that Sunday and for that teaching to be the sermon that preceded the celebration of the Lord's Supper even though the Senior Pastor briefly expounded the Word prior to celebrating the Lord's Supper on that day." Presbytery further found that it erred in failing to redress the views of the teaching elder who stated his approval of those proceedings.

In support of these conclusions Presbytery adopted the following statements:

It is the position of Metropolitan New York Presbytery that an "exposition of the Word" by a woman shall not take the place of the ordinary sermon in public worship services in the churches within its bounds.

It is the position of Metropolitan New York Presbytery that only qualified men should preach to God's people during public worship services. We do not believe that the principle that "a woman can do whatever an unordained man

can do” is to be applied to the preaching in public worship services (*BCO* 4-4, 8-5; WCF 21.5; WLC 156, 158).

Furthermore, it is the position of Metropolitan New York Presbytery that it is permissible for unordained and unlicensed men to occasionally preach (*BCO* 19-1), but not a woman.

Though allowing this woman to teach in place of a sermon only happened once, Metropolitan New York Presbytery has informed the church’s Senior Pastor and the Session that this practice is unconstitutional, and they are not to repeat it in the future. The Senior Pastor and Session agreed to submit to the will of the presbytery on this matter.

Presbytery further concluded that it did not err in its decision to take no further action with regard to the allegations that “many worship services were held without preaching” and that a church within its bounds celebrated the Lord’s Supper without a preceding sermon. In both cases the Presbytery accepted the report of the Senior Pastor of the Church that the Session sought to differentiate between an exposition of God’s Word delivered by one who is ordained or licensed, which would be referred to as “a sermon,” and an exposition of God’s Word delivered by one who is not ordained or licensed, which would be referred to as “a message.” Thus, Presbytery concluded that there was always an exposition of God’s Word in the worship services of this congregation, but that exposition was sometimes called “a sermon” and sometimes “a message” depending on who was delivering the exposition.

In the course of the hearing before the SJC, the representative of Presbytery also provided the unapproved minutes of the Presbytery meeting of September 19, 2023. Those minutes record that Presbytery had asked the teaching elder and session in question to “examine their views regarding women preaching the Word of God in public worship services in light of the PCA Constitution (specifically, WCF 21.5, WLC 156 and 158) and the Metropolitan New York Presbytery’s position; and they notify the presbytery of their views at its next stated meeting (*BCO* 21-5, vows 2-3).” Those minutes also record that Presbytery received the following response from the Session: “The pastors and elders of Trinity Presbyterian Church—in keeping with our respective ordination and installation vows—take no exceptions to WCF 21.5 or to WLC #s 156 and 158. We continue to profess our cheerful agreement to all of the vows listed in *BCO* 21-5.” While the unapproved minutes are not clear, they

appear to indicate that Presbytery approved this response. That was also the view of the Presbytery's representative at the hearing.

This response, received by Presbytery at a meeting that occurred after Presbytery was cited to appear before the Standing Judicial Commission, is clearly inadequate and requires further response. The Session's response neither acknowledges any error nor delineates any specific stated differences that the teaching or ruling elders take to the *Westminster Standards* or the *Book of Church Order* in order to have viewed the alleged practice to be permissible.

In view of the inadequate nature of the response of the session, and the lack of clarity in the unapproved minutes as to exactly what action Presbytery took on that response, the Commission concluded that the best way forward was to follow *OMSJC* 15.6.c by remitting this matter to Presbytery so as to allow Presbytery to complete any remaining work in the matter, including such things as: seeking an admission of error from the teaching elder and session involved in the matter; requiring a statement of specific stated differences that the teaching or ruling elders take to the Constitutional documents that led them to conclude the they did not err (if that is their position); seeking evidence of repentance from those who committed the errors that Presbytery has identified; and determining how the congregation will be informed of Presbytery's conclusion that the Session had erred in its actions. Presbytery's actions will then be reported to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly, which Assembly can then review, through the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records, the adequacy and constitutionality of those actions. Should the actions be found to be satisfactory the matter will be concluded. Should the Assembly, on recommendation from RPR, conclude that Presbytery's response is inadequate then *RAO* 16-10.c may be followed. The Standing Judicial Commission believes this approach is consistent with *BCO* 40 as understood and applied in light of *RAO* 16.10. It also appropriately protects the prerogatives and responsibilities of Presbytery while moving the matter toward a conclusion that is consistent with our Constitution.

### A Further Note on Procedure in the Matter

This case came to the SJC as a *BCO* 40-5 reference from the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly on the basis of a proposal from the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records. RPR argued that the review of the records of Metro New York Presbytery led to a credible report of an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings.” The Committee further argued that *BCO* 40-5 requires that such reports, even when arising from the review of the records of a presbytery, must be handled by citing the Presbytery to appear before the court next above, in this case, the General Assembly which has empowered the Standing Judicial Commission to act on its behalf. In voting to adopt the recommendation of RPR the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly apparently accepted RPR’s argument with regard to how properly to understand and apply *BCO* 40-5 to a matter arising out of the required review of the records of a presbytery.

As the Commission was assigned this matter by the General Assembly, we took up the matter and dealt with it. At the same time, we question the constitutionality of the Assembly’s referral in this case and wish to take this opportunity to explain why we are dubious about the Assembly’s action.

We note, first, that *BCO* 15-4 states “The General Assembly shall elect a Standing Judicial Commission to which it shall commit all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline, **except for the annual review of Presbytery records**, which may come before the Assembly. (emphasis added) The fact that the annual review of presbytery records is treated as an exception to the SJC’s jurisdiction over “all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline” should make us cautious about any argument that suggests that matters raised by RPR can come directly to the SJC as happened in this case.

Further, while the *Rules of Assembly Operations* and the *Operating Manual for the Standing Judicial Commission* are, and must be, under the authority of the *Book of Church Order*, it is also true that the *RAO* and *OMSJC* tell us, by way of application, how the PCA understands relevant provisions of the *BCO*. In regard to this matter, *RAO* 16-2 establishes that the General Assembly will carry out the required annual review of presbytery records through “its Committee on Review of Presbytery Records.” This statement reminds us that RPR is a committee of the General Assembly. As such, its powers and procedures must come as grants from the Assembly. *RAO* 16-4.e; 16-6; 16-7;

16-8; 16-9; and 16-10.c spell out those powers and procedures. Of particular relevance to the present matter are *RAO* 16-6.c and 16-10.c

*RAO* 16-6.c states “The findings of the committee with respect to the minutes of each presbytery **shall** be noted under the following categories as appropriate:” 1) exceptions of substance; 2) exceptions of form; and 3) notations. (emphasis added) No other options are provided for RPR. Further, *RAO* 16-10.c states “If, in responding to an exception of substance, a presbytery reports that it disagrees with the conclusion of the Assembly and/or has not corrected or redressed the identified problem; and the committee... continues to believe that the presbytery has persisted in an error that is significant enough to require an Assembly response; **then** the committee shall notify the Assembly of the continuing exception, and shall make a recommendation as to whether the Assembly should again seek a more acceptable response from the presbytery, or should appoint a representative to present its case and refer the matter to the Standing Judicial Commission to cite the presbytery to appear for proceedings according to *BCO* 40-5.” (emphasis added) In other words, RPR is empowered to bring a recommendation to cite a presbytery to appear for proceedings under *BCO* 40-5 **only** after 1) the Assembly has taken an exception of substance to the minutes of presbytery; 2) presbytery has had the opportunity to respond to the exception (whether by agreeing with it and redressing the matter or by disagreeing with it); and 3) RPR has concluded the response is unsatisfactory and requires further action by the Assembly.

This conclusion is buttressed by an analysis of Chapter 15 of *OMSJC* (the chapter of the *Manual* dealing with “Procedure for Hearing a Report Arising Out of General Review and Control (*BCO* 40; *RAO* 16-10.c)”). First, *OMSJC* is subordinate to the *BCO* and *RAO* (see *RAO* 17-5), and thus Chapter 15 must be interpreted in light of the material in the previous paragraph. Second, both the title of Chapter 15 and the language of 15.2 clearly acknowledge that the provisions of the Chapter are dependent on *RAO* 16-10.c, and, thus, that any report that arises out of the annual review of presbytery records that alleges “an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding of a lower court (*BCO* 40-5)” can come to the SJC only after the provisions of *RAO* 16-10.c have been followed.

In the matter before us, the first two required steps in the process set forth in *RAO* 16-10.c were omitted. The 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly did not first find an

exception of substance, nor was Metro New York Presbytery given the opportunity to respond to such an exception or to “redress the identified problem” before being cited to appear before the Standing Judicial Commission. As such, the 50th General Assembly exceeded its authority in immediately ordering the citation for Metro New York Presbytery to appear before the Standing Judicial Commission.<sup>1</sup>

This is not a small issue. *BCO* 11-3 holds:

All Church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing only as the Constitution may provide. When, however, according to Scriptural example, and needful to the purity and harmony of the whole Church, disputed matters of doctrine and order arising in the lower courts are referred to the higher courts for decision, such referral shall not be so exercised as to impinge upon the authority of the lower court.

Thus, as much as we recognize the appropriate concern about the actions of the church in question and Metro New York Presbytery’s response to those actions, which concern grows out of the responsibility of mutual submission and understanding that “every act of jurisdiction is the act of the whole Church performed by it through the appropriate organ” (*BCO* 11-4), we must also recognize the appropriate prerogatives of Metro New York Presbytery as a court of the Church. The procedures set forth in *BCO* 40, *RAO* 16-10.c, and *OMSJC* 15 appropriately balance these two concerns by providing a means whereby the actions of presbyteries are reviewed by General Assembly with regard to their conformity to our Constitution, a presbytery has the right to respond to any allegations of lack of conformity (whether by explanation or redress), and if there is ongoing disagreement, a mechanism is provided whereby such a dispute may be finally settled. The General Assembly should be scrupulous in the future in maintaining this careful balance that is required by our rules.

Finally, we underscore that none of the forgoing analysis in any way calls into question whether RPR acted appropriately in identifying the errors committed by Metro New York Presbytery. Both we and the Presbytery have concluded

---

<sup>1</sup> Of course, the other option would have been for the Assembly to suspend *RAO* 16-10.c, following the procedure set forth in *RAO* XX, but that path was not followed.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

that Presbytery erred and that those errors need to be corrected. Further, nothing in this analysis in any way comments on how *BCO* 40-5 reports that arise in some manner other than the annual review of the records of a presbytery should be handled. That question is not before us.

This first section of this Ruling (pp. 1-3) was adopted unanimously by the SJC's drafting committee consisting of RE Frederick Neikirk (chairman), TEs Fred Greco and Sean Lucas, and REs Mel Duncan and John Pickering. The second section titled "A Further Note on Procedure in the Matter" (pp. 4-6) was authored only by RE Neikirk and TE Lucas.

The SJC approved the Ruling on the following **16-2** vote, with three absent, two not qualified, and one recused.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	Absent
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Dissent</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Not Qualified	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	Not Qualified	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	Recused	White	Absent
M. Duncan	<i>Dissent</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

TE Lee recused himself because he was Chairman of the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records, from which this matter arose, and deemed it best to do so.

TEs Garner and Kooistra were not present at the SJC meeting in October 2023 when the Hearing was held in this matter, and thus not qualified.

## CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-13

*BCO 40-5 Matter re Metropolitan New York Presbytery*

TE Fred Greco, joined by RE Dowling, RE S. Duncan, and TE Sartorius

I concur with the Decision of the Standing Judicial Commission in this case to remit the matter to the Presbytery to allow it to resolve the errors of the teaching elder and session involved in the matter. However, I desire to state my disagreement with the portion of the SJC's decision entitled "A Further Note on Procedure in the Matter."

First and foremost, I do not believe that the SJC was required to make such a statement in its decision. At best, the "Further Note" is *dicta* that is not binding on future Assemblies or litigants. At worst, I believe it is a statement that goes beyond the requirements of our Constitution and attempts explicitly to correct the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. As a creature of the General Assembly, the **Committee** on Review of Presbytery Records (emphasis added) may recommend an action to the Assembly (*BCO* 15-1). It may not, however, bind the General Assembly to a specific course of action. The SJC has indicated in its decision that *Rules of Assembly Operation (RAO)* 16-6.c does indeed bind the General Assembly in its process because it delineates the normal and ordinary course of action arising out of the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (CRPR). While this is the ordinary course of action, I do not believe it is Constitutionally mandated.

Because the *RAO* is not a part of the Constitution (*BCO* Preface III), the Constitutional provision that governs is *BCO* 40 (Review and Control, specifically *BCO* 40-5). That states in part:

When any court having appellate jurisdiction shall receive a credible report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court, the first step shall be to cite the court alleged to have offended to appear before the court having appellate jurisdiction, or its commission, by representative or in writing, at a specified time and place, and to show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in question.



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

I believe that the matter raised in New York Metro Presbytery is an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding” of the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church (Rye, NY). I further believe that the Presbytery failed to properly resolve such matter and do its duty under *BCO* 40-5. As a result, CRPR was within its purview to report such to the General Assembly and to ask the Assembly to act.

I do not think that every such report under *BCO* 40-5 would warrant immediate referral to the General Assembly to act through its Standing Judicial Commission. In fact, CRPR followed its normal course in what has become SJC 2023-14. However, I do not believe that CRPR is *forbidden* from bringing such recommendations to the Assembly. I note that the Assembly agreed with the recommendation of CRPR by an overwhelming margin (1447 to 168, or 89% to 11%). I further note that it is possible (even likely) that CRPR anticipated an inadequate response from the Presbytery to the exception of substance, a possibility that was borne out by the SJC decision characterizing it as “clearly inadequate and requires further response.” The response did not even address the heart of the matter, as the SJC decision states: “The Session’s response neither acknowledges any error nor delineates any specific stated differences that the teaching or ruling elders take to the *Westminster Standards* or the *Book of Church Order* in order to have viewed the alleged practice to be permissible.”

For the reasons stated above, I concur and clarify that I do not believe the SJC should have issued its “Further Note on Procedure in the Matter.”

TE Fred Greco

### CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-13

*BCO 40-5 Matter re Metropolitan New York Presbytery*

TE David F. Coffin, Jr.

January 30, 2024

I concur with the decision of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) in this case, to remit

this matter to Metro New York Presbytery with the injunction that they take up and dispose of the matter in a constitutional manner. (*OMSJC* 15-6.c) Metro New York Presbytery has addressed this matter as indicated in Minutes of August 8, 2023 and September 19, 2023. The Presbytery shall complete its work of dealing with TE Higgins and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Rye, NY, and report the results of that work to the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records for the 51<sup>st</sup> GA.

However, so there will be no misunderstanding with respect to my concurrence, some further observations are in order to highlight and support the “Further Note on Procedure” concluding the decision (pp. 4-6). That note sets forth a declaration of conscience, explaining that though the SJC complied with the assignment of a *BCO* 40-5 matter from the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, it did so with grave concerns about the constitutionality of the Assembly’s referral, while having little or no recourse.

The expression of these concerns must be understood in light of the fact that the SJC is governed exclusively by the provisions of *The Book of Church Order* and the “Rules of Assembly Operations” (*RAO*). Specific directions governing the implementation of these provisions are set forth in the “Operating Manual for Standing Judicial Commission,” (*OMSJC*) as adopted by the General Assembly (*RAO* 17-5). Each member of the SJC vows, with respect to his labors, to judge according to the Constitution of the PCA (*RAO* 17-1).

Further, it must be noted that when a matter comes before the SJC, the Commission is required, throughout the *OMSJC*, to determine whether the matter is properly before the Commission according to the provisions of the Constitution. This is true from the reception of a case—in the provisions for finding a case Administratively in Order—and with respect to the hearing of a matter—in the provisions for a Panel finding a case Judicially in Order. Just as the referring Assembly could not determine the final judgment of a case prior to referring it to the SJC, so too the Assembly cannot determine *the SJC’s judgment* as to whether a case is in order.

In addition, the chapter of the *OMSJC* that sets forth the procedure for taking up a referral from the Assembly via CRPR, i.e., “15. Procedure For Hearing a Report Arising Out of General Review and Control (*BCO* 40; *RAO* 16-10.c),” is clearly dependent upon *RAO* 16-10.c., anticipating that the provisions of *RAO* 16-10.c have governed the referral, and thus necessitates the *SJC*’s judgment as to compliance with *RAO* mandated procedures.

All of these considerations urge that it is procedurally appropriate, and a matter of conscientious necessity, for the *SJC* to communicate its concern about the way this matter was referred to the *SJC*.

With respect to that concern, first, a general consideration. Our *BCO* is properly designed to set forth the fundamental scriptural principles of the government of the church, and a few practices and procedures that, prudentially, will provide a wholesome uniformity, consistency, and due process in the functioning of our government and discipline. Each Court of the church must adopt a set of regulations that set forth how those principles, practices and procedures will practically govern that court. These regulations are typically set forth in Rules or Bylaws adopted by that Court (e.g., “Rules of Assembly Operations” (*RAO*)). However, these Rules can neither add to, nor take away from, the provisions of the *BCO*. Thus, the Court’s Rules determine, for that Court, subject to review, how the *BCO* will be administered in that jurisdiction.

The question in this instance is: May the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (CRPR) recommend to the General Assembly that a matter arising out of the review of presbytery minutes be considered as a *BCO* 40-5 case? At first glance, one might suppose that would be permissible; *BCO* 40-5 is a provision of our government, and available to the *Courts* of the church for the good of the church. However, that initial impression cannot stand analysis. The question is, more properly, can CRPR, a *committee* of the Assembly, *a committee that is a creature of the Assembly*, and has responsibilities and powers *no more or less than those appointed* by the Assembly in the “Rules for Assembly Operation,” properly recommend to the Assembly that a matter arising out of the review of presbytery minutes, be considered as a *BCO* 40-5 case without the CRPR itself first following the procedural requirements of the *RAO*? The answer is plainly, No. In its rules the Assembly has declared that a matter arising out of presbytery minutes *must be treated* by the CRPR in a particular way. The pertinent rules are as follows:

*Rules of Assembly Operation* 16-6. Guidelines for Examining Presbytery Records [emphasis added]:

- c. The findings of the committee with respect to the minutes of each presbytery shall be noted under the following categories as appropriate:
  - 1) Exceptions of substance: Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and important delinquencies, and any non-compliance with *RAO* 16-3.e.5 should be reported under this category [record of officer candidate examinations].
  - 2) Exceptions of form: Violations of the Assembly's Guidelines for Keeping Presbytery Minutes (*RAO* 16-3), rules of order, etc. should normally be reported under this category. When a minor irregularity from a *BCO* provision or requirement is noted, it may be treated as an exception of form (*BCO* 40-3). If subsequent minutes continue to reflect the same particular exception of form, it may become an exception of substance.
  - 3) Notations: The committee may report to the clerk of presbytery any typographical errors, misspellings, improper punctuation and other minor variations in form and clarity. These are to be given as advice for the respective clerks.

These, *and these only*, are the Committee's options. Further, when it appeared through experience that these Rules were not adequate for serving the Assembly well, the Assembly itself added to those Rules,<sup>1</sup> in section 16, a way in which a matter arising out of the review of presbytery minutes *could* be referred to the SJC under *BCO* 40-5, after the regular requirements of the *RAO* had been pursued and found wanting,

---

<sup>1</sup> For insight into the historical circumstances of the amendment, the corresponding change to *BCO* 40-5, and the significance of those circumstances for understanding the provisions in question, see the Concurring Opinion of RE. J. Howard Donahoe in this case.

*RAO 16-10.c.* If, in responding to an exception of substance, a presbytery reports that it disagrees with the conclusion of the Assembly and/or has not corrected or redressed the identified problem; and, the committee (after reviewing the presbytery's response and rationale, and, if a majority so desires, consulting with the Committee on Constitutional Business) continues to believe that the presbytery has persisted in an error that is significant enough to require an Assembly response; then, the committee shall notify the Assembly of the continuing exception, and shall make recommendation as to whether the Assembly should again seek a more acceptable response from the presbytery, or should appoint a representative to present its case and refer the matter to the Standing Judicial Commission to cite the presbytery to appear for proceedings according to *BCO 40-5*.

Note that this path is permissible for the Committee only *after* it has fulfilled its responsibilities under the regular Rules for dealing with matters arising out of presbytery minutes (as cited above).

In this case referred to the SJC by the GA, the CRPR had no right to recommend to the Assembly that a matter arising out of the review of presbytery records, *de novo*, be treated as a *BCO 40-5* case without first following the order and requirements of the procedures of *RAO 16*, and the Assembly itself, had no right to accede to that recommendation. The Assembly had no right to do so because it had already bound itself according to the provisions set forth in the *RAO*. Apart from suspending those Rules, or amending them, the Assembly had no right to accede to the improper request from CRPR. The acts of the 50<sup>th</sup> GA in this matter provide a misleading standard, the error of which must be exhibited and rejected by a more considered deliberation. It is my hope that future Assemblies will not follow such an unconstitutional course and that future Moderators will rule such recommendations out of order.

Should the 50<sup>th</sup> Assembly's action in this matter be taken as precedent for other such referrals, the SJC would be burdened with increased responsibilities, responsibilities unspecified, and thus a distraction from the mounting caseload that is specified as its Constitutional obligation. *RAO 16-10. c.* was designed

to bring before the SJC alleged exceptions of substance (“Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and important delinquencies”) only after the brotherly discussion of the concerns raised by CRPR, as approved by the Assembly, were brought to a presbytery for an appropriate response. Through this time-tested collegial procedure, most such disputes are resolved. The RAO, however, contains a valuable safeguard, should the exchange reach a stalemate: The Assembly itself, upon recommendation from CRPR, can send the matter to the SJC.

The erroneous view evident in the action of the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, neglecting the wise procedure set forth in a proper reading of the BCO and the RAO, threatens to do damage to the unity of our various courts, and diminish the capacity of the SJC to adjudicate cases with efficiency and justice, doing significant harm to our church.

TE David F. Coffin, Jr.

### CONCURRING OPINION

Case No. 2023-13

*BCO 40-5 Matter re Metropolitan New York Presbytery*

RE Howie Donahoe

January 30, 2024

I concurred in the SJC Ruling. I agree the matter raised in this Case appeared to be an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding” of a Session, and thereafter, by a Presbytery. I agree with a Dissenting Opinion that concludes, “any report deemed credible within our denomination of a woman preaching in the pulpit of a PCA Church, before a PCA Congregation, in a PCA Worship service shall be considered a “grossly unconstitutional proceeding.” The SJC Ruling does not dispute these conclusions, but that is not the issue addressed in the second part of the Ruling. I believe further comment is warranted regarding the matter addressed in the second part of the SJC's Ruling (the final three pages).

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

First, I offer here some legislative history, hopefully shedding light on the interpretation of *BCO* 40-5. I readily grant legislative history is not the primary way to interpret the meaning of a text in the law. It is possible men could have different understandings of a text when they vote to approve it. So, I agree with the late Justice Scalia that the hunt for "original intent" might be a fool's errand, and much prefer his textualist philosophy wherein a text is to be understood to mean what the words meant at the time of their adoption. But legislative history can often clarify the meaning of the text, *especially* when rationale is provided at the time the new law is considered and when the rationale is drafted by the committee elected by the body.

In 2005 and 2006, the long-serving Strategic Planning Committee ("SPC") presented comprehensive reports to the 33<sup>rd</sup> and 34<sup>th</sup> GAs in Chattanooga and Atlanta. (*M33GA*, p. 342-445; *M34GA*, pp 568-628) The SPC Reports recommended multiple amendments to the *RAO* and the *BCO*, including the current wording of *BCO* 40-5 and what is now *RAO* 16-10.c. It appears there were 14 primary members on the SPC, with RE Brock as chairman.

TE Frank Barker	TE Will Barker	TE Dave Clelland	TE Lig Duncan III
TE Wayne Herring	TE Bill Lyle		
RE Joel Belz	RE Frank Brock	RE Sam Duncan	RE Bebo Elkin
RE Glenn Fogle	RE Harry Hargrave	RE Jack Williamson	RE Mike Wilson

There were also several advisory members including Agency and Committee Coordinators, Stated Clerk Taylor, and two advisory teaching elders - TEs David Coffin and Elliot Lee.

The amendment to *BCO* 40-5 (the current language of the *BCO*) was adopted by the 33<sup>rd</sup> GA and sent to the presbyteries. The SPC's rationale was included in its report to the 33<sup>rd</sup> GA and in the material sent to the presbyteries. The presbyteries voted 54-11 to approve the amendment (83% in favor).<sup>2</sup> The revision was then adopted and enacted by the 34<sup>th</sup> GA in Atlanta in 2006. (*M34GA*, p. 57) This is the text we have operated under for the last 18 years.

*BCO* 40-5, first sentence: "When any court having appellate jurisdiction ~~shall be advised either by the records of~~ **receive a**

---

<sup>2</sup> Eleven presbyteries voted against the *BCO* 40-5 amendment: Ascension, Calvary, Grace, Heritage, Mississippi Valley, Northern Georgia, SE Alabama, SE Louisiana, Southwest, Southwest Florida, and Westminster.

**credible report with respect to** the court next below ~~or by memorial, either with or without protest, or by any other satisfactory method,~~ of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court, the first step shall be to cite the court alleged to have offended to appear **before the court having appellate jurisdiction, or its commission**, by representative or in writing, at a specified time and place, and to show what ~~it~~ **the lower court** has done or failed to do in the case in question.” (*M33GA*, 33-45, 33-48, III, 8b, pp. 184, 186).” [*M34GA*, pp. 57-60]

[SPC rationale] "Comment: Proposed change simplifies the language of the antecedent in the conditional, and allows for the use of a commission, in anticipation of a proposed amendment to *RAO* 14-10.c [now *RAO* 16.10.c] establishing a judicial procedure to settle the question of the disputed exceptions alleged under General Assembly review of presbytery records. (*M33GA*, 33-48, III, 8, p. 186; see also Appendix C, Attach. 1, p. 342).” [cf. *M33GA* pp. 340-41.]

It is clear from the SPC's rationale for the *BCO* 40-5 revision that it was initiated in preparation of the *RAO* revision that would pertain to a situation in which a presbytery filed unsatisfactory *responses* to RPR/GA citations. This *RAO* revision was also published in the SPC's Report to the 33<sup>rd</sup> GA, in anticipation of proposing it to the 34<sup>th</sup> GA for a vote.

In 2006, at the 34<sup>th</sup> GA in Atlanta, the Assembly adopted fifteen revisions to the *RAO* in omnibus, by more than the required two-thirds majority, including the addition below to what was then *RAO* 14-10.c (which is now 16-10.c).

[14-10.c - all new; now 16-10.c] If, in responding to an exception of substance identified by the Assembly, a presbytery reports that it disagrees with the conclusion of the Assembly and has not corrected or redressed the identified problem; and, the committee (after reviewing the presbytery's response and rationale) continues to believe that the presbytery has persisted in an error that is significant enough to require an Assembly response; then, the committee shall notify the Assembly of the continuing exception, and shall



make recommendation as to whether the Assembly should again seek a more acceptable response from the presbytery, or should refer the matter to the Standing Judicial Commission to cite the presbytery to appear for proceedings according to *BCO* 40-5. [*M34GA*, p. 72-73]

[SPC rationale] "See comment on *BCO* 40-5."

It is difficult, at least for me, to review that legislative history and conclude the commissioners and presbyters who approved the revision to *BCO* 40-5 envisioned the abridged process followed by last year's Assembly regarding this present matter. No Assembly in the last 18 years since the adoption of that revision to *BCO* 40-5 has ever used such an abridged process.

In short, while the provisions of *BCO* 40-5 and *RAO* 16-10.c were rightfully applied last year to Case 2023-14: *BCO* 40-5 Matter re Northwest Georgia, they were not rightfully applied to Case 2023-13: *BCO* 40-5 Matter re Metro New York. *RAO* 16-10.c was not followed - *nor suspended* - by the 50<sup>th</sup> GA. It is within the SJC's purview, and perhaps its responsibility, to simply apprise the Assembly of such. And this appraisal might be particularly warranted when such a large majority of an Assembly overlooks such a procedural mistake.

I offer two final thoughts. Some might contend *RAO* 16-10.b and 10.c are not mandatory because they are not part of the Constitution. However, those *RAO* sections set forth how the PCA has decided *BCO* 40-5 *will and should be* implemented at the Assembly level. They can only be ignored if two-thirds of an Assembly votes to suspend the Rules, or, after someone has successfully proposed a revision to the *RAO*.

I leave the reader to ponder a scenario. Let us say the minutes of a presbytery show that an ordination candidate expressed a relatively common difference with the Standards, say, allowing for some sort of recreation on the Sabbath. And presbytery judged it as not striking at any fundamental of our system of doctrine. And let us suppose a particularly zealous RPR regarded presbytery's judgment as an "important delinquency," and sought to bypass our regular order, and, through a *BCO* 40-5 accusation, without any due process, without any pre-indictment investigation, sought immediately to bring the matter to a

trial before the SJC? Would we be persuaded wisdom and fairness had been served? I think not.

RE Howie Donahoe

## **DISSENTING OPINION**

Case No. 2023-13

*BCO 40-5 Matter re Metropolitan New York*

RE Melton L. Duncan

January 29, 2024

Fathers and Brothers,

I am humbly dissenting from the decision in PCA v. Metropolitan New York Presbytery.

I affirm the rightness of the Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) recommendation approved by the Memphis General Assembly; that RPR properly utilized the *BCO* 40-5 statute to cite a lower court with a credible report of an “important delinquency” before the PCA. I also want to affirm the rightness of the SJC to determine the matter on the merits. My right honorable brethren on the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) apparently disagreed and remanded the matter back down with reasoning; “A Further Note on Procedure in the Matter.” In my view the SJC had the appropriate authority given by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to conclude the matter without further process.

In summary I am arguing that any report deemed credible within our denomination of a woman preaching in the pulpit of a PCA Church, before a PCA Congregation, in a PCA Worship service shall be considered a “grossly unconstitutional proceeding.”

For the Church,

RE Melton L. Duncan

**DISSENTING OPINION**

Case No. 2023-13  
*BCO 40-5 Matter re: Metropolitan New York*  
RE Jim Eggert  
January 2024

First, I want to affirm my agreement with the SJC's conclusion in this case. The response of the Presbytery was clearly inadequate since the record failed to reflect that the Session had acknowledged any error, nor that the teaching or ruling elders on the Session delineated any specific stated differences that they take to our Standards or the *Book of Church Order* that would have explained how it would be possible for them to have viewed the exposition of the Word by a woman in public worship services to be a permitted practice. I also agree that this matter should be remitted to the Presbytery to take up and dispose of in a constitutional manner and report its work of dealing with TE Higgins and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Rye, NY, and report the results of that work to the Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) for the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly.

My agreement above suggests that perhaps I might have *concurred* with the decision. But in the end, I chose to dissent because I disagree with the Decision's critique of the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly's action in referring this case to the SJC, a referral which I am convinced was appropriate under the circumstances.

My dissent springs mainly from that part of the opinion that commences "A Further Note on Procedure in the Matter" where the decision today "questions the constitutionality of the Assembly's referral in this case" to the SJC. I dissent because I do not question that referral. Further, the decision "takes [an] opportunity to explain why [The SJC] is dubious about the Assembly's action" of assigning the case to the SJC, but I do not regard the assignment as "dubious." Lastly, the decision asserts that the Assembly "exceeded its authority in immediately ordering the citation" for the presbytery to appear before the SJC, a proposition with which I also disagree.

When the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly decided that the minutes of the Metropolitan New York Presbytery constituted a "credible report" of an "important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings" (*BCO 40-5*) and cited

the Presbytery to appear before the SJC, the Assembly did *not* refer the SJC to evaluate either: (1) the constitutionality of the Assembly's referral or (2) the propriety of the referral under its own *Rules of Assembly Operation*. Yet a large measure of the decision today is filled with discussion of that very subject matter.

This raises a question that is both interesting and important: Was the SJC right to undermine the legitimacy of the very *referral* of this matter under the circumstances of this case? For the reasons set out herein I am not yet persuaded that it was.

The General Assembly's powers are enumerated in *BCO* 14-6 and include the following:

- a. ... to bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in practice, injuriously affecting the Church; to decide in all controversies respecting doctrine and discipline;
- ...
- c. ... to take care that the lower courts observe the Constitution; to redress whatever they may have done contrary to order...

Certainly, *BCO* 40-5 is one of the constitutional mechanisms to provide a means for the Assembly to perform these vital functions. *BCO* 40-5 states:

When any court having appellate jurisdiction shall receive a credible report with respect to the court next below of any important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings of such court, the first step shall be to cite the court alleged to have offended to appear before the court having appellate jurisdiction, or its commission, by representative or in writing, at a specified time and place, and to show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in question.

Of course, *BCO* 40-5 is a part of the *Rules of Discipline* and provides a means by which a lower court is cited to appear before a higher court. The triggering mechanism for this procedure is a "court having appellate jurisdiction" receiving a "credible report" of the sort described in the provision. *BCO* 40-5

does not specify exactly in what manner the “credible report” may arise and does not on its face exclude the possibility that it may arise out of the review of presbytery records. Indeed, unlike *BCO* 40-1 through 40-4, *BCO* 40-5 makes no express reference to “records” of a lower court at all. One might imagine any number of ways that a “credible report” might come to the Assembly, and *BCO* 40-5 appears to stand apart in Chapter 40 as a procedure and remedy only for the most *egregious* cases – those credibly involving “important delinquencies” or “grossly unconstitutional proceedings” – so that *BCO* 40-5 is not a species of regular “records review” so much as a mechanism to address only those exceptional cases falling into the orbit of the rule that command the urgent attention of the Assembly.

*BCO* 40-5 requires the exercise of judgment about whether the actions alleged trigger the criteria precedent to the issuance of a citation. Of course, a biblical or constitutional violation is always a “delinquency,” but, if it results in no substantial harm, it may not be “important.” An unconstitutional act or omission of a court is not good, but to be actionable under *BCO* 40-5 it must be “gross,” which means glaringly noticeable, usually because of inexcusable behavior. A court’s “grossly unconstitutional” act or omission is so flagrant and inexcusable as to undermine our constitutional order to a degree that it is deemed harmful in its own right.

In this matter, the Assembly exercised its judgment to trigger the issuance of a citation and committing the matter to the SJC for adjudication, deeming the report it received from RPR about Metro New York Presbytery to be a “credible report” of an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding” of that court. *BCO* 15-4’s imperative that the Assembly “shall commit all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline” to the SJC (including proceedings under *BCO* 40-5) is a mandate to the General Assembly, and is not, on its face, self-executing. In other words, a particular matter is committed to the SJC when the Assembly in fact “commits” that matter to the SJC, as it obviously did in this case.

Under the circumstances presented in this case, my deference to the Assembly’s preliminary determination to commit the instant *BCO* 40-5 proceedings to the SJC is such that I cannot in good conscience join in today’s decision which asserts the Assembly “exceeded its authority” by doing so. Of course, the SJC is a commission of the Assembly and, as such is “authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business referred to it” (*BCO* 15-1), which

it has done. But the decision as adopted essentially asserts that the business was improperly *referred*, arguing as it does, that the mechanism of the referral came to the Assembly through RPR in a manner that allegedly violated not only the *Rules of Assembly Operation (RAO)* and the *Operating Manual of the Standing Judicial Commission (OMSJC)*, but apparently our Constitution. In other words, the Decision effectively maintains that the very *citation* of the presbytery was outside the power of the Assembly.

For reasons set out below, I respectfully disagree. First, it appears that the decision's interpretation of the *RAO* transgresses *BCO* 40-5. Furthermore, I don't believe the referral of the case to the SJC necessarily violated the *RAO*. I disagree with the constitutional considerations advanced in the Decision and have concluded that the referral of the matter to the SJC was in order.

***I. As Articulated in the Decision, the Interpretation of RAO 16 is Unconstitutional and Cannot be Enforced.***

The Decision agrees that the Assembly “apparently accepted RPR’s argument with regard to how to properly understand and apply *BCO* 40-5 to a matter arising out of the required review of the records of a presbytery.” The Assembly simply applied *BCO* 40-5 on its face when it made the determination that it had received a “credible report” of an “important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding” and cited the presbytery to appear before the SJC. Not a single word of *BCO* 40-5 prohibits the Assembly from citing a presbytery to appear because the “report” arose from RPR in connection with its review of presbytery records, a limitation that must be derived -- if it can be derived at all -- from a source *other* than *BCO* 40-5.

*BCO* 40-5 took its present form in 2006 via an amendment adopted per the recommendation of the Strategic Planning Committee, whose rationale noted that the change “allows for the use of a commission, in anticipation of a proposed amendment to *RAO* 14-10.c establishing a judicial procedure to settle the question of the disputed exceptions alleged under General Assembly review of presbytery records.” (M33GA, 33-48, III, 8, p. 186; see also Appendix C, Attachment 1, p. 342).” (See also pp. 340-41 in M33GA.) Of course, the rationale of an Assembly Committee is not determinative of the Assembly’s intent, which must be derived by the words of the text that the Assembly adopted. Therefore, even if we assume that the Strategic Planning Committee's rationale for the revision was initiated in preparation of the *RAO*

provision now in consideration, such rationale cannot control the interpretation of *BCO* 40-5. We ought not interpret *BCO* 40-5 based on *actual* provisions of the *RAO*, much less “*anticipated*” ones, for that would make the interpretation of the Constitution reliant on extra constitutional documents and procedures that can be revised outside the constraints of the constitutional amendment process. Neither the *RAO* nor the *OMSJC* are part of the Constitution and are constitutionally *subordinate* to the *BCO*. Therefore, the prescriptions of the *BCO* must supersede any contrary prescriptions of the *RAO* or the *OMSJC*.

*BCO* 40-5 prescribes that when a qualifying report has been received by “any court having appellate jurisdiction,” then “*the first step*” is to cite the court to appear. The Decision advances an interpretation of *RAO* 16-6.c and *RAO* 16-10.c that supposes the Assembly must entertain *other* precedent steps before citing a presbytery to appear, i.e. that the Assembly must first take an exception of substance to the presbytery minutes, afford the presbytery an opportunity to respond to RPR, and *only then* entertain a recommendation from RPR to cite the presbytery to appear per *BCO* 40-5. These novel and modified “first steps” prescribed by the *RAO* (and advanced by the Decision) are a not enforceable since the *BCO* is supreme over the *RAO*, and because the insertion of interceding steps ahead of “the first step” mandated by *BCO* 40-5 would unconstitutionally amend *BCO* 40-5, contrary to the prescriptions of *BCO* 26-1 and 26-2, making the citation of the Presbytery not the “first step,” but the *last*.

## ***II. The Assembly Did Not Violate BCO 15-4***

The Decision alludes to *BCO* 15-4, a provision that states the Assembly “shall commit all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline” to the SJC. But by this rule, the committal of the instant *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC, being a matter governed by the *Rules of Discipline*, was not only appropriate; it was *mandatory*.

While it is true that *BCO* 15-4 removes the “annual review of Presbytery records” from the jurisdiction of the SJC, that is not the case here. The Decision warns that the SJC’s lack of jurisdiction over the annual review of presbytery records “should make us cautious about any argument that suggests that matters raised by RPR can come directly to the SJC as happened in this case.” But the Assembly most certainly did *not* ask the SJC to engage in the “annual review of presbytery records;” it empowered the SJC to *adjudicate* a

case as prescribed by *BCO* 40-5 by “reversing or redressing the proceedings of the court below in other than judicial cases,” “censuring the delinquent court,” “remitting the whole matter to the delinquent court with an injunction to take it up and dispose of it in a constitutional manner,” or “staying all further proceedings in the case” just “as circumstances may require.” None of those remedies could be accomplished merely by the “annual review of presbytery records.” The full SJC received the record in this case, reviewed briefs, heard the arguments of the parties, and then rendered a final decision. None of these procedures, and certainly not the result reached in this case, bear any substantive resemblance to the “annual review of presbytery records.” They were acts unique to the adjudication of a *BCO* 40-5 case.

### ***III. The Assembly Did Not Violate BCO 11-3***

Calling it “no small issue,” the Decision also advances the argument that *BCO* 11-3 implies that the Assembly (through RPR) should have followed the procedures in *RAO* 16, first identifying that the presbytery’s minutes showed an “exception of substance” and that the presbytery then be “given an opportunity to respond to such an exception or to ‘redress the identified problem’ before being cited to appear.” *BCO* 11-3 reads as follows:

All Church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing only as the Constitution may provide. When, however, according to Scriptural example, and needful to the purity and harmony of the whole Church, disputed matters of doctrine and order arising in the lower courts are referred to the higher courts for decision, such referral shall not be so exercised as to impinge upon the authority of the lower court.

Against the chain of reasoning advanced in the Decision, not a syllable of this provision prescribes the Decision’s proposed procedure. Indeed, *BCO* 40-5, does not require that a presbytery be given an opportunity to respond *before* being cited to appear, stating instead that the “*first step* [emphasis added] shall be to cite the court alleged to have offended to appear,” *after* which a presbytery is to be heard. Consequently, nothing in *BCO* 11-3 supports the conclusion that the Constitution was violated merely because the Assembly acted on a recommendation from RPR to commit *BCO* 40-5 proceedings to the



SJC in this matter, proceedings in which the presbytery was in fact heard by the SJC. By the reasoning of the Decision, it would seem that *BCO* 40-5 would *itself* transgress *BCO* 11-3.

***IV. The Committal did not Clearly Violate the RAO.***

The Decision today carefully advances an interpretation of *RAO* 16, particularly *RAO* 16-6.c and 16-10.c, but the Decision's interpretation is not the only reasonable interpretation of the *RAO* or the *BCO*, and it is evidently *not* the interpretation adopted by the 50th General Assembly.

The *RAO* is certainly one way that the Assembly expresses its interpretation and implementation of the *BCO*. But I am not persuaded that the *RAO*, as presently written, exhausts all the mechanisms by which the Assembly may commit a *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC per *BCO* 15-4.

I do not understand the argument of today's Decision to be that the Assembly lacks essential power to assign a *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC, but that the *origin* of the presentation of the *BCO* 40-5 proceeding in this particular matter wrongly originated via an unauthorized source (RPR) and an unauthorized procedure (without precedent exchanges between RPR and the presbytery) that violated the letter of the *RAO*. Today's Decision effectively maintains that the *RAO* prescribes but a single path by which the Assembly may assign a *BCO* proceeding to the SJC that arises out of RPR. I respectfully disagree.

In support of its interpretation, the Decision cites *RAO* 16-10.c, under the heading "Guidelines for Responding to the Assembly:"

If, in responding to an exception of substance, a presbytery reports that it disagrees with the conclusion of the Assembly and/or has not corrected or redressed the identified problem; and, the committee (after reviewing the presbytery's response and rationale, and, if a majority so desires, consulting with the Committee on Constitutional Business) continues to believe that the presbytery has persisted in an error that is significant enough to require an Assembly response; then, the committee shall notify the Assembly of the continuing exception, and shall make recommendation as to whether the Assembly should again seek a more acceptable response from the

presbytery or should appoint a representative to present its case and refer the matter to the Standing Judicial Commission to cite the presbytery to appear for proceedings according to *BCO* 40-5. (emphasis added).

Putting aside that “guidelines” are not necessarily as stringent a regulation as “rules,” the Decision interprets the adverb “then” to effectively mean “then, and then only,” advancing the position that RPR, being a creature of the Assembly, may only do what the Assembly expressly authorizes, whether they be guidelines or otherwise, its “powers and procedures coming as grants from the Assembly.”

But this argument demands closer scrutiny. *RAO* 16-10.c governs only “exceptions of substance.” Curiously, however, “exceptions of substance” are defined as

Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and important delinquencies, and any noncompliance with *RAO* 16-3.e.5 should be reported under this category.

The definition of “exception of substance” does *not* cite *BCO* 40-5, nor does it allude to *BCO* 40-5 “grossly unconstitutional proceedings.”

Regarding an “exception of substance,” one might suppose that a “serious irregularity from the Constitution” or even a “matter of impropriety” should be interpreted to include both “important delinquencies” and “grossly unconstitutional proceedings.” On the other hand, if one adopts a stricter interpretive approach – along the lines of today’s decision – we perhaps might infer that, since RPR’s “powers and proceedings” come only as “grants from the Assembly,” and since no mention is made in *RAO* 16-10.c of *BCO* 40-5’s “grossly unconstitutional proceedings,” that RPR has been granted no authority to engage in an exchange with a presbytery concerning the same, so that the review and control of credible reports of “grossly unconstitutional proceedings” (from whatever source) remain the exclusive prerogative of the *Assembly* regardless of the machinations of RPR.

But more fundamentally, the Decision overlooks that *RAO* 16-7, the article that prescribes the “Guidelines for Reporting on Presbytery Records” and lists those matters that RPR may report to the Assembly, seems to ascribe broad authority to RPR. After authorizing RPR to include in its report

- the minutes it has received (*RAO* 16-7.a),
- a list of the presbyteries that have not submitted minutes (*RAO* 16-7.b),
- RPR’s recommendation concerning the minutes of each presbytery including the details about any exceptions of substance (*RAO* 16-7.c),

the very next paragraph then authorizes and directs RPR to include in its report **“[a]ny other recommendation to the Assembly”** (emphasis added) (*RAO* 16-7. d).

“Any other recommendation” is a wide grant of power to RPR, and a particularly potent endowment when one considers that it is added *after* the very provision that the Decision maintains circumscribes RPR’s whole authority to recommend a *BCO* 40-5 citation regarding an “exception of substance.” Beyond those powers described in the Decision, RPR may make any other recommendation at all to the Assembly, presumably including recommendations regarding “grossly unconstitutional proceedings” concerning *BCO* 40-5. Put simply, the Decision’s proposed interpretation of the *RAO*, while presenting one plausible understanding of those rules, is not the only one. I maintain that the Assembly was free to interpret the *RAO* another way, and obviously did so. Indeed, if the above is correct, then a motion to suspend the rules would not have even been necessary (or expected), as is supposed by the Decision.

Granted, we cannot know for sure what interpretation of the *RAO* the Assembly had in view when it assigned the instant *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC; that is the enigma inherent in the collective action of any Assembly. But when the *RAO* is reasonably susceptible to two interpretations, one of which vindicates the Assembly’s referral of a *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC, it’s my view that the SJC should prefer the interpretation that vindicates the Assembly’s action. As explained above, there are at least two such plausible interpretations in this case: (1) that *RAO* 16.10.c unconstitutionally amends the “first step” of *BCO* 40-5 and (2) *RAO* 16-7. d grants RPR wide authority to make other recommendations, including concerning proposed *BCO* 40-5

proceedings. Therefore, I have concluded to defer to the Assembly's apparent judgment.

***V. The Referral was not Out of Order.***

In the end, the propriety of the Decision's critique of the Assembly is bound up with one's understanding of the relationship between the Assembly and the SJC in *BCO* 40-5 proceedings. *OMSJC* 15 governs the SJC when it hears reports arising out of review and control under *BCO* 40 and *RAO* 16-10. c. In such cases, *OMSJC* 15.1 and 15.2 direct the SJC to first determine whether the case is administratively and judicially in order. Generally, in any matter presented to the SJC, if a case is not in order, the Commission cannot proceed in the case. So perhaps the critique of the Assembly's referral of the instant case should be understood as the common exercise of the SJC's obligation to engage in such a preliminary analysis, and perhaps one might even propose that the Assembly may not antecedently adjudicate the SJC's judgment as to whether a case is in order under the *RAO* or otherwise.

Whatever the merit of such an argument, I do not believe that this analysis justifies the Decision as written.

First and foremost, the SJC did *not* find the instant case to be administratively or judicially out of order. It received the record, received briefs, heard the argument of the parties, deliberated, and then decided the case, all as prescribed by *BCO* 40-5. Indeed, if the case was out of order, then the SJC should have refused to hear the case at all. Such did *not* occur, and if the argument of the Decision be true, then not only was the referral of the *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC in this case null and void, violating as it allegedly did both the Constitution and the *RAO*, but it also follows that today's Decision itself would be null and void as a lawless act of both the Assembly and its SJC. Applying the Decision's logic, the SJC, without the prescribed precedent work of RPR, could not have been in any better position to take up this *BCO* 40-5 proceeding than was the Assembly itself, which is to say that neither the Assembly nor the SJC could take it up at all.

Contrary to the reasoning of the Decision, I am inclined to defer to the Assembly's apparent interpretation and implementation of its mandated duty to "commit" *BCO* 40-5 proceedings to the SJC under *BCO* 15-4 and assume a more deferential attitude toward the Assembly's referral in this case than the Decision's explanation will permit.

Evaluating the role of the SJC in a *BCO* 40-5 referral from the Assembly is complicated by the fact that such a referral has two elements:

- (1) the preliminary and jurisdictional question of whether the matter is appropriate for a *citation* to issue to a presbytery in the first place; and
- (2) whether the “credible report” has been proven to be true.

That the SJC (rather than the Assembly) has exclusive jurisdiction to settle the matters identified in (2) is not, I believe, a controversy. But it is not so clear that the Assembly lacks authority to adjudicate the question posed by (1) in circumstances like this case. If we assume, as *BCO* 40-5 seems to do, that the Assembly has the power of *referral* to the SJC, we must also assume that the Assembly must possess power to evaluate:

- What constitutes a “report;”
- Whether a report is a “credible report;”
- Whether a report, if true, would demonstrate an “important delinquency; “and
- Whether a report, if true, would demonstrate a “grossly unconstitutional proceeding.”

Interestingly, even *RAO* 16-10.c, highlighted by the Decision, seems to assume that the Assembly *does* have power to assess those matters addressed in (1), for *RAO* 16-10.c provides that the Assembly can receive a recommendation from RPR to refer a *BCO* 40-5 matter arising out of the review of presbytery records to the SJC.

But if the Assembly possesses a primary role in evaluating the matters laid out in (1) above, to what degree does the SJC possess the power to review those preliminary determinations in such cases as the Assembly elects to exercise such power? *BCO* 15-4’s direction that the Assembly “commit all matters governed by the Rules of Discipline” seems to assume that the Assembly both possesses power and may play an active role – to “commit” implies action – to make at least the preliminary determination about what is in fact a matter “governed by the Rules of Discipline.”

For example, a report about alleged grossly unconstitutional proceedings of a presbytery received by the Assembly that is not “credible” is *not* “governed by the Rules of Discipline,” and therefore the Assembly cannot, constitutionally speaking, “commit” the matter to the SJC, nor can the SJC take it up. The same goes for reports that do not in the Assembly’s judgment present “important delinquencies” or “grossly unconstitutional proceedings.” If the Assembly, after deliberation, affirmatively declined to commit a report to the SJC because it concluded it did not present an “important delinquency” or “grossly unconstitutional proceeding,” would its own SJC have the power to review that determination, reverse it, and take up the matter? I would not think so since the Assembly, not the SJC, is the only body with power to “commit” the matter to the SJC. But by the same logic, the SJC should not have jurisdiction to review and reverse the Assembly’s action in cases where it has reached the opposite conclusion – that a matter did *not* present “important delinquencies” or “grossly unconstitutional proceedings.” Today’s Decision implies that the SJC retains a power of review over an Assembly’s determination about whether a matter is appropriate to be “committed” under *BCO* 40-5. I disagree.

I grant that there are reasons to be concerned about direct referrals of *BCO* 40-5 reports to the SJC in that the Assembly could become overly aggressive in assigning *BCO* 40-5 cases, overwhelming the SJC, when perhaps redressing a concerning report might be better resolved through the robust process of review of presbytery records. And even though I disagree, I also appreciate the plausible interpretation of the *BCO*, *RAO* and *OMSJC* articulated in the decision about the prerequisites that must be satisfied before RPR may propose that the Assembly commit a *BCO* 40-5 proceeding to the SJC arising out of the review of presbytery minutes.

But I am unpersuaded that the decision’s interpretation is the *only* plausible interpretation, and I am inclined in this case to defer to the Assembly’s apparent interpretation and implementation of its mandated duty to “commit” *BCO* 40-5 proceedings to the SJC under *BCO* 15-4 in this case. The Assembly obviously found the report in this case so egregious that it justified invoking the exceptional provisions of *BCO* 40-5.

Lastly, I want to state my conviction that the final disposition of the instant matter, including whether it should for any reason be subject to another *BCO* 40-5 referral, is and should be the prerogative of the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly according to its best judgment in interpreting our Constitution. It is not within

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

the SJC's purview or power, in this Decision or otherwise, to direct or constrain the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly's interpretation of the *RAO* or the Constitution with respect to the referral of *BCO* 40-5 proceedings, nor is it the SJC's role to "explain" to the 51st General Assembly what should happen after the Presbytery in this case reports its work of dealing with TE Higgins and the Session of Trinity Presbyterian Church, Rye, NY, nor do I find it appropriate in this case for the SJC to counsel the Assembly to be "scrupulous in the future in maintaining" the alleged "careful balance that is required" by the Assembly's own "rules" of operation.

I respectfully dissent.

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

**Case No. 2023-14**

***BCO 40-5 REPORT***

***re:***

***NORTHWEST GEORGIA PRESBYTERY***

***RULING ON REPORT***

**January 12, 2024**

The SJC cited Northwest Georgia Presbytery to appear at its Fall Stated Meeting as directed by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in the following resolution.

That the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly:

1. Find that the February 14, 2021 letter from RE [name omitted] et al. is a "credible report" of "an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceedings" (*BCO 40-5*): specifically, there is evidence that (1) the calls to the three candidates were constitutionally deficient, so implementing them was unconstitutional, and (2) the Presbytery acted improperly in approving the calls and installing the three candidates.
2. Cite the Northwest Georgia Presbytery to appear, per *BCO 40-5*, before the PCA's Standing Judicial Commission which the 50th GA constitutes its commission to adjudicate this matter, by representative or in writing, at the SJC's fall stated meeting, to "show what the lower court has done or failed to do in the case in question," following the *Operating Manual for the SJC*, particularly chapter 15.

The party representatives provided documents bearing on the matter pursuant to *OMSJC 15.2* and filed briefs outlining their positions. On October 19, 2023, representatives of the General Assembly and the Presbytery appeared for hearing before the SJC.



Having considered the record, briefs and arguments presented by the party representatives, the SJC enters the following decision to "redress the proceedings of the court below" (*BCO* 40-5 and *OMSJC* 15.6):

The SJC finds that Northwest Georgia Presbytery erred egregiously in approving the calls and installing three candidates for Associate Pastor, the calls to the three candidates being constitutionally deficient. The SJC stays all further proceedings in this matter and declares that all matters relating to the Report, presently or previously pending before the General Assembly, are ended, concluded, and terminated. (15.6.d). The relief sought by the GA's Representative, annulment of the installations of the candidates, is not granted. There is no precedent in PCA judicial proceedings for annulling the installation of a minister. Further, in this case the use of such an expedient would be of doubtful legitimacy considering PCA Constitutional and parliamentary principles (*BCO* 24-7; *RONR* (12<sup>th</sup> ed.) 35:1; 35:6.c)). This Ruling fully redresses the matters raised in the Report abovenamed.

In this Ruling, the SJC directly reviewed an action or delinquency *of the Presbytery*, not of the Session, or the congregation, or the pastor who moderated the meeting.

The SJC finds that several important errors were made in electing three assistant pastors to the role of associate pastors (as set forth below). The Record does not clearly indicate when and how much of these election details were known by the members of Presbytery prior to the installation of the three associate pastors.

In its Brief and at the Hearing, Presbytery admitted that it was erroneous for a self-appointed commission to conduct the installation of the three assistant pastors elected as associate pastors without clearer authorization from the Presbytery. However, no account was given for the precipitous effort to install the newly elected associates, and there is no evidence in the record, briefs or arguments presented by the Presbytery that a reasonable explanation exists for doing so just 13 days after the election.

If any of Presbytery's committees, commissions, or members had been aware of the election irregularities, it would have clearly warranted some inquiry and delay in installations. Below are set forth those irregularities. Again, these were not errors committed by the Presbytery, but they point to the important delinquency of proceeding with the installations without prior inquiry. The Presbytery has the obligation to see to it that all the proceedings of an election, and any "facts of importance," be laid before the Presbytery. (*BCO* 20-5)

1. *The election procedure precluded the congregation from voting on each of the three TEs individually.* Voters were asked to vote in favor, or opposed, to all three combined. No voter was able to vote in favor of two but not in favor of the third, and so on. However, a call to office in the church is a call to particular persons—individuals called, gifted, and nurtured by Christ—to be particularly recognized by the officers of the church, as well as the congregation, for a particular work. An election by slate was a violation of the principles of Scriptural polity and egregiously unfair to both the candidates and the congregation.
2. *The vote was conducted by standing and not by ballot.* Presbytery's Representative presented arguments for why this should not be regarded as a “grossly unconstitutional” procedure. Nonetheless, it was an “important delinquency,” denying a member the right to vote privately in writing, especially given the sensitivity of the situation, namely, that the three TEs would have continued to serve at the church as assistant pastors if they had not been elected as associate pastors.
3. *The number of voters present at the congregational meeting was not determined.* At the time, and prior to a *BCO* revision enacted in 2022, a majority of voters *present* was required to elect a pastor (*BCO* 20-4). Both the GA Representative and the Presbytery Representative presented reasonable theories about how many voters were present and how many eligible voters might have abstained. Nonetheless, given the

wording of *BCO* 20-4 at the time, it was an important delinquency not to have ascertained and recorded the number of voters present.

4. *The moderator did not adequately fulfill the duty set forth in BCO 20-5. BCO 20-5 describes a duty of a moderator to "endeavor to dissuade the majority" from proceeding to elect a pastor if there is a "large minority of the voters who are averse to the candidate who received a majority of the votes."* In the election in question, the Record shows the vote was 127-93 (58-42%). While the *BCO* does not prescribe in detail the method by which a moderator is to fulfill that duty, the procedure used in the election in question was not sufficiently clear or adequately prudent, nor did it achieve the goal envisioned in *BCO* 20-5.<sup>1</sup>

---

A proposed Ruling was drafted and approved by an SJC committee of RE Bise, TE Coffin, RE Donahoe, TE Evans, and TE Waters (chair). The SJC reviewed the proposed Ruling and adopted the Ruling above by vote of **19-0** with one absent, one recused, one abstained, and two not qualified.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	Absent
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Concur</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	<i>Concur</i>	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Not Qualified	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Abstained
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	Not Qualified	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	Recused	White	<i>Concur</i>

---

<sup>1</sup> There are only minor differences between our current *BCO* 20-5 and that of the PCUS Book of 1879. Here is an excerpt from F.P. Ramsay's 1898 comments on this provision: "The directions to the Moderator that he endeavor to dissuade the majority when it appears that the minority will not concur must not be interpreted too strictly; for it might be that he could not conscientiously make this endeavor. But he should at least press upon them the importance of unanimity, and a sense of the responsibility that they assume. Sometimes, however, there is a wilful and obstinate minority who oppose, as Pastor, the very servant of his that Christ presents to them, and who ought not to be yielded to. The full and exact facts should be certified to the Presbytery by the Moderator, that the Presbytery may have all the data for judging."

## APPENDIX Q

M. Duncan *Concur* Lucas *Concur* Wilson *Concur*

TE Lee recused himself because he was Chairman of the GA Committee on Review of Presbytery Records, from which this matter arose, and deemed it best to do so.

TEs Garner and Kooistra were not qualified because they were absent from the October meeting at which the hearing was held on this matter.

**CASE Nos. 2023-15 & 2023-17**

***MR. TOM TURNER***

***v.***

***SOUTH FLORIDA PRESBYTERY***

**RULING ON COMPLAINTS**

March 7, 2024

South Florida Presbytery ruled these Complaints administratively out of order for lack of standing. Likewise, the SJC rules these Complaints are administratively out of order due to lack of standing and cannot be put in order. Mr. Turner is no longer a member of the PCA because Cross Community Church, where he is a member, disaffiliated from the PCA at a congregational meeting on February 12, 2023.

Ten days prior to that meeting, their pastor (then and still) TE Tommy Boland notified South Florida Presbytery that he had left the PCA and affiliated with Stevens Valley Church in Nashville, TN (pastored by a man who left the PCA in October 2016).

The Minutes of the February 12, 2023 congregational meeting of Cross Community include these excerpts:

Pastor Boland then presented to the congregation a recommendation and motion from the Session that the Church withdraw from membership in the PCA. ... Ballots were then distributed for voting by members and collected for counting. The tabulated vote was 55 in favor, and 4 against, passing by a majority.

A second motion was introduced by RE Tom Turner wherein the congregation authorizes the session to proceed with withdrawal at an appropriate date in the future, to allow for completion of outstanding business and implementation of appropriate changes to Articles of Incorporation, By-Laws and other actions deemed necessary to properly define out [*sic?*] structure an organization moving forward. This was approved by a majority voice vote.

## APPENDIX Q

The second motion was out of order because it purported to approve a contingent action, with respect to the Congregation's vote to disaffiliate from the PCA. Therefore, the first motion is the effectual action of the congregation, and the requirements of *BCO* 25-11 were met with the adoption of the first motion. We note that no action of Presbytery was required because the Congregation had already disaffiliated.

---

The SJC reviewed the Officer's proposed ruling and approved the final version of the Ruling by vote of **19-2**, with one not qualified and two absent.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Dissent</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	<i>Dissent</i>
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	Absent	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	Not Qualified	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	<i>Concur</i>	Kooistra	<i>Concur</i>	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	<i>Concur</i>
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	<i>Concur</i>	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

**DISSENTING OPINION**

Case Nos. 2023-15 & 2023-17: *RE Turner v. South Florida*  
REs John Bise and Frederick Neikirk  
March 27, 2024

We respectfully disagree with our brothers on the Standing Judicial Commission in the decision to rule these cases administratively out of order (“AOO”) due to lack of standing. The decision was predicated on the determination that when Cross Community Church (“CCC”) voted on February 12, 2023 to withdraw from membership in the PCA, the action was effective immediately, thereby rendering out of order a second resolution of the congregation. The second resolution provided that CCC “...authorizes the session to proceed with withdrawal at an appropriate date in the future, to allow for completion of outstanding business and implementation of appropriate changes [to various corporate documents] ... and other actions deemed necessary....” Summarily, it is our view that the two resolutions in question were intertwined in such a way that the AOO ruling denies access to the Courts of the Church to a censured party, in this instance CCC, acting through RE Turner.

RE Tom Turner had complained to the South Florida Presbytery (“SFP”) against an action of SFP’s Judicial Commission (“SFPJC”). This action was taken on July 19, 2023 and followed a two-year series of communications and judicial activities surrounding TE Tommy Boland, the pastor of CCC, allegations of sexual misconduct within the church and of the CCC Session failing to take appropriate actions in response to those allegations, and related items. Notably, TE Boland had first refused or failed to appear before SFPJC, then was suspended from the office of teaching elder by SFPJC which appointed a commission to enforce its judgement. TE Boland then communicated to SFPJC that he had previously withdrawn from membership in the PCA by affiliating with the Stephens Valley Church, an independent body. SFPJC later cited the Session of CCC to appear before it “in accordance with *BCO* 40-5” to answer for its actions in permitting TE Boland to continue preaching at CCC. Although SFPJC cited the CCC Session to appear on multiple occasions, the Session had refused to appear, asserting that the actions and censure against TE Boland were not lawful. At the meeting on July 19, 2023, SFPJC voted “to depose TE Boland from his pastoral office in accordance with *BCO* 34-4b and recognize his transfer of church membership

(under suspension) to the Stephens Valley Church in Nashville, TN.” SFPJC’s minutes also record “A second motion was made to dissolve the relationship of the Cross Community Church with the Presbyterian Church in America for its repeated defiance of any action of SFP, in accordance with *BCO* 40-5 and 40-6 in censuring a delinquent court according to the rules provided for process against individuals, so far as they may be applicable.”

On July 20, 2023 RE Turner filed two complaints with SFP. The first asserted that the SFPJC erred when it deposed TE Boland. The second argued that SFPJC erred in dissolving the relationship of CCC and SFP in that SFPJC did not have the authority to take that action. On July 27, 2023 the Administrative Committee of SFP notified RE Turner that his complaints were out of order in that his church was no longer a member of SFP. On that same date the Stated Clerk of SFP notified the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly that CCC was no longer a part of SFP or the PCA. On August 8, 2023 SFPJC reported its actions to Presbytery. There is, however, no evidence in the Record that either SFPJC or SFP ever acted to confirm or adopt the July 27, 2023 decision of Presbytery’s Administrative Committee.

Historically, the courts of the PCA have held that any party who has been censured has the right to be heard via appeal or complaint regarding the censure decision and the process that led to that decision. This case should be no different.

The decision of the SJC states:

*The second motion was out of order because it purported to approve a contingent action, with respect to the Congregation’s vote to disaffiliate from the PCA. Therefore, the first motion is the effectual action of the congregation, and the requirements of BCO 25-11 were met with the adoption of the first motion. We note that no action of Presbytery was required because the Congregation had already disaffiliated.*

We see no reason the congregation of CCC should be denied the latitude to affect the disaffiliation based on timing determined by its Session. Whether the determinative aspect was corporate documentation or the desire to complete the judicial process in pending cases, such an authorization is not



unreasonable, though admittedly in this instance the timing had become protracted.

The actions of CCC's Session and of TE Boland were understandably frustrating to the Presbytery. Neither was cooperative with SFPJC's attempt to inquire into serious allegations of misconduct and each allegedly withheld material information. Further, both appear to have defied instructions from SFP. Nevertheless, there were available paths open to the Session, TE Boland, and to SFP. CCC's Session or TE Boland could have requested reference of the cases to the SJC. SFP could have drawn charges against the CCC Session and the church, cited the Session to appear, and proceeded to trial or to a judgement of contumacy in the event of continued refusal to appear. Any of these would have been more consistent with our polity than the denial of access resulting from the AOO ruling, and each would have made it more likely that the allegations against TE Boland and the Session would have been adjudicated so as either to vindicate or appropriately censure the Session, based on findings of the Court.

Among prior SJC cases supporting the access to Courts of the Church by parties disputing a censure against them is SJC Case 2013-07: *Session of FPC North Port v. Southwest Florida Presbytery*. That case revolved around the right of an individual to complain against a lack of judicial process prior to her removal from church rolls. In the final decision of that case, the SJC wrote,

*In Presbyterian polity in general, and specifically in the polity of the Presbyterian Church in America, the actions of a court (whether of a Session or a Presbytery) are not beyond review and possible correction. As the Westminster Confession of Faith states: "All synods or councils, since the apostles' times, whether general or particular, may err" (WCF 31.3). In accordance with our Book of Church Order, when a communing member of the Church who is subject to the jurisdiction of a court believes that court has erred, the member has a right to file a complaint against an act or decision of the court (BCO 43-1).*

We believe that RE Turner and CCC had the same right to complain as did the individual communing member in 2013-07.

## APPENDIX Q

Another helpful case is SJC Case 2019-06, *PCA v. Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley* in which a key issue was the right of a person removed from the membership roll to object to a session's assertion of no intention to submit to the government and discipline of the church. In this case, the SJC ruled that the Petitioner should have been afforded the right to process.

*[T]he Session should have afforded the Petitioner her constitutional privileges and processes described in BCO 38-4 before deciding to remove her name from the roll.*

We see Case 2019-06 as analogous with respect to the right of one to process when censured.

In sum, we believe that CCC should have been afforded a hearing and formal process before being removed from membership. Such a course would have been more in keeping with the polity of the PCA and the precedents of this Commission, and, more important, would have made it more likely that the cause of Christ and His Church would have been vindicated and any evils appropriately called to account.

Finally, we must emphasize that our dissent takes no position on the validity of the underlying issues in the case. Whether TE Boland or the Session were justified in any or all of their actions is not before us. Our point is simply to assert that RE Turner should have had access to the courts of the Church to complain against the removal imposed on CCC.

/s/ RE John R. Bise

/s/ RE Frederick Neikirk

**PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA  
STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION**

**CASE No. 2023-19**

***TE JARED HUFFMAN***

***v.***

***TENNESSEE VALLEY PRESBYTERY***

***RULING ON APPEAL***

**March 8, 2024**

This case came before the SJC styled as an appeal after TE Huffman had initially filed an appeal with the Stated Clerk of Tennessee Valley Presbytery on September 6, 2023. The case had originated January 17, 2023 when the Tennessee Valley Presbytery (“TVP”) in a called meeting empowered its Moderator to appoint an ad-interim committee to demand satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting the Christian character of TE Huffman per *BCO* 31-2. TE Huffman had previously disclosed patterns of sin to the Session of Restoration Southside Church where he had served. The work of the ad-interim committee and a subsequent judicial commission with TE Huffman led to his making a confession which, after interaction with the commission, was finalized on June 2, 2023 and reported to TVP at its stated meeting on August 8, 2023. TE Huffman’s confession was prepared under provisions governing the conduct of a *BCO* 38-1 case without process which were amended by action of the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly on June 13, 2023. Prior to June 13, 2023, *BCO* 38-1 stipulated that the accused had the right of *complaint* against the court’s judgment. On June 13, 2023, *BCO* 38-1 was amended to say that “a censured person has the right to *appeal* (*BCO* 42)” (emphasis added).

Although TE Huffman filed notice with the Stated Clerk of TVP of his “appeal” to *the Presbytery* on September 6, 2023, there was confusion as to the proper process. There is no indication in the Record of the Case that TVP acted on the appeal. TE Huffman subsequently filed an appeal with the SJC on September 26, 2023.

In view of the fact that this Case originated and was near completion under the terms of *BCO* 38-1 as it existed prior to amendment by the 50<sup>th</sup> General

## APPENDIX Q

Assembly, it would be unfair to retroactively impose the amended terms on TE Huffman. Accordingly, we find that the Case is judicially out of order and remand the same to TVP for adjudication as a complaint as was proper under the then extant rule. As TVP has not ruled on the complaint (previously mischaracterized as an appeal) presented to it on September 6, the matter is remanded to the Presbytery. The clock is reset for Presbytery, as instructed, to consider the complaint at its next stated meeting. If the presbytery fails to consider the complaint at its next stated meeting, the complaint can be brought to the next higher court (SJC). Also, if the presbytery denies the complaint, it can be carried to the next higher court. The remainder of the (Old *BCO 43-2*) section then applies:

(excerpt from old *BCO 43-2*) ... Written notice [of complaint] thereof shall be filed with both the clerk of the lower court and the clerk of the higher court within thirty (30) days of notification of the last court's decision. Notification of the last court's decision shall be deemed to have occurred on the day of mailing (if certified, registered, or express mail of a national postal service or any private service where verifying receipt is utilized), the day of hand delivery, or the day of confirmed receipt in the case of e-mail or facsimile. Furthermore, compliance with such requirements shall be deemed to have been fulfilled if a party cannot be located after diligent inquiry or if a party refuses to accept delivery.

---

The proposed ruling was drafted and approved by the Panel, which included TE Waters (chair), RE Eggert, and RE Bise with alternates RE White and TE Lucas. The SJC approved the final Ruling by vote of **19-1**, with 3 absent and 1 recused.

Bankson	<i>Concur</i>	S. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Maynard	<i>Concur</i>
Bise	<i>Concur</i>	Eggert	<i>Concur</i>	Neikirk	Recused
Carrell	<i>Concur</i>	Evans	Absent	Pickering	<i>Concur</i>
Coffin	<i>Concur</i>	Garner	<i>Concur</i>	Sartorius	<i>Concur</i>
Dodson	<i>Concur</i>	Greco	<i>Concur</i>	Ross	Absent
Donahoe	<i>Dissent</i>	Kooistra	<i>Concur</i>	Waters	<i>Concur</i>
Dowling	<i>Concur</i>	Lee	<i>Concur</i>	White	<i>Concur</i>
M. Duncan	<i>Concur</i>	Lucas	Absent	Wilson	<i>Concur</i>

RE Neikirk indicated he recused because he was given facts in the Case by a person related to a party before the Case became public.

#### IV. PROPOSED MANUAL CHANGES

The Standing Judicial Commission submits to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly the following proposed amendments (underscoring for additions; ~~striketrough~~ for deletions) to the *Operating Manual of the Standing Judicial Commission (OMSJC)* for adoption. Changes relate to six areas.

**1. Amend OMSJC 8.4 (a) and (b) to provide a standard size for footnote text and to permit tables of contents and cover pages for briefs:**

- a. Any brief filed hereunder must be typewritten or printed on 8-1/2 x 11 inch paper, with no smaller than 12 point type, with 1 inch margin on all sides, line numbering that restarts on each page, and may be single spaced. All briefs shall also be filed by electronic means with the Stated Clerk. The text of footnotes shall be no smaller than 10 point type and shall be single spaced.
- b. The preliminary brief filed by a party shall not exceed 12 pages in length. Any supplemental brief filed by a party shall not exceed 6 pages in length. Briefs may include a cover page and table of contents which shall not count toward the page limitation.

**RATIONALE** - The proposed change to subsection (a) provides a uniform standard for formatting footnotes. The proposed change to subsection (b) allows for and encourages useful organizational additions to briefs which do not count against the page limit.

**2. Briefs for matters initially determined to be Administratively Out of Order (AOO) and Judicially Out of Order (JOO)—Amend the sections**

**enumerated below be amended to permit parties to file briefs when cases are found to be Administratively or Judicially Out of Order**

## 8. BRIEFS

### 8.1 Review Briefs

In the event that the Officers find that a case is not administratively in order (OMSJC 9.1(a)), or a Judicial Panel finds that a case is not judicially in order (OMSJC 9.1(b) & OMSJC 10.5-6), each party may file a review brief setting out the party's position regarding whether the case is in order. In such review brief the parties may allude to those documents that have been supplied by the lower court as the proposed Record of the Case and may additionally allude to any documents that were not submitted as part of the proposed Record of the Case but only if such documents bear on whether the case is in order. Review briefs shall be filed with and reviewed by the officers if no panel has been assigned and shall be filed with and reviewed by a panel if a panel has been assigned.

### 8.2~~1~~ Preliminary Briefs

- a. Once the Record of the Case is established only one preliminary brief may be submitted through the Stated Clerk before the initial hearing by a Panel or the Full Commission, whichever is hearing the case. Any preliminary brief from a Complainant or Appellant shall be filed after the Panel has declared the case judicially in order and no later than 14 days after he receives the established (perfected) ROC. The Stated Clerk immediately shall mail a copy of this brief to the Respondent or Appellee. Any preliminary brief from a Respondent or Appellee must be filed no later than 14 days prior to the date set for the hearing of the case.
- b. Such a preliminary brief should include the party's position with regard to the following:
  - (1) A summary of the facts.
  - (2) A summary of the proceedings in the lower court(s).
  - (3) A statement of the issues.
  - (4) The proposed judgment and relief.
  - (5) Argument in support of judgment and relief.

8.32 Supplemental Briefs

A supplemental brief may be filed only when the case initially has been heard by a panel. Within 14 days after a party has received a proposed and recommended decision of a Judicial Panel under *OMSJC* 17.5 of this Manual, that party may file with the Stated Clerk a supplemental brief which shall be limited to setting forth errors the party believes were made in the proposed and recommended decision of the Panel or Commission in accordance with *OMSJC* 17.9.a. In the event of a rehearing before the full Commission, each party may file a supplemental brief in accord with a briefing schedule to be established by the officers of the Commission.

8.43 No brief of a party shall make any reference to any fact not a part of the Record of the Case. The Panel or Commission may, at its discretion, strike all or part of a brief that makes such reference.

8.54

- a. Any brief filed hereunder must be typewritten or printed on 8-1/2 x 11 inch paper, with no smaller than 12~~10~~ point type, with 1 inch margin on all sides, line numbering that restarts on each page, and may be single spaced.
- b. Any review brief shall not exceed two pages in length. The preliminary brief filed by a party shall not exceed 12~~10~~ pages in length. Any supplemental brief filed by a party shall not exceed 5 pages in length. c. Any brief timely filed which does not meet these standards of form shall be returned to the sending party with reasons. In this case a revised brief may be submitted provided that such brief is filed with the Stated Clerk within 5 days of notification that the brief does not meet the standard of form.

8.65 Failure to file a brief by a party shall not be considered to be an abandonment of the case.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURE 9.2

9.2

- a. If a case is preliminarily ~~initially~~ found not to be administratively in order or not to be judicially in order, the Officers or a Panel shall reduce to writing the ground for such preliminary finding, including any conclusion as to whether the case either can or cannot be put in order. The Stated Clerk shall ~~notify~~ ~~contact~~ the relevant parties or clerks of such preliminary conclusion and request that the case be put in order, if possible, and advise the parties that the party bringing the appeal or complaint may file a review brief within 15 days of such notification. The Respondent may file a responsive review brief within 15 days of the first review brief.
  
- b. If a case cannot be put in order within the Rules of Discipline of the BCO and the requirements of this Manual, or In cases where the Officers or a Panel have made such a preliminary finding that the case is out of order, the Officers or Panel, as the case may be, shall, after the 30-day period described above has expired, and after reviewing any review brief(s), make a secondary determination as to whether the case is in order. No party shall be entitled to an oral hearing on such a jurisdictional question without the consent of the Officers or Commission as the case may be. If the Officers' or Panel's secondary conclusion is that the case is not in order, no further action shall be taken in relation to the case other than to recommend to the next meeting of the Commission that the case be dismissed on the ground that the case is out of order. That recommendation shall include a statement setting forth the ground(s) for the conclusion that the case is not in order and either an explanation as to why it cannot be put in order or that the parties have failed to timely put the case in order despite an opportunity to do so. Alternatively, the Officers or Panel may, based on the review brief(s), find that the case is administratively in order and proceed with the case, subject to the review of any jurisdictional question by the Full Commission.



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- c. ~~If the parties fail to put the case in order within 30 days after notification under this Section of the Manual, In cases where it is determined that the case should be heard by the Full Commission and the Commission makes a preliminary finding that the case is out of order, the Commission shall reduce to writing the ground for such preliminary finding, including any conclusion as to whether the case either can or cannot be put in order. The Stated Clerk shall notify the relevant parties or clerks of such preliminary conclusion and request that the case be put in order, if possible, and advise the parties that they may file a review brief within 30 days of such notification. After the 30-day period described above has expired, and after reviewing any review brief(s), the Commission shall make a final determination as to whether the case is in order. No party shall be entitled to an oral hearing on such a jurisdictional question without the consent of the Commission.~~
- d. ~~Then the Officers of the Commission may make a determination that the case not be found in order and take no further action in relation to the case other than to recommend to the next meeting of the Commission that the case be dismissed on the ground that the case was not found in order.~~
- e. ~~That recommendation shall include a brief statement of the grounds for the determination that the case is not in order and either an explanation as to why it cannot be put in order or a report that the parties have failed to do so.~~

10.6 If the Judicial Panel determines that a case is not judicially in order, the Panel through the Stated Clerk shall notify the parties and give them an opportunity to cure the defect, if it can be cured within the Rules of Discipline of the BCO and the requirements of this Manual. If the defect is cured within 30 days from receipt of such notice, the Panel shall proceed to hear and adjudicate the case. Except as noted below, if significant defects are not cured within 30 days from the receipt of notice then the Panel may make a determination that the case not be found in order and take no further action in relation to the case other than to recommend to the next meeting of the Commission that the case be dismissed on the ground that the case was not found

in order. If, however, the defect is due to the neglect or failure of the lower court to provide a Record of the Case that is “complete and sufficiently documented” as defined in *BCO* 32-18, 42-5, and *OMSJC* 7, then the Panel shall apply *BCO* 42-7 or 43-6 as appropriate. If the decision of the Panel is not confirmed by the Commission, the Commission may return the case to the Panel, or may appoint a new Panel in accordance with *RAO* 17.3 to hear and adjudicate the case, or may decide to hear the case as the Full Commission.

**RATIONALE** - The proposed changes provide parties the opportunity to file briefs when cases are found to be Administratively Out of Order or Judicially Out of Order and provide the Commission information from both parties before making a final ruling.

**3. Amend the sections listed below to eliminate mailed (hard copy) filings in favor of exclusive electronic (e.g., email) filings:**

**OMSJC 4.2**

The call of a special meeting shall specify the business to be considered at the meeting, and no other business may be considered except by an affirmative vote of three-fourths of those members present and voting, which in no case shall be less than 13 affirmative votes of members of the Commission. Further, no action may be taken on any case not specified in the call. The Officers may amend the call for the consideration of additional business if notice thereof is sent by ~~mail or~~ electronic means to the Commission members no less than 14 days before the date of the meeting.

**OMSJC 7.4.c and 7.4.d**

- c. If a party objects to the Record as being incorrect or incomplete, such party shall notify: (i) the Stated Clerk, (ii) the Panel Chairman or the Chairman of the Commission if the case is to be heard by the Commission, and (iii) the other party, by ~~mail or~~ electronic means within 15 days of the date of receiving of such Record of the Case from the Stated Clerk, obtaining a receipt of acknowledgment from each. Any party so objecting shall specify, in writing, the alleged defect(s) and proposed remedy(ies). Failure to lodge a timely objection to

the Record of the Case shall constitute acceptance of the Record of the Case by the parties.

- d. If the other party shall accede to the objection, it shall be so stipulated in writing and made a part of the Record of the Case. Such stipulation shall be filed by ~~mail or~~ electronic means with the Stated Clerk and the Panel Chairman, or the Chairman of the Commission if the case is to be heard by the Commission, not more than 30 days after the date the last party received such Record of the Case from the Stated Clerk, obtaining a receipt of acknowledgment.

#### ***OMSJC 10.7.b***

- b. Notify all parties of such time and place of hearing ~~by letter with return receipt requested or by~~ electronic means. ~~If by letter, such notice shall be mailed not less than 40 days prior to the date of hearing. If by electronic means, such~~ Such notice shall be sent not less than 40 days prior to the date of hearing and there must be a receipt of acknowledgement in the file from each party. Such 40 day period may be shortened if the parties to the case agree in writing.

#### ***OMSJC 10.10***

- 10.10 AFTER THE ORAL ARGUMENTS. A Judicial Panel immediately after hearing the oral arguments of the parties, shall go into closed session and discuss the issues in the case. In that discussion, the Panel may (1) frame the issues, (2) vote on a judgment and (3) announce these to the parties. Or, the Panel may take all these matters under advisement and reconvene within the next 20 days, as often as necessary, to frame the issues and render a judgment. This "reconvening" may be held by telephone conference call. The Chairman of the Panel shall designate a Panel member voting with the majority to prepare a written decision. This decision shall be ~~mailed or~~ sent by electronic means to the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly within 40 days from the date the Panel heard the oral arguments. Any Panel member may file, within

said 40 day period, a concurring or dissenting opinion which shall be appended to the decision.

***OMSJC 10.11.a***

10.11.a When a Judicial Panel has reached a decision in a case, the Chairman or Secretary of the Judicial Panel shall prepare a full report of the case and ~~mail or~~ send by electronic means the same to the Stated Clerk, who shall forward, immediately, a copy of the full report to each member of the Commission. This report shall include the following

***OMSJC 11.3.b***

b. Notify the parties of such time and place of hearing ~~by letter with return receipt requested or~~ by electronic means. ~~If by letter, such notice shall be mailed not less than 30 days prior to the date of hearing. If by electronic means, such~~ Such notice shall be sent not less than 30 days prior to the date of hearing and there must be a receipt of acknowledgement in the file from each party.

***OMSJC 12.10, 13.7, and 14.7***

12.10 After a decision has been reached by the full Commission, any member may file by ~~mail or~~ electronic means, within 14 days after the date the text of the decision is sent by the Secretary to the members of the Commission, a concurring or dissenting opinion, which, if it conforms with the requirements of *OMSJC* 18.12, shall be promptly sent to the parties as an appendix to the decision

13.7 After a decision has been reached by the full Commission, any member may file by ~~mail or~~ electronic means, within 14 days after the date the text of the decision is sent by the Secretary to the members of the Commission, a concurring or dissenting opinion, which, if it conforms with the requirements of *OMSJC* 18.12, shall be promptly sent to the parties as an appendix to the decision.

- 14.7 After a decision has been reached by the full Commission, any member may file by ~~mail or~~ electronic means, within 14 days after the date the text of the decision is sent by the Secretary to the members of the Commission, a concurring or dissenting opinion, which, if it conforms with the requirements of *OMSJC* 18.12, shall be promptly sent to the parties as an appendix to the decision.

***OMSJC* 17.6, 17.7.a, 17.7.d**

- 17.6 If no member of the Judicial Panel shall request a rehearing but a party shall have timely requested under Section 17.5 a rehearing by the full Commission, the Stated Clerk shall ~~mail or~~ send by electronic means a ballot to each Commission member which shall have a place for each member to indicate his vote in favor of or against such party's request. Each member shall complete and file such ballot with the Stated Clerk within 15 days of the receipt of the ~~mailing or~~ electronic notice. If any member fails to file such ballot by ~~mail or~~ electronic means within said 15 days, or shall file the ballot without completing it, that member's vote shall be recorded as a vote against the request for such a rehearing.

- 17.7 d. Where seven members of the Standing Judicial Commission shall file by ~~mail or~~ electronic means written request for such rehearing within 15 days of the receipt of the proposed decision under Section 17.5.

***OMSJC* 17.8.h(4) and (5)**

- (4) the Stated Clerk shall ~~mail~~ send the proposal by electronic means to each member of the Commission at least 10 days before the date set for such telephone conference call;
- (5) the Stated Clerk shall in the same ~~mail~~ communication send to each Commission member a written ballot;

***OMSJC 18.6***

- 18.6 The minutes of the meetings of the SJC must be approved by ~~mail or~~ electronic ballot within 20 days after receipt of such minutes. If any member fails to file with the Stated Clerk the ballot within 20 days, that member's vote shall be recorded as approval of the minutes.

***OMSJC 18.8.a***

- a. Any party may upon a showing of good cause waive his right to appear before the higher court and present oral argument. This waiver shall be accomplished by a written notice to the higher court, ~~mailed~~ sent by electronic means not less than 14 days prior to the scheduled hearing, stating the reasons for the waiver. A party's waiver has no effect upon the other party's right of appearance.

***OMSJC 18.10***

- 18.10 FILING, NOTICE, AND THE COMPUTATION OF DATES. When a provision of the Manual requires a computation of time under Section 18.9, above, such period of time shall be computed with the following construction of certain terms used herein, to-wit:
- a. A ~~mailing by~~ communication from the Commission or Panel shall be computed from the day after the document is sent electronically ~~posted or delivered to an overnight carrier.~~
- b. Documents required or permitted to be filed by a party shall be filed with the Stated Clerk. Such filing shall be sent via electronic means and shall not be timely unless the documents are received by electronic means in the office of the Stated Clerk by 11:59 PM (Eastern Time) on the deadline date ~~within the time fixed for such filing, except that papers shall be deemed filed on the day of mailing if sent by certified, registered, priority, or express mail of the United States Postal Service or any delivery service where verifying receipt is utilized. Neither facsimiles nor E-mail will be allowed for~~

~~purposes of filing.~~ Interested parties should be aware that responsibility for such filings rests with them and that ~~delays problems~~ in delivery or non-delivery are the sole responsibility of the filing party. An electronic confirmation of receipt shall be conclusive evidence of delivery.

- c. "Notice," "notification," "from receipt," "after the receipt" shall be the local date on which the party received the electronic delivery, as ordinarily confirmed by a return email ~~when the papers are actually delivered to the party.~~ For all papers requiring such, the Commission shall be responsible for obtaining verification of date of delivery. However, compliance with such requirements shall be deemed to have been fulfilled in any of the following instances, to wit:
- (1) If a party changes his/her contact or email address without notifying the Office of the Stated Clerk.
  - (2) If a party cannot be located after diligent inquiry.
  - (3) If a party refuses to accept delivery of materials or notice, or refuses to confirm receipt of an electronic communication.
  - (4) If materials or notice are returned to the sender with an electronic notice of being undeliverable or by the carrier with a notation that delivery could not be accomplished.

***OMSJC 18.10(d)***

The Judicial Panel, or the Commission if the case is to be heard by the Commission, may extend any of the deadline dates if it determines that so doing is in the interest of justice.

**RATIONALE** - Filings made by electronic means (email) have obtained widespread acceptance in the most courts. Many courts only accept electronic filings. The current system imposes burdens on the parties to determine if a filing is timely based on the type of mail carrier or delivery service used, and burdens on the Stated Clerk's Office to determine receipt by a party of a mailed filing or document. Standardizing the sending of all filings and documents under the OMSJC by electronic means will provided needed certainty and efficiency.

**4. Amend *OMSJC 17.1* to add new subsections 17.1(e) and (f) as follows:**

***OMSJC 17.1***

e. Any Amends. (Directions as to what the lower court must do, or undo, in light of the Judgment. Cf. *BCO* 42-9; 43-10; 40-5).

f. A direction that the full decision (*OMSJC* 17.1(a-f)) shall be recorded in the minutes of the lower court(s), as well as a statement of how an affected lower court has complied with any amends therein.

**RATIONALE** - The amendments provide a mechanism by which the General Assembly may know that lower courts have considered and complied with the Court's decisions and judgments.

**5. Amend *OMSJC 7.2* to add new subsection 7.2 (c) and (d) as follows:**

- c. The Clerk shall work with the Office of Stated Clerk of the General Assembly to provide an inventory of documents for the Record.
- d. The Clerk shall provide a summary timeline of the Case. This will include dates that important documents were filed, dates parties received important notifications, significant actions of the original and higher courts related to the matter and dates thereof in the following format.

MM/DD/YY	Session action.
MM/DD/YY	John Doe filed complaint with Session.
MM/DD/YY	Session called meeting; complaint was considered and denied.
MM/DD/YY	Complainant received notification that his complaint was denied.
MM/DD/YY	Complainant carried/filed that complaint with Presbytery.
MM/DD/YY	Presbytery stated meeting; complaint was considered and denied.
MM/DD/YY	Complaint notified Presbytery Clerk he had carried/filed it with the SJC.



**RATIONALE** - The amendments provide additional detail to enhance the Court's understanding of actions in the lower court and assist the administrative staff in organizing the Record of the Case.

**6. Amend *OMSJC* Section 9.1 as follows:**

1. When a judicial case is submitted to the Commission, the Officers shall make an initial determination as to whether the case is administratively in order.

- a. A case is administratively in order if the relevant provisions of *BCO* 41, 42, and 43 have been followed, including but not limited to:

(1) an Appeal must include specification(s) of error set forth concisely in numbered paragraphs for each error alleged to support the Appeal (~~BCO~~ 42-3, -8; cf. *BCO*, Forms For Judicial Business Appendix G, V Appeal). If an Appeal fails this qualification, putting the case in order (*OMSJC* 9.2 a.) shall include only formatting, not substantive, changes.

(2) a Complaint must include a statement of the action(s) or delinquency(s) complained of and the reasons supporting said complaint set forth concisely in numbered paragraphs (*BCO* 43-2; *BCO*, Forms for Judicial Business Appendix G, VI Complaint). If a Complaint fails this qualification, putting the case in order (*OMSJC* 9.2 a.) shall include only formatting, not substantive, changes.

- b. If a majority of the Officers cannot agree whether the matter is in order, then it shall be submitted to the full Commission at its next meeting.

~~b. A case is judicially in order when a Panel or the Commission determine that the relevant provisions of *BCO* 41, 42, and 43 have been followed and the documents~~

## APPENDIX Q

~~for the Record of the Case are in order in accordance with  
OMSJC 7.2.~~

**RATIONALE** - The additions provide guidance and definition for administrative decisions by reference to the elements of Appeals and Complaints described in the Book of Church Order.

### V. OFFICERS

The Commission unanimously elected the following Officers for 2024-2025:

RE Jack Wilson, Chairman

RE Sam Duncan, Vice Chairman

TE Fred Greco, Secretary

TE Hoochan Paul Lee, Assistant Secretary

**STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION  
SUPPLEMENTAL REPORT  
TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

May 24, 2024

**Item 7. Amend *OMSJC* Sections to conform cross-references to *BCO 35* as follows:**

- 7.2.a(3) all transcribed testimony actually taken before the lower court (*BCO 35-7 35-9*). Audio and/or video recordings shall not be admissible or be made a part of the Record of the Case unless the same have been transcribed and authenticated by the Moderator and Stated Clerk of the lower court (*BCO 35-8-35-10*);
- 7.2.b(3) all transcribed testimony actually taken before the lower court (*BCO 35-7 35-9*). Audio and/or video recordings shall not be admissible or be made a part of the Record of the Case unless the same have been transcribed and authenticated by the Moderator and Stated Clerk of the lower court (*BCO 35-8-35-10*);
- 18.4.a(2) that the new evidence does have an important bearing on the case and refer the case to the lower court for a new trial (*BCO 35-14 35-16*).
- 18.4.b(2) that the new evidence does have an important bearing on the case and refer the case to the lower court for a new trial (*BCO 35-14 35-16*).

**Rationale:**

*BCO 35* was amended at the 2023 General Assembly in Memphis. The amendments resulted in renumbering several paragraphs of that Chapter. The cross-references found in the *OMSJC* were not updated at that time. This amendment accomplishes that conforming update.

## APPENDIX R

### STATED CLERK'S REPORT TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

In their new book, *The Great Dechurching*, Jim Davis and Michael Graham write, “More people have left the church in the last 25 years than all the new people who became Christians from the First Great Awakening, Second Great Awakening, and Billy Graham crusades combined.” Pew Foundation researchers now estimate Christians will only comprise about a third of the U.S. population by 2070.<sup>1</sup> If we only consider the math, then the question is not whether Christianity will decline in our nation but how fast and to what degree.

Church statistician Ryan Burge pulls no punches when describing what is happening in the major Protestant churches. He says, “The mainline is just a bloodbath,” with the major liberal denominations down by at least 30 percent since 1987.<sup>2</sup> Evangelicals are not far behind. Southern Baptists lose more members every year than our total denomination and are down at least three million from their 16 million high a decade ago.

Against all that bad news, Burge says this: “There are two traditions that are up. The Assemblies of God has grown by over 50% in the [last] 35 years. The PCA has doubled in size, as well.” But then he says that the Assemblies are not doing as well as a first glance would indicate. “Sure, they have grown 50% since the late 1980s. But notice... their growth rate has decline[d] from 2% per annum to nearly 0% in the last few years.”

Only the PCA has kept growing. Burge acknowledges that the PCA is “incredibly small” compared to the Assemblies and the SBC, but, according to Burge, we are actually exceeding the growth rate of the general population

---

<sup>1</sup> David O'Reilly, “What Is the Future of Religion in America?,” *Trust Magazine* (Feb. 7, 2023). <https://www.pewtrusts.org/en/trust/archive/winter-2023/what-is-the-future-of-religion-in-america>

<sup>2</sup> Ryan Burge, “Religion Data Wonk: Just How Bad Is Denominational Decline?,” *Religion Unplugged* (June 15, 2023). <https://religionunplugged.com/news/2023/6/12/just-how-bad-is-denominational-decline>

(but only by 0.1%). According to these observations, the PCA is a clear outlier according to national church trends. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord also that *our* numbers indicate that we grew again this past year, consistent with our 50-year history – except for the Covid years. What should we make of these blessings?

First, we must acknowledge that we cannot be exact about our numbers. Although we continue to show growth, the numbers of 100 churches (mostly small ones) were estimated by their presbytery clerks for last year's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary statistics, and we do not regularly receive annual reports from many others. Still, the numbers are generally trending upward which, in an age of unquestionable church decline, gives us cause for being grateful for the Lord's blessing.

Second, we must humbly pray, asking that God would make us faithful stewards of our unique blessings. We should not pretend that we can explain or deserve such blessings, but we can affirm, as we come away from our 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebrations, that our forefathers did something special when they declared us to be Scriptural and Confessional and, at the same time, to have the Great Commission as our "top priority".<sup>3</sup> Our founders humbly acknowledged that our doctrinal scruples and love of tradition could turn us inward and tempt us to pride or schism. They also believed that prioritizing Christ's mission could keep us alive and flourishing. So far, they have been proven correct. We have had our share of controversy, but somehow our mission priorities have stayed intact and now mark us as a church that God has used against the cultural tides to proclaim the gospel to a world that needs Jesus.

### **51<sup>ST</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN RICHMOND, VA, JUNE 10-14, 2024**

Registration for the General Assembly to be held in Richmond, June 10-14, opened in early January. As of May 20<sup>th</sup>, 1,927 commissioners had registered, and is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest number in our history.

### **OVERTURES TO THE 51<sup>ST</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

As of the writing of this report, thirty-five (35) overtures have been submitted to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly.

---

<sup>3</sup> See the "Message to All Churches" adopted by the First General Assembly.

In addition to the usual overtures relating to presbytery boundaries, seven overtures seek amendment to the Rules of Discipline. Two overtures seek to establish study committees: one to whom these seven discipline overtures would be referred for review and recommendation to the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly; and, one that would seek an evaluation of the *Jesus Calling* books.

Five overtures seek to require background checks for church officers. Other overtures seek further amendment to *Book of Church Order (BCO)* standards for presbyteries' dealings with ministers (including dealing with transfers of ministers, dealing with TE presbytery membership, and adding care of TEs to the duties for which presbytery has the power to act). Another overture seeks to add the responsibility of living in obedience to the Great Commission to the duties of the Session in *BCO* 12-5.

Three overtures address the General Assembly through amendments to portions of the *Rules of Assembly Operation (RAO)* relating to review and control, including: how proposed amendments to the *RAO* are handled; the need to hear from affected Permanent Committees and Agencies before considering *RAO* changes related to them (addressing an issue from the 50<sup>th</sup> GA through a coordinated effort of Ascension Presbytery and the Stated Clerk's Office); and, what information should be required from our institutions of higher learning. Another related overture seeks to clarify the nature of policies followed by committees and agencies that are set by the GA (*BCO* 14).

Two overtures address the dissolution of pastoral calls. Two seek to grant at least part of *BCO* 53 ("The Preaching of the Word") full constitutional authority. And two address gender issues—one seeking amendment to *BCO* 7, and one commending the letter of the commission dealing with transgender procedures for minors that was formed in response to Overture 12 to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (see below). Five overtures were turned down by presbyteries and were then submitted by church sessions or an individual. You can find a complete listing and the text of the overtures submitted to date in the *Commissioners Handbook*. Please go to the General Assembly website <https://pcaga.org/resources/> to keep abreast of additional overtures as they are received. The deadline for submitting overtures to this year's Assembly (if they do not require CCB review) was May 11 ["one (1) month (31 days) prior to the opening of the General Assembly" *RAO* 11-8].

**BCO AMENDMENT VOTES BY PRESBYTERIES**

The Fiftieth General Assembly sent three proposed amendments to the *Book of Church Order* to presbyteries for advice and consent this past year. All have received the required approval from two-thirds of the presbyteries (59) and will be before this Fifty-first Assembly for a final vote (requiring approval by a majority of commissioners).

**Presbytery Votes on Amendments Sent Down by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

	<b>For</b>	<b>Against</b>
Item 1: Amend <i>BCO</i> 7-3	65	14
Item 2: Amend <i>BCO</i> 8-2 and 9-3	76	2
Item 3: Amend <i>BCO</i> 38-1	78	1

For a complete tally of the presbytery votes as of May 20, please see Attachment 1.

Votes for *BCO* amendments may continue to be submitted until the 51<sup>st</sup> GA convenes. Presbyteries should be aware that not voting on a proposed amendment to the *BCO* is tantamount to a negative vote (*BCO* 26-2) because the advice and consent of two-thirds of Presbyteries is required for approval. That differs from *Robert's Rules of Order*, in which abstentions (refraining to vote) are not counted in determining a majority. The *BCO* is of higher parliamentary authority than Robert's Rules of Order for denominational business.

**OVERTURE 12 TO THE 50<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY, "PETITION GOVERNMENT TO END SEX-CHANGE PROCEDURES FOR MINORS"**

Overture 12 to the Fiftieth General Assembly authorized Moderator Fred Greco to appoint a commission to draft a humble petition to government officials regarding the protection of minor children from the damages of gender reassignment. The commission completed its work, and in January, the Stated Clerk's Office sent the petition and a cover email to the Federal officials designated in the overture. The overture also urged presbytery clerks to send the petition to state and provincial government officials, so the Stated Clerk's Office provided the petition and the cover email to the presbytery clerks for their use.

**OVERTURE 28 TO THE 50<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL ASSEMBLY, “DECLARE MESSAGE TO ALL NATIONS A FAITHFUL EXPRESSION OF BIBLICAL POLITY SHAPING THE PCA”**

Overture 28 to the Fiftieth General Assembly declared the “Message to All Nations” a faithful expression of the Biblical polity that shaped the founding of the PCA in 1973. It directed the Stated Clerk to send it to the Presbyterian Church in the USA via its Stated Clerk. This has been done as directed.

**DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL ASSAULT HANDBOOK**

The PCA’s greatest, present legal vulnerabilities relate to abuse issues. The Stated Clerk’s Office is in the midst of preparing a handbook for churches with *suggested* approaches and general principles to handling allegations of domestic abuse and sexual assault (state laws and church situations are too varied for us to seek to create a universal template). The handbook largely consists of extractions from the Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault (DASA) study committee’s report. The handbook also intends to include a resource list of, among other things, attorneys and independent investigators. However, our attempts to create this resource list of independent investigators and attorneys with expertise in this area and a willingness to help churches is going very slowly. Understandably, Christian attorneys are reticent to provide counsel outside the states in which they are licensed. However, we have discovered there is greater willingness to provide consulting advice, and we are requesting that our churches provide us with names of believers who would be willing to be consultants.

Another step we are taking in our response to abuse is maintaining a list of disciplinary actions (i.e., suspensions and depositions) taken by presbyteries against teaching elders. Presbyteries already communicate this information to the Stated Clerk’s Office annually. The combined list of such will only include the action and dates of the disciplinary actions and will only be provided to authorized individuals from search committees with respect to specific individuals they are considering for pastoral roles. The Stated Clerk’s Office does not receive from presbyteries the causes for the discipline, and discerning such is the responsibility of search committees through references. The details for compiling, maintaining, and informing churches of names on that list are being examined by our legal counsel. We should be able to serve search committees in this way by fall. Please remember that we also provide search committees with Ministerial Data Forms from ministers who have submitted



them to the Stated Clerk's Office as part of our regular work of serving the larger church.

### **LEGAL MATTERS**

The PCA has been named in a pending lawsuit dated March 11, 2024, related to a car accident in October 2022. Our insurer is defending the claim, and the PCA can do nothing further at this time except follow the instructions provided by the attorney or adjuster.

Various courts in the PCA are receiving a spate of subpoenas for access to church records (local church records, trial records, SJC records, ministers' notes, etc.), often from those involved in difficult divorces and cases of abuse. After receiving an opinion on such matters from the PCA's legal counsel, the Stated Clerk's Office will not ordinarily grant access to GA Committee nor - Commission records due to the liabilities to which it opens our church. The AC recommends that all church courts carefully weigh the risks of granting outside parties access to ecclesiastical records. The Stated Clerk's Office will share our counsel's legal opinion with any church court that asks, but must be clear that state laws vary, requiring churches and presbyteries to consult local attorneys.

### **FINANCES**

Last summer, the Administrative Committee, under which the Stated Clerk serves, received a dire report from our accountants projecting a \$200-\$300K operating loss due to the financial impact of the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary celebration, staff transitions, and high inflation. Following that forecast, we prayed, our development team went to work, and many responded generously. With 2023 financial statements in hand, I am delighted to report that the projected six-figure operating loss was reduced to approximately -\$24K. Further, buoyed by a strong 2023 market performance, net income for the year rose to \$140K. We praise the Lord for his provision and the generosity of many who aided in our better-than-expected year-end results. Those who provided special help included the Committees and Agencies that provided above-and-beyond their regular fees, members of the Administrative Committee, key churches and presbyteries to whom we reached out for additional support, and Administrative Committee staff (the amazingly committed and expert people who serve our church with genuine zeal for Christ). We continue to ask that all churches support the financial needs of the AC as part of our mutual responsibility for the mission and ministry of the whole PCA.

The PCA is unique in NAPARC in not requiring dues of its member churches. In 2023, 385 churches *increased* their giving to the AC (compared to 312 in 2022 and 320 in 2021). Of those churches, 63 had not given to the AC in at least four years. In contrast, the number of churches that *decreased* their giving to the AC in 2023 dropped to 236. Of those 236, 88 churches dropped their giving to \$0. Considering 284 reduced their giving in 2022 and 304 did so in 2021, we praise the Lord that fewer churches decreased giving while many more increased their giving.

**RESIGNATIONS AND RESULTING NOMINATIONS NEEDED (AS OF THE WRITING OF THIS REPORT)**

**TE Brett Carl** is no longer serving on the Committee on Mission to the World Committee class of 2025. Alternate TE Tom Patton will fill the unexpired term.

**RE Patrick Fant** resigned from the Committee on Reformed University Fellowship class of 2026. Alternate RE Jeremy Kath will fill the unexpired term.

**TE Scott Seaton** resigned from the Board of Trustees of Covenant College class of 2027. The Nominating Committee has nominated RE John C. Kwasny for the unexpired term.

**RE Ryan Bailey** resigned from the Board of Directors of Geneva Benefits class of 2024. Geneva's Board appointed RE Cody Dick to fill the unexpired term. This term expires at the end of General Assembly.

**STANDING JUDICIAL COMMISSION (SJC)**

The Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) handled approximately 25 cases this past year.

Please pray for the men of the SJC as they work toward the purity and progress of the PCA. SJC work has historically been handled with exemplary integrity. We have a number of new men on the SJC, and these new members have been received and tutored with collegiality by experienced members. We pray that this relational investment will help the court deal with decisions in a manner that blesses the whole church.

For the report of cases handled this past year see the SJC Report, p. 2001 of this *Handbook*.

### **COMMITTEE ON CONSTITUTIONAL BUSINESS**

All overtures proposing amendments to the *BCO* and *RAO* (*RAO* 11-5) are referred to the CCB to seek advice for the Assembly regarding their conformity with our constitution. The Office of the Stated Clerk supports the CCB in its operations and communications. The Stated Clerk may also seek advice from the CCB on matters of constitutional import (*RAO* 8-2.b.1).

All overtures proposing amendments to the *BCO* and *RAO* were referred to CCB. I did not request advice on any other matters.

For CCB's advice on the overtures, see the Committee on Constitutional Business Report, p. 291 of this *Handbook*.

### **THE OFFICE**

The Stated Clerk's Office is in a period of staff transition due to retirements and other moves. Dr. Dixie Zietlow (Ph.D. in Business Administration and former Chief of Staff to Illinois Senator Win Stoller) is the new Business Administrator for the PCA, replacing our long-serving and treasured John Robertson, who has retired. Priscilla Lowrey, who has carried such a heavy load of meticulously preparing GA documents and records, has retired from full-time work in light of the long health struggle and recent homegoing of her husband, Mark. Experienced churchman and *BCO* historian Dr. Per Almquist will now manage documents and answer *BCO* questions. Dick Doster has announced his retirement from editing *byFaith* and will fully transition after GA with Andy Jones, a PCA TE and head of Roundtree, the agency that does many publications for PCA committees and agencies, taking his place.

### **JOHN ROBERTSON**

For the past 25 years, TE John Robertson served in the role of Business Administrator for the Administrative Committee of the PCA. As an ordained minister and certified public accountant, John's fluency in both Presbyterian polity and finances proved to be the right combination to help the PCA manage growth while also maturing in its operations and financial affairs.

Managing the PCA's business affairs is complex because the AC has no permanent funding source. Every year, the Assembly decides to create new initiatives and study committees, but it is up to the AC to find room for these

items in its budget while maintaining its normal operations. John proved highly capable at helping the church achieve its agenda without breaking the bank.

John's track record includes building the offices in Lawrenceville and helping the PCA prevail in a six-year court case, survive the Great Recession, and navigate its first canceled General Assembly (due to Covid-19).

As expert as has been John's financial management, those who worked under John's leadership talk more about his pastoral skills than his accounting skills. They recall how he is brought to tears when talking about small churches donating to the denomination, realizing the great sacrifice their gift requires. Though he was paid to evaluate the numbers, it is obvious to those who worked alongside him that he saw his work as being a shepherd of Christ's flock.

Reflecting on John's service, Stated Clerk emeritus Roy Taylor declared, "Selecting John Robertson to serve as Business Administrator was one of the wisest decisions I ever made." Many who served with John agree, and the PCA will enjoy the fruit of his labors for decades to come.

### **TRANSLATIONS OF THE *BCO* AND OTHER DOCUMENTS**

We continue to make progress with foreign language (Spanish and Portuguese) translations of our *Book of Church Order (BCO)* to help our church welcome and minister to diverse peoples and generations. The elders on the Spanish review committee are nearing the completion of their hard work with marvelous blessing:

"The Lord's favor to us in 2023 was unmistakable," says Hernando Sáenz-Oggioni, Hispanic Ministries Coordinator at Mission to North America (MNA). "We grew to 62 Hispanic Teaching Elders, 52 candidates, and 42 churches. To put it into perspective, over the past decade, we have doubled the number of PCA Hispanic pastors and more than tripled the number of Hispanic candidates for the gospel ministry in the PCA."

The PCA also has 19 Portuguese-speaking, Brazilian churches pastored by 26 Brazilians who are working with Mission to North America to pave the way for what are anticipated to be many more Presbyterian pastors from Brazil.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Our Korean-heritage fathers and brothers continue to provide important leadership in our Permanent Committees and Agencies, as well as to grow presbyteries and churches. To further their leadership and participation, key leaders have been updating the Korean *BCO* translation. Those of Korean heritage now total 14 percent of the Teaching Elders and 12 percent of the churches of the PCA.

STATISTICS

See Attachment 2 for the full Table of 2023 Five-Year Summar of Statistics. You may also view the statistics online at <https://presbyteryportal.pcanet.org/Report/StatsReport>.

Quick Summaries:

Churches added		12
Churches Transferred to Other Denominations		4
Churches Dissolved		11
	<u>Last Year</u>	<u>This Year</u>
Teaching Elders	5247	5285
Candidates for Ministry	751	572
Child Baptisms	5028	5411
Child Professions	4520	4859
Adult Professions	4175	4641
Total Membership	386,345	393,528
Total Disbursements	\$1.05B	\$1.13B

PCA PERSPECTIVE

Most whom I consult think that our tensions are lower than in the last two years, and are grateful. Brothers are working hard to come to consensus on issues that can divide us. We are not united on all things, but there seems to be a genuine desire to unify as much as our convictions allow so that we may unite in mission and, by God’s grace, add momentum to our efforts to spread the gospel and nurture God’s people. Mission to North America’s and Mission to the World’s church planting plans nationally and internationally seem to be exciting the entire denomination. Covenant College and Covenant Seminary are both reporting enrollment increases. Christian Discipleship Ministries’ Women’s and leadership training conferences have been very well attended.

## APPENDIX R

Ridge Haven's camp ministries are bursting at the seams. Geneva Benefits is providing trusted financial services to our denomination and to a growing number of others. The PCA Foundation's assets are growing to bless all of these efforts. From a broad perspective, the PCAs overall membership and funding show healthy increases this past year – perhaps demonstrating a post-Covid “pattern” in development. We pray that all of these blessings are indicative of the Lord's grace enabling our obedience to Christ's mission, and we pray that he will equip us to be faithful in stewarding the growth that he is giving as a special blessing to the PCA.

Bryan Chapell  
Stated Clerk

**Attachment 1**

**2023-2024**

***BCO* AMENDMENTS SENT DOWN TO PRESBYTERIES  
BY THE 50th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FOR VOTING, and for ADVICE AND CONSENT**

**NOTE:**     **The Stated Clerk's Office sends the proposed amendments only in their final form, as approved by the General Assembly.**

**ITEM 1: Amend *BCO* 7-3**, regarding titling of unordained people, by the addition of a sentence (underlined).

[Overture 26 was answered in the affirmative as amended by the Overtures Committee.]

**7-3.** No one who holds office in the Church ought to usurp authority therein, or receive official titles of spiritual preeminence, except such as are employed in the Scripture. Furthermore, unordained people shall not be referred to as, or given the titles of, the ordained offices of pastor/elder, or deacon.

<b>For: 65</b>	<b>Against: 14</b>
----------------	--------------------

# APPENDIX R

## ITEM 1: Amend BCO 7-3

Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Vote
1 Arizona	32	2	1	+
2 Ascension	24	4	1	+
3 Blue Ridge	54	3	1	+
4 Calvary	80	5	4	+
5 Canada West				
6 Catawba Valley	34	7	0	+
7 Central Carolina	53	1	2	+
8 Central Florida	70	7	3	+
9 Central Georgia	39	0	0	+
10 Central Indiana	18	9	4	+
11 Chesapeake	37	2	2	+
12 Chicago Metro	20	31	0	-
13 Columbus Metro				
14 Covenant	59	3	1	+
15 Eastern Canada	23	1	4	+
16 Eastern Carolina	32	7	3	+
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	21	22	3	-
18 Evangel	66	2	0	+
19 Fellowship	26	1	4	+
20 Georgia Foothills	33	7	5	+
21 Grace	37	0	1	+
22 Great Lakes				
23 Gulf Coast	36	2	0	+
24 Gulfstream	13	9	2	+
25 Heartland	25	0	1	+
26 Heritage	24	3	2	+
27 Highlands	53	0	0	+
28 Hills and Plains	21	28	0	-
29 Houston Metro				
30 Illinois	20	0	0	+
31 Iowa	18	0	0	+
32 James River	62	2	0	+
33 Korean Capital	2	36	4	-
34 Korean Central	19	5	4	+
35 Korean Eastern	4	13		-
36 Korean Northeastern	0	10	1	-
37 Korean Northwest				
38 Korean Southeastern	4	18	2	-
39 Korean Southern	5	10	2	-
40 Korean Southwest	24	10	0	+
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	24	6	1	+
42 Lowcountry	19	0	0	+
43 Metro Atlanta	32	54	1	-
44 Metropolitan New York	3	20	1	-

Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Vote
45 Mississippi Valley	81	0	0	+
46 Missouri	15	18	1	-
47 Nashville	49	15	2	+
48 New Jersey	17	1	1	+
49 New River	16	0	2	+
50 New York State	14	14	2	-
51 North Florida	36	3	0	+
52 North Texas	54	11	4	+
53 Northern California	11	10	6	+
54 Northern Illinois	33	0	2	+
55 Northern New England	10	6	1	+
56 Northwest Georgia	41	0	0	+
57 Ohio	24	1	0	+
58 Ohio Valley	23	13	1	+
59 Pacific				
60 Pacific Northwest	38	12	0	+
61 Palmetto	56	2	0	+
62 PeeDee	34	0	0	+
63 Philadelphia				
64 Philadelphia Metro West	24	9	0	+
65 Piedmont Triad	28	6	4	+
66 Pittsburgh	48	0	1	+
67 Platte Valley	17	3	0	+
68 Potomac				
69 Providence	49	1	0	+
70 Rio Grande	18	8	0	+
71 Rocky Mountain	20	42	4	-
72 Savannah River	36	0	0	+
73 Siouxlands	33	0	0	+
74 South Coast	29	8	4	+
75 South Florida	39	2	0	+
76 South Texas	13	18	6	-
77 Southeast Alabama	30	0	0	+
78 Southern Louisiana	25	0	2	+
79 Southern New England	43	2	1	+
80 Southwest Florida	47	0	4	+
81 Suncoast Florida	36	1	1	+
82 Susquehanna Valley	43	0	3	+
83 Tennessee Valley	53	25	1	+
84 Tidewater	38	3	0	+
85 Warrior	22	1	0	+
86 West Hudson				
87 Westminster	32	2	0	+
88 Wisconsin	20	14	1	+

Official Totals: For - 65

Against - 14

Number of Presbyteries: 88

Number Reporting: 79

2/3 Approval is: 59



**ITEM 2: Amend BCO 8-2 and 9-3**, to require officers 'conformity to Biblical standards for chastity and sexual purity in self-description, by the addition of the underlined wording.

[Overture 23 from Mississippi Valley Presbytery was answered in the affirmative as amended by the Overtures Committee. (Overtures 9, 16, 17, and 24 were answered with reference to Overture 23.)]

**8-2.** He that fills this office should possess a competency of human learning and be blameless in life, sound in the faith and apt to teach. He should exhibit a sobriety and holiness of life becoming the Gospel. He should conform to the biblical requirement of chastity and sexual purity in his descriptions of himself, and in his convictions, character, and conduct. He should rule his own house well and should have a good report of them that are outside the Church.

**9-3.** To the office of deacon, which is spiritual in nature, shall be chosen men of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly spirit, warm sympathies, and sound judgment, conforming to the biblical requirement of chastity and sexual purity in their descriptions of themselves and in their convictions, character, and conduct.

**For: 77**

**Against: 2**

# APPENDIX R

## ITEM 2: Amend BCO 8-2 and 9-3

Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Vote
1 Arizona	32	2	1	+
2 Ascension	30	0	0	+
3 Blue Ridge	58	0	4	+
4 Calvary	86	0	1	+
5 Canada West				
6 Catawba Valley	38	4	0	+
7 Central Carolina	54	0	2	+
8 Central Florida	73	4	3	+
9 Central Georgia	39	0	0	+
10 Central Indiana	22	6	5	+
11 Chesapeake	37	5	0	+
12 Chicago Metro	33	15	5	+
13 Columbus Metro				
14 Covenant	62	0	1	+
15 Eastern Canada	26	0	4	+
16 Eastern Carolina	31	5	4	+
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	44	0	2	+
18 Evangel	75	0	0	+
19 Fellowship	32	0	0	+
20 Georgia Foothills	32	9	4	+
21 Grace	37	0	1	+
22 Great Lakes				
23 Gulf Coast	36	1	0	+
24 Gulfstream	21	0	2	+
25 Heartland	28	0	0	+
26 Heritage	26	6	2	+
27 Highlands	50	1	1	+
28 Hills and Plains	47	1	1	+
29 Houston Metro				
30 Illiana	20	0	0	+
31 Iowa	18	1	0	+
32 James River	60	3	1	+
33 Korean Capital	24	14	3	+
34 Korean Central	23	0	1	+
35 Korean Eastern	20	0		+
36 Korean Northeastern	11	1	0	+
37 Korean Northwest				
38 Korean Southeastern	24	0	0	+
39 Korean Southern	17	0	0	+
40 Korean Southwest	34	0	0	+
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	27	4	0	+
42 Lowcountry	19	0	0	+
43 Metro Atlanta	47	37	1	+
44 Metropolitan New York	3	17	2	-
45 Mississippi Valley	79	0	0	+
46 Missouri	26	9	0	+
47 Nashville	64	2	1	+
48 New Jersey	18	0	1	+
49 New River	17	0	2	+
50 New York State	16	15	0	+
51 North Florida	41	0	0	+
52 North Texas	64	7	1	+
53 Northern California	11	14	1	-
54 Northern Illinois	29	2	3	+
55 Northern New England	17	0	0	+
56 Northwest Georgia	40	0	0	+
57 Ohio	24	0	0	+
58 Ohio Valley	35	0	0	+
59 Pacific				
60 Pacific Northwest	44	9	0	+
61 Palmetto	56	0	1	+
62 PeeDee	35	0	0	+
63 Philadelphia				
64 Philadelphia Metro West	30	3	0	+
65 Piedmont Triad	32	4	2	+
66 Pittsburgh	49	0	1	+
67 Platte Valley	19	1	0	+
68 Potomac				
69 Providence	49	1	0	+
70 Rio Grande	22	3	0	+
71 Rocky Mountain	54	10	3	+
72 Savannah River	36	0	0	+
73 <del>Siouxlands</del>	29	4	0	+
74 South Coast	31	6	4	+
75 South Florida	41	0	0	+
76 South Texas	33	1	4	+
77 Southeast Alabama	31	0	0	+
78 Southern Louisiana	24	1	2	+
79 Southern New England	42	5	1	+
80 Southwest Florida	53	0	0	+
81 Suncoast Florida	36	3	3	+
82 Susquehanna Valley	50	0	2	+
83 Tennessee Valley	72	6	1	+
84 Tidewater	31	4	2	+
85 Warrior	21	0	0	+
86 West Hudson				
87 Westminster	39	0	0	+
88 Wisconsin	31	2	1	+

Official Totals: For - 77      Against - 2  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 79  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 3: Amend BCO 38-1**, regarding confessions and offended parties, as follow (strike-through for deletions, underlining for new wording).

[Overture 27 from Pacific Northwest Presbytery was answered in the affirmative as amended by the Overtures Committee.]

**38-1.** When any person shall come forward and make his offense known to the court, a full statement of the facts shall be recorded and judgment rendered without process. In handling a confession of guilt, it is essential that the person intends to confess and permit the court to render judgment without process. Statements made by him in the presence of the court must not be taken as a basis of a judgment without process except by his consent. In the event a confession is intended, a written Confession (i.e., a sufficient summary of the facts, the person's specific confession, and any expression or evidence of repentance) must be approved by the accused, and by the court, before the court proceeds to a judgment, and the co- signed document shall be appended to the minutes (regular or executive session). No other information may be presented without written consent from the accused and the court, and this prohibition includes individuals, prosecutors, committees, and commissions. A censured person has the right to appeal (BCO 42). The person has the right to be assisted by counsel at any point, in accord with the stipulations of BCO 32-19. [See Stated Clerk's note below.]

In any instances involving a personal offense (BCO 29-3), the court shall attempt to inform the offended person(s) of that part of the Confession the court deems pertinent to the offense against him or her. The court shall invite the offended person to provide the court comment on the Confession prior to final approval of the Confession by the confessor and the court. The court shall encourage the offended person to enlist the help of an advisor in preparing any such comments. In all instances, the court shall report the way such offended persons were informed of the parts of the Confession pertinent to them.

**[Stated Clerk's Note:** The last two sentences in paragraph one above are necessary because the 50th GA Overtures Committee adopted wording prior to the 50th GA's adopting Items 9 and 10 of the Amendments Sent Down to Presbyteries by the 49th GA, thereby amending the same section of the *BCO*. See below, note 7 of the Rationale accompanying Overture 27.]

**Rationale #7 from Overture 27 to 50th GA:**

7. Note: The 49th GA approved two amendments to *BCO* 38-1 and sent them to presbyteries for a vote. As of April 11, 2023, presbyteries had voted 77-1 & 78-0 in favor. If the 50<sup>th</sup> GA in Memphis also approves them, then the current final sentence in *BCO* 38-1 ("*The accused person has the right of complaint against the judgment*") will be revised to read: "A censured person has the right to appeal (*BCO* 42)." And an additional sentence will be added after it: "The person has the right to be assisted by counsel at any point, in accord with the stipulations of *BCO* 32-19." These two new sentences would not be touched or affected by this Overture.

**For: 78**

**Against: 1**

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## ITEM 3: Amend BCO 38-1

Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Vote
1 Arizona	32	2	1	+
2 Ascension	29	0	0	+
3 Blue Ridge	59	0	4	+
4 Calvary	86	0	1	+
5 Canada West				
6 Catawba Valley	41	0	0	+
7 Central Carolina	56	0	0	+
8 Central Florida	78	0	0	+
9 Central Georgia	39	0	0	+
10 Central Indiana	28	0	6	+
11 Chesapeake	26	7	10	+
12 Chicago Metro	34	0	3	+
13 Columbus Metro				
14 Covenant	63	0	0	+
15 Eastern Canada	24	0	2	+
16 Eastern Carolina	35	1	6	+
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	36	0	10	+
18 Evangel	84	0	0	+
19 Fellowship	28	0	0	+
20 Georgia Foothills	38	0	7	+
21 Grace	37	1	2	+
22 Great Lakes				
23 Gulf Coast	37	0	0	+
24 Gulfstream	23	0	0	+
25 Heartland	28	0	1	+
26 Heritage	33	0	4	+
27 Highlands	52	0	0	+
28 Hills and Plains	28	5	10	+
29 Houston Metro				
30 Illinois	20	0	0	+
31 Iowa	18	0	1	+
32 James River	61	3	0	+
33 Korean Capital	39	0	0	+
34 Korean Central	21	0	6	+
35 Korean Eastern	16	0		+
36 Korean Northeastern	11	0	0	+
37 Korean Northwest				
38 Korean Southeastern	11	2	11	+
39 Korean Southern	17	0	0	+
40 Korean Southwest	22	5	9	+
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	28	1	2	+
42 Lowcountry	19	0	0	+
43 Metro Atlanta	82	0	0	+
44 Metropolitan New York	21	0	0	+

Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Vote
45 Mississippi Valley	84	0	0	+
46 Missouri	30	0	5	+
47 Nashville	66	1	2	+
48 New Jersey	16	0	0	+
49 New River	19	0	0	+
50 New York State	26	0	0	+
51 North Florida	41	0	0	+
52 North Texas	70	0	1	+
53 Northern California	26	0	1	+
54 Northern Illinois	32	0	3	+
55 Northern New England	16	0	1	+
56 Northwest Georgia	31	1	6	+
57 Ohio	24	0	0	+
58 Ohio Valley	36	0	0	+
59 Pacific				
60 Pacific Northwest	51	0	0	+
61 Palmetto	56	0	0	+
62 PeeDee	33	0	1	+
63 Philadelphia				
64 Philadelphia Metro West	30	0	3	+
65 Piedmont Triad	36	2	0	+
66 Pittsburgh	49	0	1	+
67 Platte Valley	20	0	0	+
68 Potomac				
69 Providence	49	1	0	+
70 Rio Grande	19	0	2	+
71 Rocky Mountain	65	0	1	+
72 Savannah River	36	0	0	+
73 <del>Savannah</del>	33	0	0	+
74 South Coast	31	0	10	+
75 South Florida	40	0	1	+
76 South Texas	26	7	6	+
77 Southeast Alabama	31	0	0	+
78 Southern Louisiana	26	0	1	+
79 Southern New England	51	0	1	+
80 Southwest Florida	51	0	2	+
81 Suncoast Florida	36	3	4	+
82 Susquehanna Valley	38	3	11	+
83 Tennessee Valley	71	3	5	+
84 Tidewater	35	0	3	+
85 Warrior	21	0	1	+
86 West Hudson				
87 Westminster	5	24	0	-
88 Wisconsin	31	0	3	+

Official Totals: For - 78 Against - 1  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 79  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

## APPENDIX R

### Attachment 2

#### STATISTICS (2023)

##### CHURCHES ADDED TO THE DENOMINATION IN 2023

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Date Rec.</b>	<b>Source</b>
Blue Ridge	Hope	Crozet, VA	03/23	Organized
Calvary	Oconee	Seneca, SC		ARP
Chicago Metro	Christ	Wheaton, IL	11/15/23	Division from Christ Roselle
Gulf Coast	Gulf Coast	Gulf Shores, AL	10/11/23	Organized
Korean SE	Grace Community	Suwanee, GA	06/04/23	Organized
	Saebit	Newnan, GA	09/24/23	Organized
Northern IL	Exodus	Springfield, IL	11/23	Organized
Northwest GA	Riverside Community	Cartersville, GA	08/19/23	Organized
Pacific	Bridges Community	Alhambra, CA	09/24/23	Organized
	Christ our Redeemer	Camarillo, CA	05/21/23	Merger of Christ Ventura and Red. Camarillo
Pacific NW	Boise	Boise, ID	10/23	Organized
Piedmont Triad	Great Commission	NC		Independency
South Coast	Trinity of San Diego	Encinitas, CA	02/05/23	Organized
Southeast AL	Reformation	Pike Road, AL	04/25/23	Organized

##### CHURCHES LOST FROM THE DENOMINATION IN 2023

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Address</b>	<b>Date Rec.</b>	<b>Source</b>
Central Indiana	Trinity	Brownsburg, IN	06/26/23	Independency
Chesapeake	New Covenant	Abingdon, MD	05/09/23	OPC
Chicago Metro	Grace	Lansing, IL	02/12/23	
Columbus Metro	New City	Hilliard, OH		Dissolved
Eastern Carolina	Antioch	Goldsboro, NC	01/28/23	ARP
Gulfstream	Hammock Street	Boca Raton, FL	08/27/23	
James River	Northside	Richmond, VA		Dissolved
Metro Atlanta	Christ Gwinnett	Lawrenceville, GA	10/03/23	Dissolved
	Christos Community	Norcross, GA	10/03/23	Dissolved
	Village East Atlanta	Atlanta, GA	10/03/23	Dissolved
Metro NY	Covenant of Faith	Jericho, NY	03/14/23	Dissolved
NY State	Armor	Orchard Park, NY		OPC
Northern CA	New City Salt Lake	Salt Lake City, UT	04/23	Dissolved

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Churches Lost, continued

Pacific	Christ Church Ventura	Ventura, CA	05/21/23	Merged
	Redeemer	Camarillo, CA	05/21/23	Merged
Phil Metro West	CrossPointe	Media, PA	12/31/23	Dissolved
Southeast AL	Clayton	Clayton, AL	01/24/23	Dissolved
TN Valley	Mountain View	Chattanooga, TN		Dissolved
Westminster	Cash Hollow	Johnson City, TN	03/19/23	Dissolved

## MINISTERS ADDED TO THE DENOMINATION IN 2023

Presbytery	Name of Minister	Date Rec.	Source
Arizona	Erik Coonce		
Ascension	Cody Hooper	04/16/23	Ordained
Blue Ridge	Thomas Wong	12/10/23	Ordained
Calvary	C. Scott Cook		ARP
	Mikael Romer	02/05/23	Ordained
	William Vandoodeward	10/24/23	ARP
	Jeremy Britton		Ordained
Canada West	Brock Pavier	11/05/23	Ordained
	Abel Sisco	03/26/23	
	Philip Tadros		Ordained
	Patrick Wang	03/04/23	Ordained
Central Carolina	Matt Harris	03/12/23	Ordained
	William Keyton	09/17/23	Ordained
	Joel-Philip May	03/26/23	Ordained
Central Florida	Tyler Kenney		Ordained
	Matthew Matulia	01/08/23	Ordained
	Steve Page	12/03/23	Ordained
Central Georgia	Mike Palombo		EPC
Central Indiana	Brandon Buller		
	David Chambers		
	KJ Drake	10/02/23	Ordained
	Chris McLaughlin	10/02/23	Ordained
Chicago Metro	Andrew Barber		
	Mike Fenimore		
	Brian Martin		
	Ben Pannera		
Columbus Metro	Joseph Mills		

# APPENDIX R

## Ministers Added, continued

Covenant	Austin Lenox	04/02/23	Ordained
	Joshua Reagan		Ordained
	Phil Reynolds	10/03/23	Non-den
	John Stephenson	05/09/23	Ordained
Eastern Carolina	Anderson Shore	11/12/23	Ordained
Eastern Canada	Tarak George	03/26/23	Ordained
	Kingsley Lai	03/26/23	Ordained
Evangel	Scott Churnock	08/08/23	OPC
	Chad Escue	09/10/23	Ordained
	Clayton Hornback	09/10/23	Ordained
	Stephen Merwin	11/26/23	Ordained
	Joel Richards	11/26/23	Ordained
Fellowship Great Lakes	Luke Stannard	05/14/23	Ordained
	Corey Lanier	08/13/23	Ordained
	Andrew Chesebro		Ordained
	Paul Davis		Ordained
	Nathan Groeslma		Ordained
	Thomas Myrick		
	Roger Qi		Ordained
	Jerry Riendeau	01/29/23	Ordained
	Devon Rossman	05/14/23	Ordained
	Nick Settrington	02/19/23	Ordained
Gulf Coast	Heath Taws	05/21/23	Ordained
	Leo Yen	03/31/23	Ordained
Heartland	John Choi	09/24/23	Ordained
	Tyler Clements	10/15/23	Ordained
	Billy Hastings	05/07/23	Ordained
	Ryan Mayo	10/15/23	Ordained
	Bill Vogler		
Heritage	Robert Corwin	01/28/23	Ordained
	Caleb Evans	05/09/23	Ordained
Hills and Plains	Shane Pennington		Ordained
James River	Ryan Cavanaugh	04/15/23	OPC
Korean Capital	Si Young Jung	11/12/23	Ordained
Korean Central	Sagar Mekwan	01/19/23	Ordained
Korean NW	Daniel Daewook Kim		
Korean SE	Eric Ryu		



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## Ministers Added, continued

Korean SW OC	Jung Hyun Ahn	10/04/23	Ordained
	Daniel J. Kang	03/26/23	Ordained
	Christopher Kim	09/24/23	Ordained
	Paul Lee	03/26/23	Ordained
	Yong Ho Lee	09/12/23	PCKor
Lowcountry	Caleb Willingham	08/06/23	Ordained
Metro Atlanta	Donny Harwood	11/12/23	Ordained
Metropolitan NY	Will Anderson		Ordained
	Joshua Oh	11/14/23	KAPC
Mississippi Valley	Heath Cross		
	Wilson Jamison	08/20/23	Ordained
Missouri	Lowell Griggs	01/17/23	EPC
Nashville	Gary Anderson	08/13/23	Ordained
	LeeEric Fesko	08/13/23	Ordained
	Ryan Hudson	04/30/23	Ordained
	Evan McCarthy	08/20/23	Ordained
	Stephen Simmons	02/26/23	Ordained
New Jersey	Nathan Pugh		Chile
New York State	Justin Chiarot	11/05/23	Ordained
	Jared Hoyt	09/16/23	EPC
	Eric Walter	09/24/23	Ordained
North Florida	Ethan McConnell	01/08/23	Ordained
	Jason Peters	11/19/23	Ordained
North Texas	Sam Leopold	10/22/23	Ordained
	Conrad Quiros		
	Ryan Swindle		Ordained
Northern California	Amos Choi		
Northern Illinois	Josue Pernillo	10/08/23	Ordained
	Zach Rogers	04/16/23	Ordained
N New England	Jeremy McKeen	10/21/23	CCCC
	James Pavlic	01/21/23	CCCC
Pacific	Christian Bland	11/12/23	Ordained
	Nicholas Whitaker		
Pacific Northwest	Tommy Hannah		
Palmetto	Devin Coleman	06/11/23	Ordained
	Alfred Matthews	08/10/23	ECA
Piedmont Triad	Taylor Howsmon	01/15/23	Ordained
	John Nyuon	03/26/23	Ordained
	Mack Strawbridge	06/04/23	Ordained

# APPENDIX R

## Ministers Added, continued

Philadelphia	Colin Howland		
	Casey Huckel	10/22/23	Ordained
	Jonathan Richardson	01/29/23	Ordained
	Josiah Vanderveen	06/18/23	Ordained
Phil Metro West	Jacob Bier	09/10/23	Ordained
	Dean Chia	06/04/23	Ordained
	Nicholas Gwak	06/04/23	Ordained
	Joshua Jacobs	03/05/23	Ordained
Platte Valley	Tim Janiszewski	11/04/23	EPC
Potomac	Christopher Calvi	03/26/23	Ordained
Providence	Roy McDaniel	11/19/23	Reinstate
	Stephen St. John	02/07/23	Sovereign
Grace	John Summers	11/19/23	Ordained
Rio Grande	Bradley Boatman		
	Gavyn Chavez	05/07/23	Ordained
	Daniel Davalos		
	Charles Fiorillo		
Rocky Mountain	Cristian Garcia	02/07/23	Ordained
	Josh Harstine	05/21/23	Ordained
	Luke Lilevjen		
Siouxlands	Brock Larson		Ordained
South Coast	Rudy Manrique	11/19/23	Ordained
	Ryan Miller	03/05/23	Ordained
	Jason Pickard	09/27/23	New Zealand
	Kyler Wright	02/12/23	Ordained
	Joel Yoon	04/26/23	KAPC
	David Vilches	04/29/23	Ordained
South Texas	John Weller		Ordained
	David Augustine	09/16/23	Ordained
S New England	Yang “Tony” He	08/20/23	Ordained
	Nicholas Betancourt	11/19/23	Ordained
Southwest Florida	Timothy Brown	03/26/23	Ordained
	Charles Dause		Ordained
	Wade Savant	05/09/23	
	Austin Snively		Ordained
Suncoast Florida	Jonathan Spencer	10/08/23	Ordained
	Peter Stonecipher	02/26/23	Ordained
Susquehanna Valley	Timothy Cook	11/18/23	Ordained
Tennessee Valley	Mark Gregory	05/13/23	EPC

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

### Ministers Added, continued

West Hudson	Wendel Abreu		
	Fernando Almeida		
Westminster	AJ Babel	09/10/23	Ordained
	Michael Moon	04/23/23	Ordained

## MINISTERS DISMISSED TO OTHER DENOMINATIONS IN 2023

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Name of Minister</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>To</b>
Catawba Valley	James Almond	05/23	ARP
Chesapeake	David Barker	05/09/23	OPC
	Nicholas Hathaway	05/09/23	OPC
	Kurt Scharping	05/09/23	OPC
Covenant	Seth Still	01/13/23	PCUSA
Eastern PA	Jules Grisham	11/14/23	EPC
Evangel	Mark Hunter	09/23/23	EPC
Gulf Coast	Stacey Cox	02/14/22	ARP
Hills and Plains	Hunter Bailey		EPC
	Samuel Rodriguez		RCUS
Houston Metro	Jonathan Schumate		EPC
Korean NW	Jonathan Han	04/17/23	KAPC
Korean SW OC	Hyun Joong Lim	09/12/23	CRC
Metro New York	Norman Yung	09/22/23	EPC
Missouri	Edward Killeen	04/26/23	EPC
Nashville	Mika Edmondson		EPC
New York State	Jonathan Hunt	01/21/23	OPC
Northern California	Timothy Marseglia	05/23	EPC
N New England	Jason Wakefield	02/04/23	EPC
Pacific	Geoffrey Shaw	01/28/23	CREC
Pacific Northwest	Doug Kothe	10/09/23	IntMinFell
	Aaron Morris	05/02/23	PCUSA
Pittsburgh	John Jee	07/22/23	OPC
Potomac	Michael Langer	06/06/23	EPC
Providence	Nathan Eldredge	02/07/23	ARP
South Texas	George Lacy		Australia PC
Southeast Alabama	Todd Baucum	01/24/23	ECO
Tennessee Valley	Michael Ford		EPC
Tidewater	Jeffrey Lee	10/05/23	EFC of America

**MINISTERS REMOVED FROM OFFICE IN 2023**

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Name of Minister</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>How Removed</b>
Arizona	Benjamin Castaneda	03/07/23	Divested
Blue Ridge	Wade Bradshaw	11/06/23	Name Erased
Central Carolina	Kris Decker	08/26/23	Divested
	Jonathan McClure	05/23/23	Name Erased
Central Florida	William Gunter	04/18/23	Demitted
	Paul Manuel	11/20/23	Name Erased
Central Georgia	Timothy Mares	05/09/23	Demitted
Chesapeake	Tony Kim		Deposed
	F. Todd Williams	03/23	Name Erased
Chicago Metro	Paul Vroom	03/30/23	Deposed
Columbus Metro	Nate Conrad	05/16/23	Deposed
Covenant	Jon Dorton	10/02/23	Demitted
	Jason Glover	02/07/23	Demitted
	Bryan Miller	10/04/23	Demitted
Eastern Carolina	Kelley Buffaloe	04/22/23	Name Erased
	Cole McLaughlin	04/15/23	Demitted
	Didi Wong	10/27/23	Name Erased
Eastern PA	Gregg MacDougall	11/15/23	Divested
Evangel	William Bondurant	05/09/23	Divested
	Casey Giddens	02/14/23	Divested
Highlands	Mark Kreitzer	02/25/23	Deposed/Excom
Illiana	Jason Knox	04/01/23	Divested
Iowa	Edward Ludt	12/01/23	Demitted
	Jeff Maskevich		Name Erased
Korean Central	Hyun Seok Kim	10/11/23	Demitted
Korean SE	Donghyun Choi	09/28/23	Name Erased
	Samuel Kim	09/28/23	Name Erased
Metro Atlanta	Andrew Flatgard	05/02/23	Deposed
	Ewan Kennedy	05/02/23	Demitted
	Seth McLaughlin	05/02/23	Demitted
	Bruce McRae	01/23	Name Erased
Metro New York	Willard Sokol	01/17/23	Deposed
Missouri	Kenneth Conklin	10/17/23	Deposed
Nashville	John Patton	11/14/23	Demitted
	Darren Smith	08/08/23	Demitted
North Florida	Jim Huster	04/11/23	Name Erased

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

North Texas	James Jessup	05/03/23	Name Erased
Northern California	Michael Chung	10/06/23	Divested
	Rob Wootten	10/06/23	Deposed
Pacific Northwest	Robert Binion	10/06/23	Demitted
	William Jackson	10/09/23	Divested
	Edward Koh	10/09/23	Divested
Palmetto	Gary Bainton	11/09/23	Deposed
Providence	Michael Shipma	01/24/23	Name Erased
Rocky Mountain	Brandon Acheson	01/26/23	Deposed
Savannah River	Charlie Turner	10/17/23	Name Erased
Suncoast Florida	Jeff Krause	05/09/23	Divested
South Coast	Gary Cass	10/03/23	Demitted
South Texas	Robert Pickard		Name Erased
S New England	Stephen Um	09/23/23	Name Erased
Susquehanna Valley	Aaron Anderson	11/20/23	Name Erased
	Mark Bolze	11/20/23	Divested
	Philip Postma		Divested
Tennessee Valley	Jared Huffman	08/19/23	Deposed
West Hudson	Marc Rollman	09/20/23	Divested
Wisconsin	Jeffrey Pennington	01/28/23	Name Erased

## MINISTERS DECEASED IN 2023

<b>Presbytery</b>	<b>Name of Minister</b>	<b>Date</b>
Blue Ridge	John Kuebler	07/23/23
Chesapeake	Thomas Wenger II	09/11/23
Covenant	Craig Barnard	01/29/23
	William Hogan	11/25/23
Evangel	Harry Reeder	05/18/23
Georgia Foothills	John Grauley	09/24/23
Gulf Coast	Steven Bradford	04/23
Heritage	Anthony Wade	04/30/23
Highlands	Ted Mahaffey	06/01/23
Houston Metro	James Spiritosanto	02/23
Metro Atlanta	Carl Wilhelm	05/08/23
Metropolitan NY	Timothy Keller	05/19/23

## APPENDIX R

### Ministers Deceased, continued

Mississippi Valley	Michael Butterfield	03/20/23
	Mark Lowrey	12/24/23
	James Turner	01/21/23
New Jersey	Elwin Jewell	08/31/23
New River	David Currence	03/23/23
	Harold Kelley	05/26/23
North Florida	Ronald Swafford	12/11/23
Pacific Northwest	Richard Longfellow	03/05/23
Palmetto	Harold Patteson	
	Paul Poyner	07/31/23
Philadelphia	George Gunn	03/23
	Jong Yun Lee	01/18/23
	Stephen Smallman	05/14/23
Potomac	Marlin Hardman	01/13/23
Rio Grande	Aaron Zapata	01/27/23
Savannah River	Charles Rector	07/27/23
	Charles Stakely	07/19/23
South Coast	Richard Kaufmann	02/18/23
	George Miladin	07/02/23
South Texas	Mike McCrocklin	05/23
Tidewater	Cal Frett	03/23
Warrior	John M. Warren	05/28/23
	W. Cecil Williamson	01/23
West Hudson	William Iverson	08/21/2
Westminster	Preston Sartelle	04/21/23
	John Whitner	04/22/23

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## FIVE YEAR SUMMARY 2023

	2019	2020	2021	2022*	2023
Presbyteries	88	88	88	88	88
Churches	1,567	1,580	1,593	1,627	1,645
Missions	348	348	318	305	289
Teaching Elders	5,057	5,117	5,159	5,247	5,285
Candidates	557	531	704	751	572
Licentiates	169	171	222	193	186
Profession of Faith by Children	4,922	4,023	4,479	4,520	4,859
Profession of Faith by Adults	5,153	4,291	4,674	4,175	4,641
Communicants	300,113	299,891	297,239	300,413	305,045
Non-communicants	78,551	78,330	75,991	80,685	83,198
Total Membership	383,721	383,338	378,389	386,345	393,528
(Comm, Non-comm, IEs)					
Family Units	147,666	145,058	143,933	143,696	142,887
Adult Baptisms	2,613	2,181	2,275	2,287	2,645
Infant Baptisms	5,717	4,583	5,363	5,028	5,411
Total Contributions	\$904,550,356	\$1,042,366,740	\$998,758,176	\$1,083,558,318	\$1,111,603,109
Per Capita Giving	\$3,014.03	\$3,475.82	\$3,360.12	\$3,606.90	\$3,644.06
Assembly Causes	\$21,897,147	\$21,952,615	\$21,701,660	\$21,417,490	\$21,363,097
Presbytery Causes	\$10,621,337	\$10,056,064	\$10,383,683	\$9,519,199	\$9,621,223
Congregation Benevolences	\$117,755,108	\$119,004,084	\$120,310,548	\$128,101,223	\$131,618,050
Total Benevolences	\$150,273,592	\$151,012,763	\$152,395,891	\$159,037,912	\$162,602,370
Per Capita Benevolences	\$501	\$504	\$513	\$529	\$533
Congregational Current Expenses	\$697,389,987	\$683,085,062	\$686,149,852	\$795,205,621	\$858,955,418
Congregational Building Fund	\$89,827,572	\$100,487,760	\$121,359,547	\$97,780,703	\$105,814,369
Total All Disbursements	\$937,491,151	\$934,585,585	\$959,905,290	\$1,052,024,236	\$1,127,372,157

Totals represent the latest statistics reported by churches to the Stated Clerk's Office.

\*Numbers based on statistics received through 11.13.2023

# APPENDIX S

## REPORT OF THE THEOLOGICAL EXAMINING COMMITTEE TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA June 2024

### I. Introduction to the Committee's Work

#### A. Purpose and Scope of Examinations

According to our *Book of Church Order*, Teaching Elders should seek office “out of a sincere desire to promote the glory of God in the Gospel of his Son.” In this same spirit, the Theological Examining Committee (comprising 3 Teaching Elders, 3 Ruling Elders, and 2 alternates) serves the General Assembly by ensuring that candidates for positions of influence in our denomination are both gifted for and committed to promoting the glory of God by promoting the biblical gospel of Jesus Christ. Our task, according to *The Book of Church Order*, chapter 4, section 1.14, is to examine “all first and second level administrative officers of committees, boards, and agencies, and those acting temporarily in these positions who are being recommended for first time employment.”

#### B. Nature of Examinations

The examinations we administer resemble those for the ordination of Teaching Elders in the PCA, covering the following areas: Christian experience, theology, the sacraments, church government and the *BCO*, Bible content, church history, and the history of the PCA. Our standard procedure is to administer a written examination covering theological views, followed by an intensive oral examination, which entails not only views but knowledge in these areas.

### II. Summary of the Committee's Work

In the past year, the committee has conducted two (2) examinations.

1. On **November 28, 2023** the committee examined **Dr. Dixie Zietlow** for



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

the position of **Business Administrator of the PCA Administration Committee**. All areas of the exam were sustained and unanimously approved by the committee.

The nominee submitted a written statement affirming that she had no personal differences with the Westminster Standards.

2. On **January 12, 2024**, the committee examined **RE Brad Voyles** for the position of **President of Covenant College**. All areas of the exam were sustained and unanimously approved by the committee.

The nominee stated that he had no personal differences with the Westminster Standards.

Respectfully submitted,

TE K.J. Drake, Chairman

RE Edward Currie, Secretary

## APPENDIX T

### ATTENDANCE REPORT FOR THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Arizona</b>			
Flagstaff, AZ	Church/Resurrection	Joshua Walker	
Goodyear, AZ	King of Kings	Alex Diaz	Dirk Uphoff
		Joshua Harp	
Peoria, AZ	Fellowship of Grace	Jonathan Foster	Dave Price
			Keith Shull
Sun City West, AZ	Covenant	Paul Muresan	
Other Teaching Elders		Matt Esswein	
		DH Henry	
<b>Ascension</b>			
Aliquippa, PA	New Life	Jared Nelson	
Beaver, PA	Chapel	Tom Stein Jr.	
Beaver Falls, PA	Christ	Scott Moreland	
Ellwood City, PA	Berean	Cody Hooper	
Erie, PA	Faith Reformed	David Hills	
	West Erie	Marc Miller	
Harrisville, PA	Rocky Springs	Scott Fleming	
Industry, PA	Fairview Reformed	Jeff Zehnder	Ben Hardesty
Seneca, PA	Christ Covenant PCA	Jeremy Coyer	
Valencia, PA	Gospel Fellowship	Matthew Everhard	Dave Gibson
			Dale Hohman
Volant, PA	Hillcrest	Nathan Morgan	Tim Adams
			Jay Neikirk
<b>Blue Ridge</b>			
Blacksburg, VA	Grace Covenant		Donald Weyburn
Charlottesville, VA	Christ Central	Joseph Magri	
	Grace Community	Jon Anderson	
	Trinity	Chris Colquitt	Hunter Chorey
		Kelly Scott	John Collmus
			Michael Martin
			Craig Wood

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Blue Ridge, continued</b>			
Christiansburg, VA	Providence	Brian Waters	
Crozet, VA	Hope	Todd Johnson	
Draper, VA	Draper's Valley	Roland Mathews	Uriah Bartlett Stuart Pratt Don Craighead Charlie Nave
Floyd, VA	Harvestwood Cov		
Harrisonburg, VA	Christ Covenant	Bill Leach Burruss McCombe Todd Pruitt	Gary Shickel Jerry Weniger Mark Coddington
Lexington, VA	Grace	Justin Clement Jason Kriaski	
Lynchburg, VA	Mercy	Bryan Rigg	Stephen Hobson Wynn Shackleford
Martinsville, VA	Hope	Matt Pinckard	
Roanoke, VA	Christ the King	John Pennylegion Tobias Riggs	Frank Smith
	Providence	Jake Hooker	
	Westminster	Kyle Ferguson	Michael Gray
Staunton, VA	Holy Cross	Jake Bennett Kent Woodrow	
Waynesboro, VA	Tabernacle	Essen Daley Kyle Kockler	
Winchester, VA	Eagle Heights	Nat Davidson	James Murphy
Other Teaching Elders		Tom Breeden Josiah Carey John Carroll Dave Gilleran Doug Hart Joe Holland Jr. Mick Leary Heath McLaughen John Pearson Joe Slater Ben Spivey Drew Trotter Jr. Bailey Wagner Willis Weatherford Thomas Wong	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Calvary</b>			
Abbeville, SC	Lebanon	John Butler	
	New Hope	James Norris	Pat Hodge
Anderson, SC	New Covenant	Tom Buiter	
		Tim Pitzer	
		Jonathan Wisdom	
Clemson, SC	Clemson	Bryan Counts	Mark Dodd
		Reid Jones	Will Huss Jr.
			Rob Porter
Clinton, SC	Westminster	Chad Reynolds	
Easley, SC	Covenant	David Preston	
Fountain Inn, SC	Fairview	Kenny Maple	
		Jonathan Williams	
Greenville, SC	Downtown	Brian Habig	Scott Hultstrand
		Jeff Heiser	Mark Miller Jr.
		Sam Taaffe	
	Eastside	Mark Auffarth	
	Grace & Peace	Joe Dentici	George Koontz
		Timothy Udouj	
	Mitchell Road	Scott Puckett	Jon Barkman
		Mark Reed	Bob Caldwell
		Neel Skelton	Jason Cochran
		Jacob Virtue	Philip Temple
	Redeemer	Nick Turner	
	Resurrection	Jonathan Davis	
	Second	Brendon Branigin	Mel Duncan
		Jeff Early	Kevin Mobley
		Rick Phillips	Jeremy Weaver
Greenwood, SC	Greenwood	Paul Patrick	
Greer, SC	Antioch	Zachary Groff	
	Fellowship	Marty Martin	Terry Richards
		Andrew Newman	Jeff Wayne
Laurens, SC	Friendship	Robert Cathcart Jr.	
Reidville, SC	Reidville		Larry Bradley
			Roy Verrips
Roebuck, SC	Mount Calvary	Andrew Hane	Josh Killen
		Jim Stephenson	
		Richard Thomas	
Seneca, SC	Crossgate	Jay Brown	
	Oconee	Scott Cook	Mac McRoberts

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
Simpsonville, SC	Christ Community		Randy Gordon Dale Olsen
	Palmetto Hills Woodruff Road	Josh Martin Scotty Anderson Dan Dodds Taylor King Carl Robbins	Benjamin Wiggershaus Fredric Marcinak Doug McConkey Derek Scott
	Grace	Justin Kendrick	
	Taylors, SC	William Castro	
	Other Teaching Elders	Jonathan Master Rod Mays George Mixon Michael Morales Oliver Pierce Joey Pipa Jr. Roy Taylor Jr. Jeffrey Windt	

## Canada West

Calgary, AB	Woodgreen	Don Hulsey	Paul Mandry
Edmonton, AB	Crestwood	Jeff Kerr	
Lethbridge, AB	Westminster Chapel	Adam Harris	
		Theo Lodder	

## Catawba Valley

Charlotte, NC	Prosperity StoneBridge	Bruce Brown Kevin Burrell Daniel Ellingburg	Frank Lopane
Concord, NC	Providence	Ben Ressler	
Cornelius, NC	NorthCross	Gary Purdy	
Denver, NC	Lakeshore	Berry Stubbs	
Harrisburg, NC	Grace	Eugene Oldham	Daniel Nicholas Scott Starcher
Hickory, NC	Grace Covenant	Mike Gordon	Nate Phillips
Mooresville, NC	Harbor	Michael Colvard Tyler Spry	Jim Aldridge
	Shearer		Corey Wing
Mount Ulla, NC	Back Creek	Bill Thrailkill	
Stanley, NC	First	Jay Krestar	Kevin Rhyne

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

## Catawba Valley, continued

Other Teaching Elders

Hudson Belk  
Will Faires Jr.  
Andrew Goyzueta

## Central Carolina

Albemarle, NC	Second Street	John Black	
Charlotte, NC	Christ Central	Tony Myles	
<b>Central Carolina, continued</b>			
	East Charlotte Hope Community	Sid Druen Matt Guzi Aaron Ingle Trip Smith III Mark Upton	Jon Wilkinson
	South Charlotte	Dean Faulkner	George Kurz Joe Spencer
	Sovereign Grace	Bill Barclay Will Keyton Ben Thomas	Ron Barnwell Homer Nash Jr.
	Uptown		Tim Shorey
Fayetteville, NC	Cross Creek	Michael Mock	Steve Bennett Johnny Surles
Indian Trail, NC	Church/Redeemer	Matt Harris Adam Mumpower	
Locust, NC	Carolina		Tim Akers
Matthews, NC	Christ Covenant	Dave Baxter Bruce Creswell Kevin DeYoung Nathan George Tom Groelsema Joel May Mike Miller Eric Russ	Jordan Clark Curt Johnson Flynt Jones Lane Jones Jim Sutton
Mount Gilead, NC	Lake Tillery	Chip McAulay	
Sanford, NC	Christ	Ralph Johnston	
Southern Pines, NC	Redeemer	Bo Collins III	Bob Rose
Waxhaw, NC	Grace	Daniel Vinson	
		Chris Brock Drew Martin Will Ross	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Central Florida</b>			
Brooksville, FL	Faith	Anthony Alonso	
Casselberry, FL	Chinese Evan Christ	Moses Han	
DeLand, FL	Immanuel	Deren Harper	
		Tyler Kenney	
Eustis, FL	Lakeside Covenant	Matt Matulia	
	New Hope	Richard Burguet	
Lake Mary, FL	River Oaks	Cody Brobst	
Maitland, FL	Orangewood	Joe Creech	James Miller
			David Moore
Melbourne, FL	Northside		Bob Mattes
Ocala, FL	Good Shepherd	Josh Gilman	Mike Dwyer
		Michael Rauls	Barry Ginn
	Grace	Theo van Blerk	
Orlando, FL	Christ United Fell	Michael Aitcheson	Gregory Hersey
		Colton Allen	
	Lake Baldwin	Brian Lum Shue Chan	
	St. Paul's	Justin Borger	John Maynard
	University	Rick Gilmartin	
		Steve Weidenmuller	
Port Orange, FL	Spruce Creek	Josh Owen	Vic Headley
		Robert Rothwell	Gabe Williams
Sanford, FL	St. Andrews Chapel	Stephen Adams	Michael Crotty
		Don Bailey Jr.	Steven DeLoach
		Burk Parsons	Lee Webb
		Kevin Struyk	
St. Cloud, FL	Lake Nona		Andrew Augenstein
			Kevin Chase
Titusville, FL	Christ Community	Daniel Levi	
Vero Beach, FL	Christ the King	Seth Wallace	Glenn Grevengood
Other Teaching Elders		Levi Berntson	
		Thomas Brewer	
		Stephen Fisher	
		Kevin Gardner	
		Aaron Garriott	
		Michael Glodo	
		Jonathan Iverson	
		Benjamin Shaw	
		Scott Swain	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Central Georgia</b>			
Eatonton, GA	Lake Oconee	Jeff Birch	Richard Driessnack
Forsyth, GA	Dayspring	Mike Palombo	George Rountree
		David Martin	Steve Harbin
Kathleen, GA	Houston Lake		Lloyd Strickland
		Paul Bankson	Chuck Ezell
			Todd Kinnebrew
Macon, GA	First	Parker Agnew	Chuck Duggan
	North Macon	Bob Brunson	Blake Sullivan
		Hunter Stevenson	Rob Morton
Midland, GA	St. Andrews		John Mitchell
			Chris Schuster
Milledgeville, GA	Covenant	Kreg Bryan	Doug Pohl
		Bill Douglas	
<b>Central Indiana</b>			
Carmel, IN	Christ Community	Josiah Jones	
Indianapolis, IN	Fountain Square	Pat Hickman	
	Grace	Nicholas Davelaar	
		John Peoples Jr.	
	New City	Taylor Bradbury	
	Redeemer	Charles Anderson	
		Jeff Nottingham	
		Ben Reed	
Muncie, IN	Westminster	Kristofer Holroyd	Phil Pinegar
Richmond, IN	Christ	David Chambers	
		Rich Hawkins	
		David Young	
Yorktown, IN	New Life	Bob O'Bannon	
		KJ Drake	
		Andrew Whitaker	
<b>Chesapeake</b>			
Arnold, MD	Broadneck Evan	Brian March	Chris Deterding
		Jon Pickens	Steven Deterding
Baltimore, MD	Abbott Memorial	Chris Garriott	
	Faith Christian Fell	JB Watkins	
Columbia, MD	City of Hope	John Song	



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Chesapeake, continued</b>			
Davidsonville, MD	Grace	David Frierson	
Dundalk, MD	Inverness	Michael Weltin	
Forest Hill, MD	Aisquith	John Ceselsky	
	Forest Hill	Jason Van Bommel	Shawn Trautman
Havre de Grace, MD	Living Hope	Donald Dove	
Lutherville, MD	Hope Chapel	Sebastian Kim	
Marriottsville, MD	Chapelgate	Mike Khandjian	Joe Raine
		Tai Paul Kim	
Millersville, MD	Severn Run Evan	Jesse Crutchley	Brad Chwastyk Jeremiah Horner
Owings Mills, MD	Liberty	Aaron Lira	Steven Madden
Parkville, MD	Loch Raven	David Milligan	Brian Duty
		Bryant Park	
Pasadena, MD	Severna Park Evan	Dan Smith	
		Michael Stephan	
Reisterstown, MD	Covenant of Grace	Mark Samuel	Gregory Hard
Relay, MD	Grace Reformed	Doug Serven	
Severn, MD	Grace Point	Josh Sillaman	Matthew Zolnierrek
Stevensville, MD	Safe Harbor	Nathan Waddell	
Westminster, MD	Deep Run	Brian LoPiccolo	
		Daniel Iverson III	
		Jacob Jasin	
		Arch Van Devender	
<b>Chicago Metro</b>			
Chicago, IL	Covenant	Dan Adamson	
		Aaron Baker	
Crown Point, IN	Grace	Brad McMurray	
Hinsdale, IL	Trinity	Geoff Ziegler	
Lansing, IL	First	Ken Wojnarowski	
Manhattan, IL	Missio Dei	Mike Fenimore	
Orland Park, IL	Redemption	Caleb Hughes	
Roselle, IL	Christ	Joe Cristman	Gary Templin
		Pablo Herrera	
West Chicago, IL	Faith Community	Rhett Austin	
Winnetka, IL	Grace	Marshall Brown	
Other Teaching Elders		Sean Martin	
		Philip Ryken	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Columbus Metro</b>			
Dublin, OH	Northwest	Chris Mabee Patrick Tebbano	Chip Crickard
Gahanna, OH	Walnut Creek	Hayden Nesbit	
Granville, OH	The Granville Chapel	Dan Layman	
<b>Covenant</b>			
Charleston, MS	First	Grant Gilliam	
Cleveland, MS	Covenant	Ben Ratliff	Ted Leininger Matthew Mullins Jacob Taylor
Columbus, MS	Main Street	Aaron Suber	Justin Harris Russ Russell
Corinth, MS	Trinity	John Windham	Bill Davis
Dyersburg, TN	First	Gage Jordan	
Eads, TN	Hickory Withe	Doug Barcroft	
Fort Smith, AR	Covenant	John Clayton	
Germantown, TN	Riveroaks Reformed	Tommy Lee Jr.	
Greenville, MS	Covenant		Collins Brent
Greenwood, MS	Westminster	Richard Owens Josh Reagan	
Hernando, MS	Christ Covenant	Jim Plunk	Bob Barber Scott Sartor
Hot Springs, AR	Hope	Scott Davis	Billy Eddy
Indianola, MS	First	Duncan Hoopes	Jason Conner Q. Davis Jr.
Jackson, TN	Grace	Scott Floyd	
Jonesboro, AR	Christ Redeemer	Bill Berry	
Memphis, TN	Independent	Robert Browning Sean Lucas Ronnie Rowe Parker Tenent Matt Howell	David Caldwell
Olive Branch, MS	Redeemer Christ	Logan Almy Daniel Stanphill	
Oxford, MS	Christ College Hill	Clint Wilcke Ryan Dean	
Saltillo, MS	Redeemer		Jeremy Foster
Somerville, TN	Christ	Tyler Kenyon	
Starkville, MS	Grace		Jonathan Barlow

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Covenant, continued</b>			
Tupelo, MS	Lawndale	Bill Bradford Jeremy Britt	
Water Valley, MS	First	Curt Presley III	Barron Caulfield
Other Teaching Elders		Alan Cochet Joseph Johnson Jay Outen Jim Shull	

## Eastern Canada

Bedford, NS	Bedford	Bill Radford	
Gatineau, QC	Grace Gatineau	Frank Garcia	
Ottawa, ON	Resurrection	Ben Jolliffe	
Toronto, ON	Christ	Kyle Hackmann Lyndon Jost	Ewan Goligher Rick Swagerman
		Luke Bert	

## Eastern Carolina

Cary, NC	Peace	Doug Domin Chris Florence Ken Langley	Joe Frazier
Clayton, NC	Christ	John Musgrave	
Dunn, NC	Christ	Tim Inman	
Durham, NC	Christ Central	Daniel Mason	Glen Berkel Carson Rockett
Jacksonville, NC	Good Shepherd	Mark Whipple	
New Bern, NC	Harvest	Jason Petterson	Tom Phillips Craig Simon
Princeton, NC	Village Chapel		
Raleigh, NC	Progressive	Shawn Willis	
	Christ The King	Elliot Grudem James Sutton	
	Midtown Community	Anderson Shore	
	Redeemer	Garrett Black Ross Jelgerhuis	Bruce Narveson Michael Newkirk
Wake Forest, NC	Christ Our Hope	Timothy Sharpe Gabe Sylvia Jr.	Michael Ovack
Wilmington, NC	Christ the King		Jakim Friant Tim Pattison
	Downtown	Jay Denton	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
Wilson, NC	Wilson	Andy Raynor	Ken Dozier Danny Handley

Other Teaching Elders Sam Kennedy

## Eastern Pennsylvania

Allentown, PA	Lehigh Valley West Valley	Matt Franchetti Mark Howard	Ken George
Center Valley, PA	Cornerstone	Matt Bostrom	Dave Almack
Dresher, PA	New Life	Clint Estes	
Easton, PA	Bridge Community	Tim Gorbey	
Hatfield, PA	Lansdale	Brian Hand	
Quakertown, PA	Providence	Jonathan Kuciemba	
Scranton, PA	Hope	Taylor Bradley	Bill Barnes
Warminster, PA	Christ Covenant	Mark Herzer	
Willow Grove, PA	Calvary	Angel Gomez	
Other Teaching Elders			Jonathan Eide
		Michael Goodlin	

## Evangel

Alabaster, AL	Evangel	Alex Goodsell	
Birmingham, AL	Briarwood	Jim Alexander Max Bunn Stephen King Joel Richards Michael Wichlan	Billy Ball Mark Hess Matt Moore Drew Ricketts Mike Sanders Bruce Stallings Bryan Wintersteen Charles Woodall
	Cahaba Park Covenant	Claude McRoberts III David Driskill John Fountain Henry Morris	Mark Hogewood Mark Midyette John Pickering
	Faith	Jamie Peterson Sr. Martin Wagner	
	Oak Mountain	Caleb Click Mark Long Tom Patton III Greg Poole	Jeff Anderson Nathan Kirkpatrick
	Red Mountain	Charles Johnson	Cole Gresham Miles Gresham

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
Evangel, continued	Third	Michael Brock Anton Ivanov Hunter Twitty	
Hoover, AL	Cross Creek		Brandon Robbins
Jacksonville, AL	Hope Community	Steve Mayes	
Moody, AL	Community		Matthew Duke Joe Ellis Mark Bowyer Michael McMillan
Pell City, AL	Lakewood		
Rainbow City, AL	Rainbow	Ray Tucker	
Sylacauga, AL	Knollwood	Mark Jessup	
Trussville, AL	Christ	Jeffrey Bagley Michael Davis	
Other Teaching Elders		James Dickson Howard Eyrich Murray Lee	
<b>Fellowship</b>			
Chester, SC	Trinity	Richard Wheeler	Don Wood Jr.
	Zion	Al Ward Jr.	Steven Palecek
Clover, SC	Bethel	Chris Donnelly	Neil Allen
		Trent Thomas	Chris Wallace
Fort Mill, SC	Christ Ridge		Josh Bouldin Chad Cureton
Gaffney, SC	Salem	Corey Lanier	
Lake Wylie, SC	Redeeming Grace	Devin Kahan	Ryan Bowen Jimmy Summers
Lancaster, SC	Indian Land	Michael Lee	
McConnells, SC	Olivet	Chip McArthur Jr.	Chris Arnold Jason Petty
Rock Hill, SC	Hopewell	Jason Anderson	
	Westminster	Caleb Blow Jonathan Garrett Mike Honeycutt JT Hoover	
Van Wyck, SC	Trinity	Chris Sewell	Joe Bilbro
York, SC	Filbert	Jeff Bryant Dave Hall	Everett Whitesides
Other Teaching Elders		Mark Ashbaugh Wallace Tinsley Jr.	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

## Georgia Foothills

Athens, GA	Redeemer	Wes Andrews Todd Lowery Matt Siple	
Blairsville, GA	Grace	Christian Brewer	
Chestnut Mtn, GA	Chestnut Mountain	Travis Brown Ben Phillips	Dave Martin James Zeller
Clarkesville, GA	Christ	Hobie Wood Steve Woodworth	
Dacula, GA	Restoration	Scott Barber	
Duluth, GA	Old Peachtree	Joe Deighton Alan Johnson	Jon Richards Jack Wilson
Gainesville, GA	Westminster	Charlie Phillips	
Watkinsville, GA	Faith Oconee Fellowship	Nathan Parker Clay Werner	Jerry Norris
Winder, GA	Northside	Tim Weldon	
Other Teaching Elders		Ed Dunnington Rod Entrekin Stephen Estock Alan Foster Bruce Owens	

## Grace

Biloxi, MS	First	Tim Horn	
Brookhaven, MS	Faith	Brady Nelson	
Crystal Springs, MS	First	Christopher Willett	Bob Lee
Gulfport, MS	First	Gardner Fish	Bryan Kelly
Hattiesburg, MS	Bay Street First	Brian Davis Darwin Jordan	Sam Duncan Keith Easterling Rob Jackson Jr.
	Woodland	David Irving	Troy Gibson
Hazlehurst, MS	First	James Logan	
Mize, MS	Calvary	Jackson Lin	
Natchez, MS	New Covenant	John Franklin	
Summit, MS	New Covenant	Brian McCollough	Chris Bird

## Great Lakes

Ann Arbor, MI	Christ	Jeremy Byrd	
Bad Axe, MI	First	Scott McDermand	
Brighton, MI	Pathway Covenant	Andrew Chesebro	
Dearborn, MI	Grace	Jerry Riendeau	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Great Lakes, continued</b>			
Detroit, MI	Redeemer	DeMyron Haynes	Jerome Gorgon Jay Quint
East Lansing, MI	University Reformed	Nate Groelsema Jason Helopoulos Kevin Phipps Nick Setterington	David Hinkley Kevin McAlvey Zane Meibeyer
Elkhart, IN	Heart City	Joel Irvin	
Fenton, MI	Tyrone Covenant	Lawrence Bowlin David Groendyk	
Ferndale, MI	New City	Tommy Myrick	
Ft. Wayne, IN	Providence	Tony Garbarino	Ross Harris
Grand Rapids, MI	Christ	Roger Qi Andrew Vander Maas	Bob La Fleur Jerry Stutzman
<b>Great Lakes, continued</b>			
Granger, IN	Gracehill Michiana Covenant	Ben Seneker Elliott Pinegar Peter Wallace	Jacob Stoltzfus
Harrison Tship, MI	Knox	Adam Thomas	
Holland, MI	Covenant	Ken Klett	
Hudsonville, MI	Hudsonville Ref	Chad DeGraff Shane Sterk	
Kalamazoo, MI	Trinity Good Shepherd	Jeremy Visser Ryan Potter Neil Quinn	Greg Vanden Heuvel
Mount Pleasant, MI	Fellowship Reformed	Devon Rossman	
Other Teaching Elders		Bruce Baugus Robert Knuth	
<b>Gulf Coast</b>			
Cantonment, FL	Pinewoods	David Balzer	Don Roe
Fairhope, AL	Eastern Shore	Pat Davey	Mike McCrary
Foley, AL	Grace Fellowship	Rick Fennig	TJ Neely Rick Sullivan
Ft. Walton Beach, FL	Westminster	Chad Watkins	Jason Belcher Landon Jostes
Gulf Breeze, FL	Concord	Jonathan Becker	Joel Holston
Lillian, AL	Lillian Fellowship	Dean Conkel	
Loxley, AL	Loxley	Andrew Colbert	Doug Vermeulen
Mobile, AL	Christ		Devin Brown Lukasz Myc
	Christ Redeemer	Ben Nelson	

## APPENDIX T

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Gulf Coast, continued</b>			
	Grace Community	Dustin Belue	
Niceville, FL	First	Joe Grider	Bob Steele
Panama City, FL	Covenant	Stephen Tipton	Leigh Hinkle
	First	Heath Taws	Rocky Welch
			Todd Mitchell
			Nathan Sato
Pensacola, FL	Fairfield	Ralph LaGuardia	
	McIlwain Memorial	David McIntosh Jr.	George Earles
Tallahassee, FL	Westminster	Sean McGowan	George Close
	Wildwood	David McNeely	
Other Teaching Elders		Dennis Shackelford	

### **Gulfstream**

---

Boca Raton, FL	Spanish River	Al Barth	Mike Veitz
		David Cassidy	
		Brian Haring	
		Matt Wilson	
Jupiter, FL	Sand Harbor	Andrew Jacobson	Bob Brunjes
		Steven Weiss	
Palm Bch Garden, FL	Cornerstone	Mark Murnan	
Port St. Lucie, FL	Christ the King	Jason Paugh	
Stuart, FL	Grace	Bernie van Eyk	
	Treasure Coast	Rob Edenfield	
West Palm Beach, FL	Truth Point	Matt Eusey	
Other Teaching Elders		Josh Malone	

### **Heartland**

---

Andover, KS	Kirk of the Plains	Rick Franks	
Lawrence, KS	Grace	George Boomer	Phil Oberzan
		Ryan Mayo	Scott Rask
Lees Summit, MO	Christ the Redeemer	Jason Wegener	Steve Campbell
			Jim Slocomb
Olathe, KS	New Hope	Jim Baxter	Larry Hauck
		Tim Elliott	Brian Phipps
Overland Park, KS	Redeemer	John Choi	Lance Kinzer
		Tony Felich	
Wichita, KS	Evangel	Tim Rackley	Marlon Johnston
	Heartland Comm	Jonathan Whitley	
		Ben Marquez	



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Heritage</b>			
Dover, DE	Grace	Kenny Foster Joshua Suh	Tyler Hogan Tim Reisinger
Easton, MD	Shore Harvest	Scott Shaw	Conrad Judy Jr
Elkton, MD	Fair Hill	Steve Coward Peter Lamme	Tom deLorimier
Hockessin, DE	Good News	Charles Davis Sam DeSocio	
Kemblesville, PA	Cornerstone		George Pauley Dave Spangler
Middletown, DE	Crossroads	Michael Hernandez	
Millsboro, DE	East Gate	Kevin Gladding	
New Castle, DE	Heritage	Ruben Sernas	
<b>Heartland, continued</b>			
Newark, DE	Evangelical	Chad Barber Caleb Evans Rick Gray Graham Guo	Brian Warshaw Bill Zinkand
Salisbury, MD	Providence	Peter Render	
Smyrna, DE	CenterPoint	Dave Dorst	
Wilmington, DE	City Faith	Israel Ruiz Ore Kevin Koslowsky	
Other Teaching Elders		Randen Schleiden Daryl Wattley	
<b>Highlands</b>			
Asheville, NC	Covenant Reformed	Jim Curtis Sean McCann	
	Grace & Peace Trinity	Jonathan Inman Robert Recio	Tim Carlson Stephen Todd
Boone, NC	CrossPoint Comm Grace Highlands	Scott Stewart Graham Svendsen	
Brevard, NC	Cornerstone	Andy Silman	
Elizabethton, TN	Memorial	Tim Mindemann	Robert King
Franklin, NC	Emmanuel	Tim McQuitty	
Hazelwood, NC	Hazelwood	Steve Muzio	
Morganton, NC	Faith	Danny Beck	
Murphy, NC	Providence	David Hina	Wil Meiners
Newland, NC	Fellowship	Cooper Starnes	
Sylva, NC	Redeemer	Steven Hansen	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

## Highlands, continued

Weaverville, NC	First	Skip Gillikin	
Other Teaching Elders		Andy Adams	
		Lonnie Barnes	
		Craig Bulkeley	
		Alec Cotton	
		Scott Hill	
		Andrew Shank	

## Hills and Plains

Bentonville, AR	Christ	Aaron Raines	
		Chris Taylor	
Edmond, OK	Heritage	Michael Philliber	
	King's Cross	Casey Shutt	
<b>Hills and Plains, continued</b>			
Fayetteville, AR	Christ Community Covenant	Dave Abney	
		Jay Bruce	Jeff Chewning
		Paul Sagan	Nathan Jarvis
Joplin, MO	Christ the King	Levi Bakerink	
Minco, OK	First Reformed	Jason Averill	
Norman, OK	Christ the King	Mike Biggs	
Oklahoma City, OK	City	Jason Hsu	
Owasso, OK	Trinity	Blake Altman	
Rogers, AR	Trinity Grace	Brandon Van Marel	Noel Henley
Siloam Springs, AR	Redeemer	Ted Wenger	
Stillwater, OK	Grace	Wilson Van Hooser	Aaron Reeves
Tulsa, OK	Christ	Jeremy Fair	
	Grace & Peace		Tyler Gray

## Houston Metro

Beaumont, TX	Reformed	Mark Blalack	Ryan Bowling
			Chuck Heare
	Riverside	Josh Rieger	Eric Manthei
Bellaire, TX	Southwest	David Wakeland	Winston Dollahon
			Charles Reed
Houston, TX	Christ	Richard Harris	Dan Tidwell
		Axel Sotelo	Ken Wynne
	Christ the King	Clay Holland	David Duren
	Cornerstone	Blake Arnoult	Philip Whitley
	Covenant	Lou Veiga	Jeremy Thomas

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Houston Metro, continued</b>			
Huntsville, TX	Christ	Nolan Williamson	Mark Fullerton Sam Massey
Katy, TX	Christ	Fred Greco Curt Mire Duncan Rankin	Mark Becker Dave Cias Neal Hare
Lufkin, TX	Covenant	Mark O'Neill	Bill Craig
Spring, TX	Spring Cypress	Ben Duncan	Justin Chandler Danny McDaniel
The Woodlands, TX	Grace	Kyle Bobos Bradley Wright	
Other Teaching Elders		Juan Carlos Martinez	

## Illiana

Carbondale, IL	Grace	Harris Adams	
Coulterville, IL	Grandcote Reformed	James Stark	
Cutler, IL	Reformed		Keith Boyce
<b>Illiana, continued</b>			
Edwardsville, IL	Center Grove	Wes James	Andre Kok
Marissa, IL	Marissa	James Ryan	
Sparta, IL	Bethel Reformed	Alex Eppstein	
Troy, IL	Providence	Scott Edburg	Scott Lollar Don Walters

## Iowa

Holland, IA	Colfax Center	Luke Wolfe	
Hospers, IA	Hospers	Brian Janssen	
Iowa City, IA	One Ancient Hope		Chris Sutton
North Liberty, IA	Hope Evangelical	Lincoln Larsen	
Urbandale, IA	Westkirk	Nathan Hiatt	

## James River

Amelia Crt Hse, VA	River Run	Marty Cates	
Ashland, VA	Grace Community	Clint Dowda	
Chester, VA	Centralia	Dan Lipford	
	New Creation	Joel Passmore	
Fredericksburg, VA	Evident Grace Fell	David Fischer	Greg Bay Matt Murray Matthew McCorkle Eugene Rivers
	New City Fellowship	Bob Becker	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>James River, continued</b>			
	New Life in Christ	Sam Capitano Robert Rumbaugh Sean Whitenack	Robert Williams
Hopewell, VA	West End	Eric Dugan	Sam Couch
	West Hopewell	Ethan Mullis	Brian Berkompas Pat Maddox
King George, VA Midlothian, VA	Grace	Dave Bentz	
	Spring Run	Andrew Conrad Brian Fletcher Donnie Clinton Jr Sean Sawyers	Daniel Jordan Bruce McCloy Steve OBrien Dennie Pritchard Gene Whitehead
Powhatan, VA	Evergreen Comm	Nick Krauss	Robert Adams Steve Donahue
Richmond, VA	All Saints Reformed	Dennis Bullock	Matt Fender Rick Hutton
	Church Hill	Steve Moulson	Barry Anderson George Constantino
	City Stony Point Ref	Harrison Ford Curt Kenney	Dan Carrell Jeff Faris
Stafford, VA Other Teaching Elders	West End	Joe Brown	Phil Soldan
	Hope of Christ	Leonard Bailey Ryan Cavanaugh Jerry Gill Leonard Liu Harry Long Stanley Morton Jim Pulizzi Ambrose Winfree	Rich Leino
<b>Korean Capital</b>			
Centreville, VA	Christ Central	Huey Lee Owen Lee Bobby Suh	
	Korean Central		Sang Choi Charles Gill Jack Kim Guang Yon Weon Phill Yoon

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

## Korean Capital, continued

Chantilly, VA	Korean	Yong Ho Cha	
Clarksville, MD	Harvest	Walter Lee	
		Brian Shim	
		Steve Yoon	
Fairfax, VA	Korean	Paul Bang	
		Jacob Kim	
	Mok Yang	Peace Ahn	
Fairfax Station, VA	Christ Central	Peter Kim	
Laurel, MD	Covenant	Dong Woo Kim	
Norfolk, VA	Saesoon	Jong Ug Choi	
Rockville, MD	Rosebrook	Moses Lee	
Other Teaching Elders		David Bae	
		Su Cheor Jang	
		Abraham Kim	

## Korean Central

Columbia, MO	Korean First	Hanjoo Park	
Elmhurst, IL	Vineyard	Sun Sik Park	Jason Park
		James Yoo	

## Korean Central, continued

Glenview, IL	First Korean	Stephen Jon	Cedric Choi
Indianapolis, IN	Eunhye Korean	Paul Cho	
Nixa, MO	First Korean	Ju-Heon Lyu	
Palatine, IL	Bethel	Anson Lee	
St. Ann, MO	First Korean	Shinkwon Lee	
St. Robert, MO	Calvary	Youngjin Moon	
Vernon Hills, IL	Highland Korean	Jason Hyunsoo Park	
Other Teaching Elders		Samuel Kang	
		Sungwoo Nam	
		Brian Park	

## Korean Eastern

Ambler, PA	SarangNanum Comm	Seogwoo Sun	
Cheltenham, PA	Cheltenham	Dennis Kim	
Dillsburg, PA	First Korean	David Kim	
Lansdale, PA	Cornerstone	Andrew Kim	
		Isaac Lee	
Philadelphia, PA	Emmanuel	Chanwoo Lee	
State College, PA	State College Korean	Kyu Hong Yeon	
Warminster, PA	Korean Saints	Seunggyun Lee	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

## Korean Eastern, continued

Other Teaching Elders

Jonathan Kim  
 Danny Kwon  
 Kisup Lee

## Korean Northeastern

Tenafly, NJ

Glory Community

Sam Sung

Other Teaching Elders

Paul Lee

## Korean Northwest

Beaverton, OR

Eden Community

Joshua Kim

Lacey, WA

Olympia One Light

Choon Sik Park

Ripon, CA

The Lords

Seongeun Jang

Walnut Creek, CA

Heavenly

Jeremiah Kim

Other Teaching Elders

Daniel Jung

Chun Ho Oh

## Korean Southeastern

Charlotte, NC

Charlotte

Sungkyun Na

Columbia, SC

Sandol

Thomas Oh

Ft. Walton Beach, FL

FWB Inat'l Comm

Joshua Jea

Knoxville, TN

Korean Sarang

Jin Eun Jung

Macon, GA

Macon Korean

Jong Su Hong

Marietta, GA

Korean Covenant

Luke Kim

Newnan, GA

Saebit Korean

Ik Joon Park

North Ft. Myers, FL

Korean Community

Changwon Choi

Ocala, FL

Ocala Korean

Sam Kim

Ocoee, FL

Him

Juseong Paek

Panama City, FL

Panama City Korean

Zadok Hong

Peachtree Crnrs, GA

New

Youngchun Cho

Sungyak Kim

Pike Road, AL

Mont Open Kingdom

Kyung Jae Seo

Ridgeland, MS

Korean American

Ki Won Jang

Suwanee, GA

Grace Community

Eddie Lim

David Seo

Billy Park

Tallahassee, FL

Korean Cornerstone

Joon Yung Jang

Other Teaching Elders

Anthony Lee

Bill Sim

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

## Korean Southern

Carrollton, TX	Hope	Gu Kwang Lee	
Friends Wood, TX	Houston	Soo Dong Kim	
Houston, TX	Korean Faith	In Seung Lee	

## Korean Southwest

Diamond Bar, CA	Global	Daniel Chin	
Gardena, CA	Lamp	Caleb Her	
Los Angeles, CA	Living Faith	Aaron Sunu	
San Fernando, CA	Gateway	Sang Kim	
Torrance, CA	Redeemer	Yuma Takei	
Other Teaching Elders		Joseph Kim	
		Roberto Koh	

## Korean Southwest Orange County

Stanton, CA	Stanton City	DP Park	
Other Teaching Elders		Will Chang	
		Joel Kim	

## Lowcountry

Beaufort, SC	First Scots	Alex Mark	Mark Senn
		Steven Walton	Ron Woernle
Bluffton, SC	Grace Coastal	Jason Crenshaw	
Charleston, SC	Church Creek	Nick Batzig	Donald Cummings
		Caleb Willingham	
Goose Creek, SC	Metro North	John Schley	Nate Arnold
Hilton Head Is, SC	Hilton Head	Michael Craddock	
		William McCutchen	
		Harrison Spitler	
Mount Pleasant, SC	Christ Church	Jon Payne	Tom Clark
			Mike Royal
North Charleston, SC	Two Rivers	Jeremy Mullen	
Orangeburg, SC	Trinity	John Mark Patrick	
Summerville, SC	Hope Community	Nathan Francis	
Other Teaching Elders		Jacob Lee	

## Metro Atlanta

Alpharetta, GA	Living Fellowship	Andrew Harwell	
Atlanta, GA	Atlanta Westside	Walter Henegar	Jeff Heck
		Nagib Hermes	Norman Powell
		Joseph Parker	Bruce Terrell

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Metro Atlanta, continued</b>			
	Church/Redeemer City Intown Community	Jimmy Agan III	Chuck Francis David Entrekin Brian Terrell Joseph Thompson Jim Wert Jr.
	Kindred Hope Ponce Westminster	Howard Brown Hace Cargo Rush Hill Aaron Messner Carlton Wynne	Russell Berry Chet Lilly John White Jr.
Covington, GA	Trinity	Matt Abel Rob Rienstra	
Cumming, GA	GracePointe	James Nichols	Daniel Cook
Dahlonega, GA	Creekstone	Rich Good	
Fayetteville, GA	Redemption Fell		Frank Brown
Franklin, GA	Salem	Bill Heard	
Griffin, GA	Community	Joe Arnold	
Johns Creek, GA	Perimeter	Bob Cargo Bob Carter Herschel Hatcher Omari Hill Randy Pope Eric Ryan Randy Schlichting Chip Sweney Jr.	Simon Cole
Lawrenceville, GA	New City	Patrick Choi Brandon Dean Ryan Johnson	
Marietta, GA	East Cobb		Bob Edwards
Newnan, GA	Christ	Drew Archer	
Peachtree City, GA	Carriage Lane	Timothy Gwin	Craig Jeffery Greg Rosser
Stockbridge, GA	The Rock	John Stovall	
Tucker, GA	Tucker	Erik Veerman	
Other Teaching Elders		Doug Griffith Stephen Maginas Kevin McCarty Guy Richard	



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Metropolitan New York</b>			
New York, NY	Emmanuel	Tim Chang	
		Scott Strickman	
	Exilic	Aaron Chung	
	Redeemer	David Ellis	
		Drew Field	James Oh
		Rich McCaskill III	
		Hector Sanchez Jr.	
		Crawford Stevener	
		Jeffrey White	
	Redeem East Harlem	Justin Adour	
Other Teaching Elders	Redeem Lincoln Squ	Michael Keller	
		Bruce O'Neil	
		Terry Gyger	
		Wei Ho	
		Eric Lipscomb	
		Matthew Terrell	
		John Yenchko	
<b>Mississippi Valley</b>			
Bailey, MS	Bailey	Eric Mabbott	
Belzoni, MS	First	Steven Dahl	
Brandon, MS	Brandon	Brad Mills	
Clinton, MS	Pinehaven		Kevin Burns
			Larkin Chapman
	Providence	Bryce Davis	
		Ian Kayser	
Delhi, LA	Delhi	Chris Wright	
Edwards, MS	Edwards	Thomas Graves	
Jackson, MS	First	Wiley Lowry III	Stuart Clarke
		Jamie Peipon	David Cleland
		David Strain	Ned Currie
		Charles Wingard	Wayne Husband
			Alan Walters
			Mark Windham
	Redeemer	Brian Gault	William Stackler
		Wilson Jamison	
		Zack Owens	
Louisville, MS	First	Heath Cross	
		Matt Miller	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Mississippi Valley, continued</b>			
Meridian, MS	Northpointe	Mason Kiple Kevin Vollema	
Monroe, LA	Ouachita	Harris Bond	Chuck Murphy
Pearl, MS	Pearl	Joey McLeod Jr.	
Philadelphia, MS	First	David Storment	
Raymond, MS	Raymond	Zach Byrd	
Ridgeland, MS	Pear Orchard	Caleb Cangelosi Dean Williams	James Clark Ken Haynes Eddie Moran
Ruston, LA	Covenant Reformed	Chris Stevens	
Tchula, MS	Tchula		Samuel Hutton
Union, MS	First	Christopher Shelton	Joe Norsworthy
Vicksburg, MS	Westminster		Gordon Sluis
Yazoo City, MS	Second		Rob Coker
Other Teaching Elders		Ligon Duncan III Aaron Halbert Haruaki Odate Danny Ruth Guy Waters	
<b>Missouri</b>			
Ballwin, MO	Twin Oaks	David D. Barnes Russell St. John	Bob Wilkinson
Chesterfield, MO	Chesterfield	Hugh Barlett Adam Delaplane Justin Huensch Owen Tarantino	John Ranheim
Eureka, MO	Heritage	Jesse York	Ken Leslie
Kirkwood, MO	Trinity	Pablo Rosales	Bill Porter
Owensville, MO	Redeem Grace Fell	Charles Stover	
St. Louis, MO	Covenant	Christopher Smith Noah Wiersema	
	Kirk of the Hills	Chad Townsley	Lowell Pitzer John Tubbesing Marcus Whitman
	Midtown		
	New City West End	Steve Schaper Thurman Williams	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Missouri, continued</b>			
	Restoration Comm	Zac Carrera Jon Eagin Daniel Song Logan Ford	
Washington, MO	South City New Port		Rob Allyn
Other Teaching Elders		Cartee Bales John Chung Daniel Doriani Ben Hoemann	
<b>Nashville</b>			
Brentwood, TN	All Saints	Matthew Bradley Nathan McCall	Jay Hollis
Clarksville, TN	Christ	Richard Schwartz	
Columbia, TN	Zion	Keaton Paul	
Cookeville, TN	Grace	Step Morgan	Nick Duncan
Franklin, TN	Cornerstone	Tony Giles	Randy Allen
		Nate Shurden	Jim Payne
	Parish	Jamie Crampton	Brandon Herrenbruck
		George Grant	Michael Mastroberti
		Brian Phillips	
Goodlettsville, TN	Faith	John dos Santos	
Mt. Juliet, TN	Hickory Grove	Kenny Silva	Al Williams
Murfreesboro, TN	Trinity	Mitchell Carter Ryan Hudson	
<b>Nashville, continued</b>			
Nashville, TN	Christ	Lee Eric Fesko	Jeff Creasy Tom Drury Bill Mooney Rob Wheeler
	City Covenant	David Richter Ryan Anderson Chad Scruggs	John Bryant Bryce Sullivan
	Midtown Fellowship	Elliott Cherry Randy Draughon Jeremy Kemp	
	Parks West End Comm	Eric Ashley John Bourgeois IV J Hager Stephen Simmons	Chuck Merritt
Rockvale, TN	Redeemer		Jonathan Kinney

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Nashville, continued</b>			
Tullahoma, TN	Covenant	Will Young	Frank Wonder
Other Teaching Elders		Charles McGowan Steve Robertson Kevin Twit Steve Young	
<b>New Jersey</b>			
Allenwood, NJ	Calvary	Tom Harr Jr.	Scott MacLean
Cherry Hill, NJ	Covenant	Drew Grigg	
	True Vine Comm	Nate Pugh	
Glassboro, NJ	Mercy Hill		Tim Pacek Ric Springer
Lawrenceville, NJ	Hope	Stephen O'Neill David Rowe	
Mount Laurel, NJ	Grace	Matthew Fisher	Matt Castillo
		Ted Trefsgar Jr.	Aaron Snethen
Other Teaching Elders		Jonathan Hatt	
<b>New River</b>			
Buckhannon, WV	Grace	Alan Hager	
Charleston, WV	Kanawha Salines	Andy Styer	James Walling
Dellslow, WV	Mercy	John Downs	
Hurricane, WV	Redeemer	Kurt Gray	
Other Teaching Elders		Peter Green Mike Hall Steven Szelmeczki Michael VanDerLinden	
<b>New York State</b>			
Buffalo, NY	Christ Central	Christopher Jhu	
Cortland, NY	Church/Redeemer	Jared Hoyt	
Duanesburg, NY	Reformed	Anthony Gorsuch	
Ithaca, NY	New Life	Tim LeCroy	
Rochester, NY	Grace	Eric Walter	Curtis Lindahl
	New City Fell Beech		Drew McLean
Rock Tavern, NY	Westminster	Kevin Chiarot	
Wellsville, NY	Presbyterian	Tom Kristoffersen	
Other Teaching Elders		Jonathan Hood	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>North Florida</b>			
Gainesville, FL	Faith	Cord Carlin	
Jacksonville, FL	Ortega	Joshua Hinson	Kevin Morris
	Westminster	Stephen Spinnenweber	
Live Oak, FL	Community	Tommy Peterson	
McIntosh, FL	Community	Zach Seal	
Middleburg, FL	Pinewood	J.D. Funyak	Ron Diamond
		Dennis Griffith	Jay Funyak
			Jason Henning
			Rick Roberts
			Charles Rogers
Palm Coast, FL	Grace	Dan McManigal	
St. Johns, FL	Cross Creek	Craig Williford	
Yulee, FL	Grace Community	David Bradsher	
Other Teaching Elders		Curtis McDaniel III	
		Larry Roff	
<b>North Texas</b>			
Allen, TX	Cornerstone	Mark Evans	Daniel Wann
Amarillo, TX	Redeemer	Tyler Taber	David Gatz
Anna, TX	Grace and Peace	Matt Wood	Brian Heise
			James Poteet
Arlington, TX	Redeemer Arlington		Stephen Wolters
Carrollton, TX	Metrocrest	Bill Lovell	Larry Perry
Celina, TX	New City	Jake Patton	
Colleyville, TX	Colleyville	Josh Anderson	
Dallas, TX	Bethel	Anton Heuss	Ed Kim
	El Buen Pastor	Jahaziel Cantu	
	Mercy	Doug Tharp	
	New St. Peter's		Brian Franklin
			Jim Pocta
	Park Cities	Paul Goebel	Donald Dillahunt
		Sam Leopold	Tim Jeffress
			Kyle Manley
			Gregory Morris
			Rick Owens
			Bill Thomas
			Steven Vanderhill
			Blake Woodall
Fort Worth, TX	Fort Worth	Brandon Eggar	

## APPENDIX T

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>North Texas, continued</b>			
	Grace Community Trinity	Kyle Oliphint Brian Davis Andy Wood	
Frisco, TX	Christ Community	Patrick Poteet	
Killeen, TX	Hill Country PCA	Peter Dietsch	
Lubbock, TX	Providence	John Bennett	
McKinney, TX	Redeemer	Jordan Stone Mark Trigsted	Jeff Landers Tony Mangefeste Gary Matlack
Midlothian, TX	Christ the King	Dave Lindberg	Greg Gorman
Plano, TX	Trinity	Jeff Morrow Jake Yohannan	Eric Wallace
Richardson, TX	Town North	David Rogers	Joel Aguilar David Schlimme
Southlake, TX	Lakeside	Donny Friederichsen	Guy Mouton Steven Stallard
Temple, TX	Redeemer	JB Wilbanks	Doug Smith Ken Smith
Tyler, TX	Fifth Street	Drew Pressoir	Clint Covington
Weatherford, TX	Weatherford		Wes Hammond Rob Looper
Other Teaching Elders		Lou Best Ben Dunson Richey Goodrich Paul Miller	
<b>Northern California</b>			
Brigham City, UT	Brigham City Bible	Alex Ford	
Castro Valley, CA	Indelible Grace	Jesse Robinson	
Honolulu, HI	The City	John Kim	
Mililani, HI	Trinity	JC Cunningham	Anthony Miklas
Palo Alto, CA	Grace	Iron Kim	Jason Greene
Roseville, CA	Valley Springs	Matt Mobley Tag Tuck	
San Anselmo, CA	Grace	Jeremiah Hill	
San Luis Obispo, CA	Trinity	Bryce Hales	
San Ramon, CA	Canyon Creek	Travis Marsh Kevin Timmons	
St. George, UT	All Saints Reformed	Ben Kappers	

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Northern California, continued</b>			
Sunnyvale, CA	Revive	SooSang Park	
West Jordan, UT	Jordan Valley	Jon Stoddard	A.T. Stoddard
Other Teaching Elders		John Kong	
		Jon Medlock	
<hr/> <b>Northern Illinois</b>			
Champaign, IL	Covenant Fellowship	KJ Kim	
Freeport, IL	Grace Fellowship	Justin Coverstone	Larry DeVries
			Dean Kuper
Hanna City, IL	Hanna City	David Keithley	Fred Winterroth
Normal, IL	Christ	Brad Lucht	
Paxton, IL	Westminster	Steve Jones	
Peoria, IL	Grace	John Cherne III	Lee Gerrietts
		Zach Rogers	Dustin Schumacher
	Redeemer	Mark Henninger	
Urbana, IL	All Souls	Josue Pernillo	
		Bryan Chapell	
<hr/> <b>Northern New England</b>			
Lewiston, ME	Free Grace	Per Almquist	
Manchester, NH	Church/Redeemer	Jon Taylor	
Nashua, NH	Christ	James Pavlic	
Pembroke, NH	Christ Church PCA	Ian Hard	
Other Teaching Elders		Joshua Henderson	
<hr/> <b>Northwest Georgia</b>			
Canton, GA	Cherokee	Clif Daniell	James Friday
	Grace		Chuck Lokey
			Stephen Murphy
			Brady Payne
Cartersville, GA	Riverside Community	Jody Stancil	Kirk Swanson
			Nathan Welden
Dallas, GA	Grace Covenant		Daniel Stout
Douglasville, GA	Grace	David Gilbert	Justen Ellis
		John Sutton	John Reams
Kennesaw, GA	Christ Community	Cameron Barham	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
Northwest Georgia, continued			
Marietta, GA	Hope	Martin Hawley	Kenneth Dewhurst Rick Griffin
Powder Springs, GA	Midway	Cilas Menezes	
Rome, GA	Seven Hills Fell	Jeff Summers	Jim Stratton
Smyrna, GA	Smyrna	Danny Myers Joel Smit	
Villa Rica, GA	First	Thomas Myers	John Vining
Woodstock, GA	Christ Covenant	Job Dalomba Jason Kennedy	
Other Teaching Elders		Greg Bylsma Robert Lester Buster Williams	
Ohio			
Boardman, OH	Cornerstone	Mark Bell	Gregg Gorzelle
Hudson, OH	Grace	Rhett Dodson Justin Salinas	
	Redeemer	Jason Piland	Ernie Miller Jim Parkin
Kent, OH	Christ	Jacob Piland	Scott Wulff
Mayfield Hgts, OH	Story	Jeremy King	
Medina, OH	Harvest	David Wallover Seth Young	
North Canton, OH	Trinity	Lee Hutchings	
Vincent, OH	Veto	John Fennell	
Ohio Valley			
Cincinnati, OH	Faith New City	Matt Cadora Brian Ferry Zach Meyer Michael Previtera Josh Reitano	Mike Nelson Paul Adams Herb Melton
Elizabethtown, KY	Grace	Monty Hershberger	
Hamilton, OH	Living Hope PCA	Chad Grindstaff	
Lexington, KY	Hope	Marshall Wilmhoff	
	Tates Creek	Mark Randle	Herb Melton
Louisville, KY	Community Redeemer	Murray Nickel	



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Ohio Valley, continued</b>			
Ludlow, KY	Trinity	Chuck Hickey	Shay Fout Joshua Kiihne
Springboro, OH	King's Cross Comm	Casey Cramer	
Other Teaching Elders		Nick Bratcher Larry Hoop Paul Hurst Kyle McClellan	

## Pacific

---

Bakersfield, CA	Providence Reformed	Jonathan Key	
Las Vegas, NV	Spring Meadows	Christian Bland	Richard Salinas Ron Warren
Manhattan Beach, CA	Pacific Crossroads	Shawn Gendall Alex Watlington	
North Hills, CA	Valley	Ron Svendsen	
Santa Barbara, CA	Christ	Nicholas Whitaker	
Other Teaching Elders		Jeffrey Choi	

## Pacific Northwest

---

Anchorage, AK	Faith	Jerid Krulish	Jeff Banker Jay Gardner
Beaverton, OR	Evergreen	Adam Parker	Mike Barnes Micah Meeuwsen
Bellevue, WA	Hope	Martin Hedman	Jim Sherwin
Boise, ID	Boise		Howie Donahoe
Coeur d'Alene, ID	Immanuel	Seth Miller	
Everett, WA	Westminster	Brent Kilman	
Hillsboro, OR	Ascension	Eric Costa	
Issaquah, WA	Covenant	Andrew Perkins	
Mill Creek, WA	Trinitas	Brant Bosserman	Scott Hedgcock
Newberg, OR	Chehalem Valley	Michael Awtry	
Poulsbo, WA	Liberty Bay	Patrick Severson	Everett Henry Robert Moseng Frank Spears
Puyallup, WA	Resurrection		
Seattle, WA	Trinity	Gavin Brand Luke Morton	
Spokane, WA	Coram Deo	Matt Allhands	
Vancouver, WA	Westminster		Camden Spiller

## APPENDIX T

Walla Walla, WA Yakima, WA	Covenant St. Andrews	Ron Gonzales Craig Harris	Darren Maxfield
-------------------------------	-------------------------	------------------------------	-----------------

### **Palmetto**

---

Aiken, SC	New Covenant	Brad Rogers	
Batesburg-L'ville, SC	Christ Community	Kent Suits	
Blair, SC	Salem	Richard Hodges	
Blythewood, SC	Blythewood		Brooks Goodman
Chapin, SC	Chapin	Scott Dinkins	
Columbia, SC	Christ Covenant	Justin McGuire	
	Cornerstone	Joshua Knott	
	Eau Claire	Adam Shields	
	Northeast	Eric Walter	
	Rose Hill	Max Rogland	
	St. Andrews	Bob Bryant	David Layman
		Andrew Davis	
Irmo, SC	Faith	Karl McCallister	
	Grace Point	Todd Boone	
		Keith Kneeshaw	
North Augusta, SC	North Augusta Fell	Jason Cornwell	
Winnsboro, SC	Lebanon	Matthew Coplin	Stephen Gantt Jimmy Joyner
Other Teaching Elders		Curt McDaniel Jr. Craig Wilkes	

### **Pee Dee**

---

Alcolu, SC	New Harmony	David Sanders	
Andrews, SC	Andrews	Mark Horne	
Conway, SC	Grace	Kyle Brent	
Dillon, SC	First	Matt Adams	Michael Brown
		Don Stager	lee Gullede
Florence, SC	Faith	Jordan Gallo	Jack North
	Good Shepherd	Stacey Severance	Andy McInville
Hartsville, SC	Hartsville	James Robbins	Martin Driggers
			John Ropp
Kingstree, SC	Kingstree	Robert Jolly	Will Carsten
			Chris Kellahan
Manning, SC	New Covenant	Daniel Miller	
Myrtle Beach, SC	Faith	John Irwin	Carl Bazemore Gene Readinger

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Pee Dee, continued</b>			
	Surfside	Brian Peterson	Dwain Curtis Paul Goodrich
New Zion, SC	Sardinia	Zach Simmons	
Sumter, SC	Westminster	Stuart Mizelle Nathan Thomas	
Other Teaching Elders		Michael Brown Jim Carter	

### **Philadelphia**

---

Bala Cynwyd, PA	City Line	Ryan Egli	David Fuller
Chestnut Hill, PA	Cresheim Valley	Jonathan Richardson	
Glenside, PA	New Life	Mark Moser Ben Thompson	
Philadelphia, PA	Korean United	Daniel Kwon	
	Northeast Community	Maranatha Chung	
	Renewal	Hansoo Jin	
	Tenth	Colin Howland	Keith Bennett
		Josiah Vanderveen	
	Third Reformed	Casey Huckel	
Other Teaching Elders		Tim Geiger Greg Hobaugh SJ Lim	

### **Philadelphia Metro West**

---

Coatesville, PA	Olive Street	Timothy Brindle	Nathan Carlson
Conshohocken, PA	Christ The King	Eric Huber	
Harleysville, PA	Covenant	John Muhlfeld	
Phoenixville, PA	Iron Works		Ray Rishty
Upper Chichester, PA	Restoration	Jonathan Bonomo	
Upper Darby, PA	Crossroads Comm	Michael Quillen	
Other Teaching Elders		Phil DeHart Dave Garner	

### **Piedmont Triad**

---

Burlington, NC	Northside	Jim Mitchell	
Clemmons, NC	New Hope	Matthew Hutchens Benjamin Tietje	

## APPENDIX T

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Piedmont Triad, continued</b>			
Greensboro, NC	Christ Covenant Grace	Jeff Miller	Towner Scheffler
		Tom Brown	
		Machen Strawbridge	
High Point, NC	Immanuel	Jacob Morrison	
Jamestown, NC	Friendly Hills	Chris Jessup	
		Nathan Kline	
Lexington, NC	Meadowview Ref	Pablo Ayllon	Richard Jones
		Taylor Howsmon	Kevin Miller
		George Sayour	
Winston-Salem, NC	Hope	Ethan Smith	
	Salem	Austin Pfeiffer	
	Trinity	Joel Branscomb	Trevor Laurence
Other Teaching Elders		Derek Radney	
		Clyde Godwin	

### **Pittsburgh**

---

Bovard, PA	Laurel Highlands	Adrian Armel	
Carmichaels, PA	Greene Valley	Keith Larson	
East Liverpool, OH	First Evangelical	Gregory Mead	
Eighty-Four, PA	View Crest	Shaun Nolan	George Willis
Harrison City, PA	New Life	Matthew Fisher	
Indiana, PA	Resurrection Indiana	David Schweissing	
LaVale, MD	Faith	Lee Capper	
Leechburg, PA	Kiski Valley	Matt Stevens	
Ligonier, PA	Pioneer	David Kenyon	
Murrysville, PA	Murrysville Comm	Seth Gurley	
Pittsburgh, PA	City Reformed		Ben Chidester
	First Reformed	James Weidenaar	
	Grace and Peace	Travis Scott	
Robinson Tship, PA	Providence	Rick Appleton	David Auman
		Ray Heiple Jr.	Denny Baker
Washington, PA	Washington	Mike Bowen	
Wexford, PA	Covenant Comm	Jon Price	Adam Kirkton
Other Teaching Elders		Frank Moser	

### **Platte Valley**

---

Fremont, NE	Grace		Les Novak
Omaha, NE	Grace Central	Eric Tonjes	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

	Harvest Community	Jacob Gerber	Bob DeYoung
		Andrew Lightner	
Other Teaching Elders		Michael Gordon	

## Potomac

---

Alexandria, VA	Alexandria	Joel Acevedo	Aaron Renenger
		Josh Diack	
Annandale, VA	One Voice Fell	Chris Sicks	
Arlington, VA	Christ	Billy Boyce	Steve Clarke
			Mark Doehnert
Ashburn, VA	King's Cross	John Jones IV	John Drum
Bowie, MD	Reformed	Chris Calvi	
		Stephen Fix	
Burke, VA	Christ	Porter Harlow	Scott Hatch
			Phil Lee
California, MD	Cornerstone	Dae Gyu Kim	Doug Leepa
		Joo Young Kim	Chad Reed
		Walt Nilsson	
Centreville, VA	Imago Dei	Nathan Boyette	
	Mount Zion	Jegar Chinnavan	
College Park, MD	Wallace	Ryan Moore	Charles Robinson
Derwood, MD	Shady Grove	Charlie Baile	
Fairfax, VA	New Hope	David Coffin Jr.	Steve Edwards
		Paul Wolfe	
Falls Church, VA	Chinese Christian	Tim Carroll	
Frederick, MD	Faith Reformed	John Armstrong Jr.	Martin Hudzinski
			Reid Wilson
Fulton, MD	Good Hope	Samuel Hettinger	Jim Heckman
		Jack Waller	
Gainesville, VA	Gainesville	Jack Lash	
Germantown, MD	Christ		Matt Pickens
Hagerstown, MD	Grace Reformed Fell	Garry Knaebel	
		Jerry Mead	
Hancock, MD	Grace Christian Fell	Edward Guyer	
Herndon, VA	Grace Christian	Zhongming Chen	Jei-show Yueh
		Arthur Hsu	
		Zhiyong Wang	
Laurel, MD	Christ Reformed	Berdj Tchilinguirian	
Leesburg, VA	Potomac Hills	Dave Silvernail Jr.	
Lusby, MD	Harvest Fellowship	Barry Noll	Cal Metz
Manassas, VA	Spriggs Road		Ryan Heisey
			Bill McFarland

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Potomac, continued</b>			
McLean, VA	McLean	William Fullilove Austin Kettle Ryan Laughlin Terence Little Joe Palekas Timoteo Sazo JT Tarter II Rob Yancey Jr.	Kevin Humphreys James Metzger Tom Pilsch
Silver Spring, MD	Mosaic Community	Joel St. Clair	
Springfield, VA	Harvester	Dan Doll Mark Hayes	Paul Perrone Greg Smith
Vienna, VA	NewCity		Thomas Kim
Warrenton, VA	Heritage	Dan Warne	Edward Faudree Christopher Olderog
Washington, DC	Grace	Glenn Hoburg Duke Kwon Russell Whitfield Remargo Yancie	Aaron Jaggard
Woodbridge, VA	Crossroads	Alex Young	Greg Mourad Aaron Root
Other Teaching Elders		Cyril Chavis Matthew DeLong Irwyn Ince Jr. Joseph Ko Timothy Mountfort Nathan Newman Don Sampson	
<b>Providence</b>			
Albertville, AL	Grace Fellowship	Jackie Gaston Jr.	John Anderson
Cullman, AL	Christ Covenant	Jason Ellerbee	Jonathan Haynes
Decatur, AL	Decatur	Scott Phillips	
Fort Payne, AL	Grace	Matthew Duraski	
Huntsville, AL	Cornerstone	John Summers	John Bise Mark Hundscheid
	Southwood	Will Spink	
	The Village	Alex Shipman	

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
Providence, continued	Westminster	Duncan Cantrell James Ensley Jim Roberts Joe Steele III Jacob Hale	Curtis Edewaard
Meridianville, AL Tuscumbia, AL	North Hills First		Lee Hudson Hal Hughston Jr.
Other Teaching Elders		Ron Clegg Glenn Gresham	

## Rio Grande

---

Albuquerque, NM	City		Arlen Biersgreen Joshua Spare
El Paso, TX	High Desert	Dan Rose	
Las Cruces, NM	Christ the King	Dawson Hunt	
	Coram Deo	Dustin Hunt	
	University	Jordan Huff	Robin Rose
White Rock, NM	Bryce Avenue	Zachary Garriis	
Other Teaching Elders		Daniel Herron	

## Rocky Mountain

---

Aurora, CO	New Life	Tim Sin	
Billings, MT	Rocky Mtn Comm		Mark Shelby
Castle Rock, CO	Cornerstone	Shawn Young	Dennis Helsel Bruce Olson
Centennial, CO	Skyview	Rick Vasquez	
Cheyenne, WY	Northwoods	Blake Denlinger	
Colorado Sprgs, CO	Cheyenne Mountain	Matthew Capone	Jim Franks
	Forestgate	Matt Giesman Josh Harstine	
	Village Seven		David Kliever EJ Nusbaum Bill Petro
Denver, CO	Waypoint	Steve Stanton	
Kalispell, MT	Denver	Ronnie Garcia	Casey Clark
Lafayette, CO	Faith Covenant	John Sackett	
Lander, WY	The Table	Michael Phillips	
	Covenant	Scott MacNaughton	Doug Duncan

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Rocky Mountain, continued</b>			
Littleton, CO	Deer Creek Comm	Paul May Daniel Nealon	
Longmont, CO	Redeemer Longmont	Paul Ranheim	
Montrose, CO	Trinity Reformed	Cristian Garcia	Dave Vanden Hoek
New Castle, CO	Trinity Reformed	Zach Kruis	
Westminster, CO	Rocky Mountain	Shane Waldron Christopher Weniger	
Whitefish, MT	Church of the Cross	Russ Tamm  Dominic Aquila Mark Bates III Steve Bostrom Duane Cory David Cullen III Del Farris Don Pegler Kurt Schimke Larry Wilkes	
<b>Savannah River</b>			
Augusta, GA	Cliffwood First	Geoff Gleason John Franks Mike Hearon D.T. House II Ken McHeard Dave Vosseller	
Brunswick, GA	Lakemont	Jim Shaw II	
Dublin, GA	Redeemer	Jonathan Rowe	
Evans, GA	Covenant	Ryan Bigham Robbie Hendrick	
Lyons, GA	Christ Church	Jason Davis	
Pooler, GA	Grace Community	Greg Salazar	
Richmond Hill, GA	First	Dave Senters	Travis Peacock Rob Shepherd Tom Taylor Jr. Ty Donaldson
Savannah, GA	New Covenant		
	Grace The Kirk	Philip Ryan Pete Whitney	
St. Simons Isl, GA	Golden Isles	Jonas Brock Alex Brown	



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
------------	--------	----------------	--------------

### Savannah River, continued

Statesboro, GA	Trinity	Jim McCarthy	
Waynesboro, GA	First	Eric Schievenin	
Other Teaching Elders		Roland Barnes	
		Evan Gear	
		Terry Johnson	
		Timothy Shaw	

### Siouxlands

---

Duluth, MN	Grace	Nathan Lee	
Hinckley, MN	First		Ben Wiener
Lennox, SD	Lennox Ebenezer	Ethan Sayler	
Minnetonka, MN	Good Shepherd		Blake Pool
Rapid City, SD	Black Hills Comm	Art Sartorius	
Spearfish, SD	New Covenant	Luke Bluhm	
Sturgis, SD	Foothills Community	Jeffrey Neikirk	
Other Teaching Elders		Matt Ryman	

### South Coast

---

Aliso Viejo, CA	Aliso Creek	Nick Locke	
Encinitas, CA	Redeemer	Paul Kim	
Escondido, CA	New Life	Won Kwak	
Irvine, CA	New Life	Jeffrey Suhr	
La Mesa, CA	New Life	Connor Underseth	Dean Abbott
		Joel Wood	
Murrieta, CA	Christ	Sam Hogan	
Oceanside, CA	Arise	Brad Jones	
Palm Desert, CA	Providence	Danny Dalton	Marty McCullah
San Diego, CA	North Park	Adriel Sanchez	Jeff Ramsey
	Resurrection	Robert Novak	
Yorba Linda, CA	Grace	Rudy Manrique	Robert Olson
Other Teaching Elders		Lloyd Kim	
		Eric Pilson	

### South Florida

---

Coral Springs, FL	First	David Barry	Ed Barnhill
		John Moore	Greg Miseyko
Cutler Bay, FL	Pinelands	Aldo Leon	Chris Barrett

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>South Florida, continued</b>			
Ft. Lauderdale, FL	Coral Ridge	Caleb Koornneef Rob Pacienza Andrew Siegenthaler	
Hollywood, FL	Park Road	TJ Campo	
Homestead, FL	Redlands Community	Lee Mashburn	
Miami, FL	El Redentor	Carlos Salabarría	
Palmetto Bay, FL	Old Cutler	Michael Campbell Greg Foss	
San Juan, PR	Iglesia La Travesía	Yamil Alejandro	
South Texas			
Austin, TX	All Saints	Brent Baker Josh Keller David Vilches	
	Christ the King	Timothy Fox	Bob Hardister Larry Laine
	Emmanuel Redeemer	Greg Ward Jon Herr Eric Landry Danny Morgan	Barry McBee Joshua Torrey Andrew Waller
	Resurrection	Adam Radcliff	
Boerne, TX	Trinity	Allen Taha	
Bryan, TX	Westminster	Tree Triolo	
Harlingen, TX	Covenant	Italo Furieri	
Kerrville, TX	Christ		Tuan La
New Braunfels, TX	Christ Hope	Nicholas Bullock Mike Haberkorn	Gary Henry
San Antonio, TX	Redeemer Trinity Grace	Bryant McGee Ben Tharp	Jeremy Whitley
Other Teaching Elders		Tom Gibbs Dan Young	

## **Southeast Alabama**

Wiesbaden, Germany	Christ	Phil Gelston	
Auburn, AL	Covenant	Jere Scott Bradshaw	Steve Dowling Mark Tatum
Boblingen, Germany	Covenant Fellowship	Dylan Halter	Sammy Rothfuss
Brewton, AL	First	Parker Johnson	

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Southeast Alabama, continued</b>			
Dothan, AL	First	Jay Joye	David Shipman
Millbrook, AL	Millbrook	Brannon Bowman	Rick Clark
Monroeville, AL	Monroeville	Roger McCay Jr.	
Montgomery, AL	Eastwood	Ross Hodges	
		Barton Lester	
	Trinity	Bill Clark	Mark Anderson
		Kurt Cooper	Bart Harmon
			Houston Waring
			John Weiss
	Young Meadows	Adam Coppock	
Vicenza, Italy	New Life	Michael Graham	
Prattville, AL	First	Allan Bledsoe	
Troy, AL	First	Rick Holbert	
Okinawa, Japan	Okinawa Covenant	Miguel D'Azevedo	
Other Teaching Elders		Tanner Crum	
		James Williams	

### **Southern Louisiana**

---

Baton Rouge, LA	South Baton Rouge	Kelly Dotson	
		Nathan Tircuit	
	Westminster	Brandon Bernard	
Clinton, LA	Faith	Tony Pyles	
New Orleans, LA	Redeemer	Ken Kostrzewa	
Zachary, LA	Plains	Campbell Silman	

### **Southern New England**

---

Boston, MA	Citylife	Benjamin Bae	
		Tony He	
		Daniel Paik	
Cambridge, MA	Christ The King	Travis Drake	
Charlestown, RI	Christ Our Hope	Daniel Jarstfer	Chris Shoemaker
			Mark Slater
Concord, MA	Redeemer	Matthew Kerr	Cris Campelli
Coventry, CT	Presbyterian	Will Snyder	
Dorchester, MA	Christ the King	Moses Park	David Daniel
Groton, CT	Covenant	Rodney Henderson	
Hyde Park, MA	Parkway	Bryan Loney	
Manchester, CT	Presbyterian	Michael Robison	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Southern New England, continued</b>			
New Haven, CT	Christ	Jerry Ornelas Benjamin Sheldon	
Newton, MA	Grace Fellowship	Bruce Cooke	
	Christ the King	Nathan Barczy	
Quincy, MA	Christ the King	Helio Carneiro	
Springfield, MA	Grace	Stephen LaValley	
Wallingford, CT	Christ	Mike Brunjes	
West Springfield, MA	Covenant Comm	Robert Hill	
Worcester, MA	Grace	Jarrett Allebach	
		Travis Hutchinson	
		Solomon Kim	
		Richard Lints	

## **Southwest Florida**

---

Bartow, FL	Oak City	Taylor Clark Brian MacDonald	
Brandon, FL	Westminster	Jeremy Fuller Wes Holland Jr.	Ed Allen Jim Eggert Rick Richert
Clearwater, FL	Christ Community		
Dade City, FL	Christ the King	Chuck Williams	
Lakeland, FL	Covenant	Jeff McDonald	Scott Robinson
	Redeemer	Dave Martin	
	Trinity		Frank McCaulley
Lutz, FL	Cornerstone	Sam Lago	
Mulberry, FL	Greater Hope	Tim Brown Stan McMahan Jr.	Ben Arnold Clint DeBoer
Riverview, FL	Redeemer	Craig Swartz	
St. Petersburg, FL	City	John Baber Justin Woodall	Wyatt Graves
	St. Petersburg	David Harding	Bob Berry
Tampa, FL	Christ Central	John Keen	Bryan Toenes
	Tampa Bay	Freddy Fritz	Todd Bayley Ken Pothoven
	University	Wright Busching	
	Westtown	Cory Colravy Morgan Lusk	Phil Smith

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Southwest Florida, continued</b>			
Winter Haven, FL	Cypress Ridge Redeemer	Rodney Barton Drew Bennett Austin Snively Jonathan Winfree	Ron Avery
Other Teaching Elders		Aldo Mondin David O'Dowd	
<b>Suncoast Florida</b>			
Bonita Springs, FL	Bay	Patrick Womack	
Cape Coral, FL	Providence Christian	Brent Lauder Peter Stonecipher	Michael Levenhagen
Ft. Myers, FL	Westminster	Ryan Broadhurst	
Lake Suzy, FL	Grace	David Stewart	Randy Bibby Bob Rhodes
Marco Island, FL	Marco	Gary Goodrich	
Naples, FL	Covenant	Greg Blosser	
North Ft. Myers, FL	North Ft. Myers	Dann Cecil	
North Port, FL	Covenant of Grace		Aleksey Fomichenko
Sarasota, FL	Covenant Life	Ken Aldrich Bob Dillard Jr. Mike Vieira	Greg Clement Brent Phillips
Venice, FL	New Creation Auburn Road	Steve Jeantet Dwight Dolby	Jim Robinson
<b>Susquehanna Valley</b>			
Alexandria, PA	Christ Reformed	Angelo Valle	
Carlisle, PA	Carlisle Reformed	Tim Cook Matt Purdy	Bill Kauffman Philip Tan
Chambersburg, PA	Redeemer	Jeff Cottone	James Marvin
Cleona, PA	Lebanon Valley	Cisco Victa	
Cochranville, PA	Manor	Daniel Henderson	
Harrisburg, PA	Trinity	John Hayward Michael Wolcott	Edward Lankford
Hummelstown, PA	Hershey	David Kertland	
Lancaster, PA	Harvest	Jim Furey	

# APPENDIX T

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Susquehanna Valley, continued</b>			
	Westminster	Chris Walker	John Barry Lee Brooks Kyle Hunt John Mwaura
	Wheatland	Luke Le Duc Keith Winder	
Mechanicsburg, PA	New Covenant Fell	Chris Bowen	Bret Bucklen Nathan Scheidler Mike Evanko
Mount Joy, PA	Proclamation	Troy DeBruin Collin Gingrich Drew Belden	
Oxford, PA	Bethany	Steve Brown	Tom Pasquarello
Shippensburg, PA	Hope Reformed	Ben Lee	Douglas Sharp Jr.
State College, PA	Oakwood	Erik Swanson	Joe Heidler
York, PA	New Life Providence	Vince Wood	Jay Hassinger Chris Menges
Other Teaching Elders		Bob Eickelberg Shibu Oommen Chris Peter Richard Smith Jr. Ron Zeigler	
<b>Tennessee Valley</b>			
Chattanooga, TN	Covenant		Adam Sanders John Wykoff
	First	Josh Adair Gabe Fluhrer	Pete Austin IV Loren Hartley Mike Kramer
	Highland Park Fell	Corby Shields	
	New City Fell	Kevin Smith	
	New City Fell East L	Gustavo Formenti	
Cleveland, TN	North Shore Fell	Chris Powell John Tomberlin Rob Wolfe	
	St. Elmo	Daniel Wells	Hans Madueme
	Trinity	Sam Brown Philip Caines	Ben Christmann
	First	Andy Aikens	
Crossville, TN			Robert Berman Forrest Marion

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Tennessee Valley, continued</b>			
Dalton, GA	Grace	Adam Brokaw Wes Parsons	
Flintstone, GA	Chattanooga Valley	Roger Collins Dennis Louis	
Ft. Oglethorpe, GA	First	Ryan Biese	Wil Davis
Hixson, TN	Hixson	Steven Edging	
Jasper, TN	Grace	Erik McDaniel	Steve Summers
Knoxville, TN	Christ Covenant Redeemer	Andrew Halbert Jr. Rob Herron	
		Shawn Slate	Josh Flory Josh Hurst
Lookout Mtn, TN	Lookout Mountain	Frank Hitchings	Bill Davis
		Chad Middlebrooks	Larry Goodman
		Wil Nettleton	Derek Halvorson
		Brian Salter	Gary Lindley
		John Mark Scruggs	John Wingard
Louisville, TN	Christ the King	Nate Xanders	
Maryville, TN	Trinity	Jonathan Brooks	
Morristown, TN	Lakeway	Chris Talley	Ryan Bowles
Oak Ridge, TN	Christ Church Covenant	John Blevins III Sean Morris	
		Nick Willborn	Brad Isbell
Rising Fawn, GA	Rock Creek Fell	Andy Jones	Allyn Lay Scott Jones
		Eric Youngblood	
Signal Mountain, TN	Wayside	Brian Cosby	David Moss
		Allen Hawkins	
Sweetwater, TN	Christ	Wes Alford	
Trenton, GA	Grace Community	Hutch Garmany	
Other Teaching Elders		Jeremy Coenen Corey Pelton Chandler Rowlen David Stoddard David Zavadil	

## Tidewater

Chesapeake, VA	Crosswater	Matt Horne Dan Kerley	
	Grace	Alvin Lin	
Elizabeth City, NC	Harbor		Tim Panek
Hampton, VA	Calvary Reformed	TJ Schley	Jim Rogers

## APPENDIX T

<b>City/State</b>	<b>Church</b>	<b>Teaching Elder</b>	<b>Ruling Elder</b>
<b>Tidewater, continued</b>			
Norfolk, VA	Immanuel Trinity	Jack Howell Ben Lyon	Daniel Brown
Smithfield, VA	Hope	Blake Wingfield	Dale Baugh
Suffolk, VA	Westminster Ref	John Martin	Ernest Perry
		Ross Turner	Mark Steiner
Virginia Beach, VA	New Covenant	Jeff Elliott	Blair Allen
			Kurt Nelson
	New Life	Ken Christian Jr.	Woody Brooks
			David Christian
Williamsburg, VA	Grace Covenant	Camper Mundy Jr.	Timothy Nargi Jr.
			Ron Pohl
			Robert Smole
Yorktown, VA	By Grace Community	Kevin Hass	Matt Houseman
Other Teaching Elders		Bryan Fowler Peter Lyon Ben Robertson	

### **Warrior**

---

Aliceville, AL	First	Derrick Brite	Donny Sanders Frank Summerville
Eutaw, AL	Pleasant Ridge	Tom Kay Jr.	
Greensboro, AL	First	John Alexander	
Selma, AL	New Covenant	Michael Perry	
Tuscaloosa, AL	Riverwood	Jeff Pate	
	Trinity	Richard Vise Jr.	
Other Teaching Elders		Paul Kooistra John Robertson	

### **West Hudson**

---

Glen Rock, NJ	Grace Redeemer	Steve Sage Peter Wang	Steve Hoogerhyde
Hoboken, NJ	Redeemer Hudson	Reed Dunn	
Jersey City, NJ	Redeemer Jersey City	Mark Wellman	
Montclair, NJ	Redeemer	Daniel Ying	Abraham Houg
Newark, NJ	Comunidade Crista	G Oliveira	
Short Hills, NJ	Covenant	Christopher Diebold	Jared Smith
Other Teaching Elders		John Hanna	



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

City/State	Church	Teaching Elder	Ruling Elder
<b>Westminster</b>			
Birchleaf, VA	Sandlick	Michael Moon	Kerry Belcher
Bristol, TN	Edgemont	Aaron Bartmess	Glynn Williams
Cedar Bluff, VA	Covenant	Carl Howell Jr.	Dan Hankins
Coeburn, VA	Coeburn		BL Peters
Glade Spring, VA	Seven Springs	Thomas Rickard	
Greenville, TN	Meadow Creek	Richard Steele	
Johnson City, TN	Christ Community	AJ Babel	
		Bill Leuzinger	
	Westminster	Bobby Roberts	
		Andy Wyatt	
Kingsport, TN	Westminster	Rob Dykes	Andy McLeod
		Steve Warhurst	

## Wisconsin

Cedar Grove, WI	Faith Reformed	Zachary Tarter	
Delafield, WI	Cornerstone		Steve Iler
Green Bay, WI	Jacob's Well	Jonatan Azpilcueta	
La Crosse, WI	Christ Covenant	Michael Bowman	
Madison, WI	Harvest	Michael Vogel	
	Lake Trails	Rich Verano	Tucker Meyers
	Resurrection	Matt Lietzen	
Milwaukee, WI	Friend of Sinners	Dan Quakkelaar	Robert Honey
Stevens Point, WI	Good Hope	James Lima	
Waukesha, WI	Iglesia Presbiteriana	Luis Garcia	
Wausau, WI	New Hope Comm	Tony Lombardo	
Other Teaching Elders		Chris Vogel	

Teaching Elders: 1459  
Ruling Elders: 654  
Total: 2113

Churches: 1006

Presbyteries: 88

## APPENDIX U

### OVERTURES REFERRED BY THE FIFTIETH GENERAL ASSEMBLY TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

(**Note:** The following overture was referred back to the IRC by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (*M50GA*, 50-24, p. 22-24)

---

**OVERTURE 2023-2** from Covenant Presbytery (to IRC, AC)  
“Request PCA Join International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC)”

---

**Whereas** the PCA voted at its 49th General Assembly in June 2022 to withdraw from the National Association of Evangelicals (NAE); and

**Whereas** it is fitting for the PCA to establish and maintain connections with other denominations that share our commitment to the Scriptures, the Reformed faith, and the Great Commission; and

**Whereas** the International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) is a global organization that can help the PCA in establishing and maintaining such connections; and

**Whereas** the ICRC aligns well with the theology and mission of not only the PCA, but also the North American Presbyterian and Reformed Council (NAPARC), of which the PCA is a member; and

**Whereas** the ICRC already includes several other NAPARC denominations, such as the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church (ARPC), the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC), the Reformed Presbyterian Church of North America (RPCNA), and the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA); and

**Whereas** the PCA’s projected annual membership dues in the ICRC (estimated at \$9,800 as of August 2022) would amount to

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

approximately half of our previous annual membership dues in the NAE (\$20,000); and

**Whereas** the PCA's membership in the ICRC would enable us to build relationships with, share resources with, and train and equip international Reformed churches in need of spiritual, ecclesial, and material support; and

**Whereas** the Lord Jesus taught us, "Everyone to whom much is given, of him much will be required" (Luke 12:48);

**Therefore be it resolved** that the PCA submit a request to join the ICRC.

*Adopted by Covenant Presbytery at its stated meeting, October 4, 2022*

*Attested by /s/ TE Robert Browning, stated clerk*

## OVERTURES TO THE FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

**(Note:** The following are the original texts of the overtures as submitted by Presbyteries to the PCA Office of the Stated Clerk. For any changes to these overtures by the Committees of Commissioners and/or the Assembly, see the respective Committee of Commissioners Reports in the Daily Journal.)

---

<b>OVERTURE 1</b> from Piedmont Triad Presbytery	(to CCB, OC)
Original Overture #1: Vacated by the Presbytery	
Current Overture #1: "Amend <i>BCO</i> 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility"	

---

[Editorial Note: This overture is similar issue to Overture 18 but proposes an alternative amendment.]

**Be it resolved:** That *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 be amended by deleting some current language (indicated below by ~~strike through~~) and adding some new language (indicated below by underlining).

~~35-1. All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses, except such as do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments. Any person who swears or promises to testify truthfully (BCO 35-8) can be called as a witness. Either party has the right to challenge object to a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall consider and rule on the objection examine and decide upon his competency.~~

*No changes to BCO 35-2 through 35-7*

~~35-8. The oath or affirmation to a witness shall then be administered by the Moderator in the following or like terms: The court shall inform the witness that, regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or promise is made in the presence of God and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:~~

Do you solemnly ~~swear~~promise, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?

If, however, the witness cannot take an oath either for conscientious reasons or because he is not a Christian and thus not able to take a lawful oath invoking God, the Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:~~at any time a witness should present himself before a court, who for conscientious reasons prefers to swear or affirm in any other manner, he should be allowed to do so.~~

Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?

Such that the final text reads:

35-1. Any person who swears or promises to testify truthfully (*BCO* 35-8) can be called as a witness. Either party has the right to object to a witness, and the court shall consider and rule on the objection.

35-8. The court shall inform the witness that, regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or promise is made in the presence of God and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

Do you solemnly swear, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?

If, however, the witness cannot take an oath either for conscientious reasons or because he is not a Christian and thus not able to take a lawful oath invoking God, the Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?

### **Proposed Text of *BCO* 35-1 through 35-8**

For context and clarity, the following is the full proposed text of *BCO* 35-1 through 35-8. Note that this text includes the two changes to *BCO* 35 approved and enacted by the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

35-1. (*If revised*) Any person who swears or promises to testify truthfully (*BCO* 35-8) can be called as a witness. Either party has the right to object to a witness, and the court shall consider and rule on the objection.

35-2. (*No change*) The accused party is allowed, but shall not be compelled, to testify; but the accuser shall be required to testify, on the demand of the accused. A husband or wife shall not be compelled to bear testimony against one another in any court.

35-3. (*No change*) A court may, at the request of either party, or at its own initiative, make reasonable accommodation to prevent in-person contact with the accused:

- a. The court may have testimony taken by videoconference. The videoconference shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can see and hear each other at the same time, and which allows for live cross-examination by both parties.
- b. The court may restrict the accused from appearing on the videoconference screen, and when the accused is represented by counsel (*BCO* 32-19), cross-examination shall be conducted by that counsel.
- c. In all cases where such accommodation has been made, videoconference testimony by witnesses under the age of 18 shall be taken by written interrogatory to be read to the witness by a person appointed by the court in accordance with the applicable provisions of *BCO* 35-11.
- d. The court shall include in the record of the proceedings its reasons for this accommodation and any objection from either party.

35-4. (*No change*) The testimony of more than one witness shall be necessary in order to establish any charge; yet, if in addition to the testimony of one witness, corroborative evidence be produced, the offense may be considered proved.

35-5. (*No change*) It belongs to the court to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence.

35-6. (*No change*) No witness afterwards to be examined, unless a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party object.

35-7. (*No change*) Witnesses shall be examined first by the party introducing them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; after which a member of the court, or either party, may put additional interrogatories. No question shall be put or answered except by permission of the moderator, subject to an appeal to the court. The court shall not permit questions frivolous or irrelevant to the charge at issue.

35-8. (*If revised*) The court shall inform the witness that, regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or promise is made in the presence of God and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

Do you solemnly swear, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?

If, however, the witness cannot take an oath either for conscientious reasons or because he is not a Christian and thus not able to take a lawful oath invoking God, the Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?

## Rationale

This Overture proposes to amend Chapter 35 of the *Book of Church Order* by revising the criteria for witness eligibility to allow persons professing no supernatural belief as witnesses in cases of process. Currently, *BCO* 35-1 disqualifies as witnesses persons “who do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments.” The proposed amendments would expand witness eligibility such that persons who do not believe in God or a future state of rewards and punishments are permitted to act as witnesses in cases of process and to offer their testimony to the courts of the church. The Overture also revises the instructions of *BCO* 35-8 regarding the oath or promise witnesses shall make.

Summary of what the proposed amendment does, and does not, do.

1. The amendment expands witness eligibility and permits church courts to hear the testimony of persons who are willing to affirm the revised oath or promise in *BCO* 35-8.
2. The amendment retains a party’s right to object to the admittance of any witness.
3. The amendment requires the court to inform every witness, regardless of his individual beliefs, that his oath or promise is made in the presence of God and that God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers.
4. The amendment retains and clarifies the exemplary oath for Christian witnesses while introducing an exemplary promise that is applicable to Christians who for conscientious reasons prefer not to swear an oath, non-Christian theists, and atheists.
5. The amendment *does not* require the court to permit any person to testify as a witness. Only witnesses who swear or promise that they will testify truthfully are permitted to be considered as witnesses. If either party objects to the admittance of a witness, the court shall consider and rule on the objection.
6. The amendment *does not* require the court to attach the same degree of credibility to the testimony of every witness (cf. *BCO* 31-8; 35-5).



7. The amendment *does not* require the court to administer an oath to any witness for whom an oath to God would be unlawful (cf. WCF 22.2) or a violation of conscience.

### **Further Explanation and Responses to Objections**

The current restriction of *BCO* 35-1 is properly understood as a product of the context of Christendom that dominated for centuries in the West. There was an extended time in the West when belief in God generally and belief in the Christian faith particularly were so widespread that even those outside of the church could be presumed to be theists of some sort, and the absence of such belief in an individual signaled an unusually significant philosophical and moral deviation from societal norms. In this context of common theistic belief, restrictions against non-theist witnesses did not severely curtail the church's capacity to receive the judicial testimony of outsiders in her courts. This is no longer the case in the rapidly secularizing modern world. In our current post-Christendom cultural milieu, functional naturalism is no longer an exceptional anomaly, and those outside of the church who might possess valuable testimony for her courts are increasingly likely to formally profess no belief in God or a future state of rewards and punishments. The proposed amendment revises witness eligibility requirements in recognition of the sweeping and profound cultural shifts that have taken place in recent decades in order that our courts are not unduly restrained in their pursuit of truth and justice.

The Westminster Standards make abundantly clear that there are many ways that falsehood may corrupt the life, witness, integrity, and justice of Christ's church. Of course, overt lies may come in from the outside. But falsehood may also take root if, internally, the church sets up obstacles to her unfettered pursuit of the truth. *Westminster Larger Catechism* 144–145 state that, beyond merely avoiding bearing false testimony, the ninth commandment enjoins Christians actively to “the preserving and promoting of truth” and that it prohibits “concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others” or otherwise acting “to the prejudice of truth or justice.” What is more, the command calls us to “a charitable esteem of our neighbors,” including our atheist neighbors, which at very least means that we ought to charitably entertain the possibility that our neighbors who bear the image of God are by common grace capable of telling the truth about grave matters. The

notion that non-theists, in the absence of the threat of immediate punishment, ought never to be trusted to offer truthful testimony posits a perpetual hermeneutic of suspicion that fails both to conform to the Reformed doctrine of common grace and to attain the heights of the “charitable esteem” required by the Decalogue and our Standards.

The law of God binds not only the life of Christians individually but the life of the church collectively and the conduct of her courts. Insofar as a provision of our *BCO* inhibits the courts’ preservation and promotion of truth in a manner that may functionally result in the concealment of the truth and undue silence to the prejudice of justice, said provision impedes the church in its God-mandated commitment to the truth. Fully and joyfully giving ourselves to the vision of the ninth commandment laid out in our Standards will involve the careful, circumspect work of removing unnecessary hindrances that obstruct the courts of the church in their labors to pursue, establish, expose, and respond with justice to the truth wherever it may be found.

Significantly, the proposed amendment does not mandate that a court receive as equally credible every witness’s testimony. It simply permits witnesses who profess no faith to offer their testimony to be judged by the wisdom and discretion of the court (cf. *BCO* 35-5), even as it retains the right of either party to object to the participation of any witness. This provision will be incalculably valuable in the abundant and easily imagined scenarios wherein an individual who does not believe in God or a future state of rewards and punishments may be able to offer substantive testimony about the speech, actions, or abusive behavior of a member of the church. Whether an unbelieving neighbor who witnesses sinful conduct while attending a dinner in a member’s home, or an adult child living at home who sees one spouse strike another, or an atheist coworker who individually observes unethical acts or an adulterous relationship in the workplace, or a medical professional who treats an injury and can corroborate a victim’s disclosure to the court, or a secularist visiting a church who alone witnesses (or even suffers) the commitment of an offense, or a victim of abuse within the church who has been so harmed as to have left the faith but nevertheless desires to bear witness to the court and seek the justice deserved, all of these individuals and so many more may be gifts to the church’s courts as those courts seek to do what is right before God for the sake of Christ’s bride and in the cause of truth and justice.

What is more, the requirement of *BCO* 8-2 (echoing 1 Timothy 3:7) that every elder “should have a good report of them that are outside the Church” suggests that the courts of the church ought to have a constitutional means of formally receiving and substantiating by way of judicial testimony an ill report from those outside the church—atheists among them—that would call into question an ordained elder’s continued qualification and fitness for office, questions that would necessarily be settled through judicial process. As the *BCO* currently stands, any offense witnessed and corroborable exclusively by individuals who do not believe in God or a state of future rewards and punishments, whether committed by an elder or any other member of the church, is rendered functionally invisible to the courts of the church because there is no avenue for such witnesses to offer admissible testimony to the offense. Such offenses are not invisible to the Lord of the church, and they should not be invisible to the church of the Lord.

Outright lies are not the only threat to the justice of the church’s courts. Constitutional obstacles to the open pursuit of the truth, wherever it may be found, are perhaps a more sinister—because a more subtle—way that falsehood may prevail and injustice multiply to the harm of the most vulnerable under our care.

Of course, witnesses are not called upon in judicial proceedings only to testify to an offense. They may also offer exculpatory testimony about an accused individual’s innocence. It should be noted, then, that permitting non-theists to offer testimony in the courts of the church may serve the cause of truth and justice both by corroborating the wrongdoing of an offender and by substantiating the innocence of the wrongfully accused.

By way of comparison with a sister NAPARC denomination, the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church already permits all persons created in the image of God to stand as witnesses: “All persons generally are competent to testify as witnesses, though the court shall make due allowance for age, intelligence, character, belief in God, possible bias, relationship to the parties involved, and other like circumstances” (*Book of Discipline*, 4.4J). Consequently, the ARP is currently better equipped than the PCA to welcome the truth into her courts, protect the vulnerable, guard the purity of the church, and adjudicate with justice.

The formation of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault by the 47<sup>th</sup> General Assembly and the reception of their report at the

49th General Assembly indicated an initial commitment by the Presbyterian Church in America to take constructive action toward reviewing policies and procedures and implementing wise changes to the *BCO* in order to more effectively protect the vulnerable, respond to allegations of abuse, find the truth, acquit the innocent, and create judicial processes whereby victims are not unduly burdened and are instead able to pursue and receive just recourse from the church. This amendment represents one step toward making good on that commitment. While the proposed changes to Chapter 35 of the *BCO* are relevant to all manner of judicial proceedings, they are particularly crucial to ongoing endeavors to better protect children and victims of abuse.

In Holy Scripture, the certainty and efficacy of God’s justice are not contingent upon the internal faith or fear of any individual. The apostle Paul declares that Christ Jesus is he “who is to judge the living and the dead” (2 Timothy 4:1), the Lord who can be trusted to render justice according to deeds (2 Timothy 4:14). In line with Scripture’s unequivocal teaching that all persons without exception will be accountable to the justice of God, the proposed revision to *BCO* 35-8 requires the court to inform all witnesses that their testimony is given in the presence of God and that God will judge them on the truthfulness of their answers. Consequently, the members of the court may take heart in their declaration precisely because God truly is the God who is—the Judge of the living and of the dead—irrespective of any potential witness’s belief or non-belief. When invoking the justice of God, the most basic question is not, “Does this witness believe in the God of justice?” but rather, “Do we believe in the God of justice?”

Notably, while retaining the exemplary oath for Christians, the proposed amendment to *BCO* 35-8 does not require atheists to swear an unlawful oath (cf. *WCF* 22.2) by the name of a God in whom they do not believe. The court’s declaration to the witness regarding God’s presence and judgment is true regardless of the witness’s subjective belief, and the language of the added promise is applicable without issue to Christians with conscientious objections to oathtaking, non-Christian theists, and non-theist witnesses alike. Intriguingly, while non-Christian theists are currently permitted to testify in the courts of the church—and, presumably, to swear the included oath in its present language by God’s name—the added promise removes the possibility that a non-Christian theist might be asked to swear an oath by God’s name and, in this way, is more consistent with the claims of *WCF* 22.2 that oaths by God’s

name require “holy fear and reverence” and must not be sworn “vainly and rashly.”

To the potential objection that the courts of the church ought to have jurisdiction over and authority to discipline all witnesses who testify, it should be noted that *BCO* 35-1 already permits any non-Christian theist—who is not subject to the court’s jurisdiction or authority to discipline—to testify as a witness. As currently written, *BCO* 35-1 does not require potential witnesses to be under the court’s jurisdiction, and it is the objection and not the proposed amendment that is foreign to the PCA’s existing policy in this regard.

To the potential objection that oathtaking is a necessary condition for admissible witness testimony, it should be noted that *BCO* 35-8 already permits witnesses for conscientious reasons to forego the exemplary oath and “affirm in any other manner.” As currently written, *BCO* 35-8 does not require all potential witnesses to swear an oath, and it is the objection and not the proposed amendment that is foreign to the PCA’s existing policy in this regard.

To the potential objection that admitting atheists as witnesses renders the church liable to malicious lies, it should be noted that she already is and will continue to be until Christ returns. It is not immediately clear why this concern should be selectively applied to the atheist—eager adherents of other non-Christian religions could presumably have as much or more reason to desire to intentionally harm the church with lies, but there exists no blanket prohibition in the *BCO* barring them from offering testimony. What is more, an atheist willing to lie in order to intentionally and maliciously bring harm to the church will presumably have no ethical qualms about lying concerning his belief in the supernatural in order that he be permitted to testify as a witness in the first place. Consequently, the current provisions of *BCO* 35 functionally do nothing to protect the church from an individual committed to spreading lies about and within the church. Ironically, the provisions as presently constructed serve only to prohibit the testimony of an honest atheist who forthrightly acknowledges his non-belief and yet wishes to bear truthful witness to the court, even as they are impotent against the dishonest atheist who is willing to lie about his beliefs in order to be admitted as a witness. The proposed amendment, however, removes the obstacle barring the honest atheist from testifying and, rather than relying on ineffective safeguards against malicious liars, focuses attention on the court’s responsibility to judge the degree of

credibility to be attached to the testimony of theist and non-theist witnesses alike.

To the potential objection that atheist testimony is unnecessary because documentary evidence is admissible and sufficient, it should be noted that there are myriad offenses which are the interest of ecclesial courts that will never generate associated documentary evidence from authorities. Though forensic tests and evidence may at times be available to substantiate allegations of physical or sexual assault, other forms of abuse (e.g., emotional abuse, verbal abuse, spiritual abuse, and instances of physical and sexual abuse that do not leave physical evidence) and other forms of sin more generally (e.g., adultery, alcoholism, lying) are not analogously confirmable by testing and documentation and may in many cases only be substantiated through eyewitness testimony. Documentary evidence is in reality only available in a small fraction of cases relevant to the courts of the church. Even where documentary evidence is available, documents—unlike human witnesses—cannot answer the questions posed to them by various parties seeking clarification, disputing facts, or pursuing further related information in a judicial process. The courts' ability to hear all relevant witness testimony is therefore immensely important to their pursuit of truth and justice both when documentary evidence may be available and in the far more frequent scenarios when it is not.

To the potential objection that the civil magistrate, not the church courts, ought to be entrusted to handle the matters impacted by the amendment, it should be noted that most sinful offenses initiating process in ecclesial courts, including some forms of abusive behavior, are non-criminal in nature and therefore are not even subject to the involvement of the civil magistrate. To be clear, there are indeed certain types of accusation and offense that the civil magistrate ought to initially address and investigate. In such cases, the church should do its best to continue to pastorally care for those involved, but the civil authorities should be promptly and clearly notified of potential crimes, especially if those crimes are against those more vulnerable. However, even in cases where an alleged offense is criminal in nature, it is certainly within the realm of possibility that the civil magistrate could ignore, fail to properly investigate, taint, or tamper with evidence relevant to, reach a wrong conclusion about, or otherwise mishandle an allegation. To reject necessary changes in our *BCO* on the grounds that the civil magistrate will handle the cases that fall through the cracks in our current provision involves a failure to

reckon with the variety of offenses of interest to ecclesial courts and unduly binds the courts of the church to the actions and findings of an immanently fallible civil magistrate.

*Adopted by Piedmont Triad Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 11, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Ethan Smith, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 2** from Northern California Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* 13-6 for Clarity in Transfers of Ordination”

---

**Be it resolved:** That *BCO* 13-6 be amended by the current language as follows (underlining for additions, ~~striketrough~~ for deletions):

**13-6. Ministers Transferring into the Presbytery**

- a. A ~~Ministers~~ seeking admission to a Presbytery from another Presbyteries Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be examined on Christian experience, and also ~~touching~~ as to his ~~their~~ views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If the examining Presbytery does not accept the Minister seeking admission, it shall record this fact along with its rationale in the minutes, and shall communicate its rationale to his current Presbytery.
- b. If an applicants comes from another denominations, the Presbytery shall examine him ~~them~~ thoroughly ~~in knowledge and views~~ as required by the trials listed in BCO 21-4. ~~and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination.~~ Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4.
- c. In every case, Presbyteries shall ~~also~~ require each ordained ministers ~~coming from other denominations~~ entering the Presbytery to state the specific instances in which ~~they~~ he may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with ~~*BCO* 21-4~~ (see *BCO* 21-4.f-g (see also *RAO* 16-3.e.5.a-d). Each ordained

minister accepted into the Presbytery shall also be required to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination.

So that the amended section will read as follows:

**13-6. Ministers Transferring into the Presbytery**

- a. A Minister seeking admission to a Presbytery from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be examined on Christian experience, and also as to his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If the examining Presbytery does not accept the Minister seeking admission, it shall record this fact along with its rationale in the minutes, and shall communicate its rationale to his current Presbytery.
- b. If an applicant comes from another denomination, the Presbytery shall examine him thoroughly as required by the trials listed in *BCO* 21-4. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for *reception* may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4.
- c. In every case, Presbyteries shall require each ordained minister entering the Presbytery to state the specific instances in which he may differ with the Confession of Faith and Catechisms in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4.f-g (see also *RAO* 16-3.e.5.a-d). Each ordained minister accepted into the Presbytery shall also be required to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination.

**Rationale:**

As presently written *BCO* 13-6 presents ambiguity concerning the thoroughness of exams for ministers transferring into a presbytery either from within the PCA or from another denomination.

In the case of PCA transfers, there has been significant debate about whether “touching on” indicates a less stringent exam, or indicates the specific subject areas to be covered. As that language dates to the 1869 draft of the PCUS *BCO*,



in which such usage was understood to specify matters to be covered, clarifying the original intent by updating the language seems needful.

In the case of transfers from outside the PCA, it is unclear whether *BCO* 13-6 as currently written intends “in knowledge and views” to be more akin to the “views” examination of those transferring from within the PCA, or to the full breadth of the trials of *BCO* 21-4.c. However, *BCO* 21-4.g (“the candidate’s knowledge and views in the areas specified above”) indicates that the whole list of trials is in view.

Since there can be great diversity between a minister transferring into the PCA (e.g., from a NAPARC denomination vs. non-NAPARC denomination), this amendment provides clarity to the items which a presbytery must either examine or must apply the “extraordinary cases” clause to ministers of “proven extraordinary gifts” (21-4.h).

As there has been confusion among presbyteries and the responses from Review of Presbytery Records, this amendment seeks to remove ambiguity and provide clarity to presbyteries on which exams to perform, what must be noted in the minutes, and what reports must be made.

*Adopted by the Northern California Presbytery at its Stated Meeting, 6 October 2023.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Alex Ford, Stated Clerk.*

---

**OVERTURE 3** from Pee Dee Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Grant Constitutional Status to *BCO* 53 re Preaching”

---

**Whereas**, the constitutional documents of our denomination include the Directory of Public Worship (Preface III, *BCO* 26.1) with our Book of Church Order implying the usefulness of and adherence to the Directory of Public Worship; and

**Whereas**, it was the desire of our founding fathers to have an authoritative Directory of Public Worship for our beloved denomination; and

**Whereas**, the Third General Assembly placed a temporary preface to the Directory of Public Worship stating it “does not have the force of law”

which was only to be in place “until a more precise statement can be prepared by the Constitutional Documents Committee;” and

**Whereas**, the Constitutional Documents Committee was dismissed in 1978 without any report or action pertaining to the Directory of Public Worship; and

**Whereas**, the 1980 General Assembly tasked the Permanent Committee on Judicial Business to re-write the Directory of Worship but this committee failed to achieve the original goal of authoring an authoritative Directory of Public Worship beyond chapters 56-58 concerning the sacraments; and

**Whereas**, the most recent changes to our Directory of Public Worship being the constitutionalization of *BCO* 59-3 by the 46<sup>th</sup> General Assembly; and

**Whereas**, we are a denomination that rightly adheres to and affirms the Regulative Principle of Worship; and

**Whereas**, the current Directory of Public Worship is wrongly considered just pious advice; and

**Whereas**, the current Directory of Public Worship is often neglected or ignored due to its lack of constitutionality; and

**Whereas**, there are current worship practices within our denomination that would be found out of order by our Directory of Public Worship, especially pertaining to women and other unqualified persons “Preaching” in Public Worship services; and

**Whereas**, the Larger Catechism continues, in Question 158, to state that “the word of God is to be preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to that office;” and

**Whereas**, our Westminster Shorter Catechism, Question 89, states that it is through the “reading, but especially the preaching of the word” that the Spirit effectually calls, convinces, and converts sinners; and

**Whereas,** WSC 89 additionally states that it is through the “reading, but especially the preaching of the word” that the Spirit builds up believers in holiness and comfort; and

**Whereas,** the Apostle Paul clearly teaches that only qualified and approved men within Christ’s church are those who have been set aside for the reading and preaching of the scriptures in worship (1 Tim. 2:12; 3:2; 4:14); and

**Whereas,** the Session is charged to order worship “in accordance with the Directory of Worship” in *BCO* 12-5e; and

**Whereas,** the amending and constitutionalizing of chapter 53 would assist the Session in ordering worship according to the Word of God, the Regulative Principle of Worship, and our Standards; and

**Whereas,** the amending and the constitutionalizing of chapter 53 would ensure that no perversion of the greatest means of grace given to the life of the Church takes place within our congregations’ worship services;

**Therefore, be it resolved,** that the Pee Dee Presbytery hereby requests the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to amend our *Book of Church Order* 53 (by deleting the language indicated below by strikethrough and adding new language, indicated below by underlining) and give this chapter constitutional status.

## **CHAPTER 53**

### *The Preaching of the Word*

53-1. The preaching of the Word is an ordinance of God for the salvation of men. Serious attention should be paid to the manner in which it is done. The minister or a qualified man should apply himself to it with diligence and prove himself a “worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

53-2. The subject of a sermon should be some verse or verses of Scripture, and its object, to explain, defend and apply some part of the system of divine truth; or to point out the nature, and state the bounds and obligation, of some

duty. A text should not be merely a motto, but should fairly contain the doctrine proposed to be handled. It is proper also that large portions of Scripture be sometimes expounded, and particularly improved, for the instruction of the people in the meaning and use of the sacred Scriptures.

53-3. Preaching requires much study, meditation, and prayer, and ministers or qualified men should prepare their sermons with care, and not indulge themselves in loose, extemporary harangues, nor serve God with that which costs them naught. They should, however, keep to the simplicity of the Gospel, and express themselves in language that can be understood by all. They should also by their lives adorn the Gospel which they preach, and be examples to believers in word and deed.

53-4. As a primary design of public ordinances is to unite the people in acts of common worship of the most high God, ministers, or a qualified man, should be careful not to make their sermons so long as to interfere with or exclude the important duties of prayer and praise, but should preserve a just proportion in the several parts of public worship.

53-5. By way of application of the sermon the minister, or a qualified man, may urge his hearers by commandment or invitation to repent of their sins, to put their trust in the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, and to confess him publicly before men.

53-6. No ~~person~~ qualified man should be invited to preach or exhort in any of the churches under our care without the consent of the Session.

*Adopted by Pee Dee Presbytery at its stated meeting, October 26, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Michael S. Brown, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 4** from Central Indiana Presbytery (CCB, OC)  
 “Establish Study Committee for Judicial Rules Changes”

---

**Be it resolved** that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America postpone consideration of all overtures touching *Book of Church Order (BCO)* chapters 27–46 (“Rules of Discipline”) and refer all such proposed overtures to a Study Committee for review and recommendation to the Overtures Committee of the 52<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly. Quorum shall be three

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Ruling Elders and three Teaching Elders; all members shall be from differing presbyteries. The committee shall be self-funded: each committee member shall bear his own expenses and be allowed to submit these expenses to his church or presbytery. The Moderator of the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly shall have discretion to fill any vacancies by an officer of the same order (*BCO* 7-2).

The committee shall produce in its report recommendations on overtures referred to it. The Committee's report shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk by the deadline listed in the *Rules of Assembly Operation (RAO)* for Overtures. Though the ad-hoc committee shall strive for unanimity where at all possible, for any overtures recommended by the committee, a minority report recommending an alternative shall be allowed if the minority includes at least two Ruling Elders and two Teaching Elders. Nothing herein shall prevent the committee from recommending germane amendments to any overtures referred to it by this Assembly.

**Be it further resolved** that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America suspend *RAO* 9-4, limiting committee membership to seven (7) members, and compose this study committee of eleven elders from different presbyteries, with at least four Ruling Elders and four Teaching Elders, with one alternate each, respectively, as follows, listed in alphabetical order (each member has given his assent to serve in this capacity, should the Assembly pass this overture):

- TE Per Almquist (Northern New England)
- RE Dan Barber (Central Indiana)
- RE Howie Donahoe (Pacific Northwest)
- TE Jacob Gerber (Platte Valley)
- TE Fred Greco (Houston Metro)
- TE Larry Hoop (Ohio Valley)
- RE Trevor Laurence (Piedmont Triad)
- TE Paul Lee (Korean Northeastern)
- RE E. J. Nusbaum (Rocky Mountain)
- RE Bryce Sullivan (Nashville)
- (Alternate) TE Steve Tipton (Gulf Coast)
- RE Richard Wolfe (Arizona)
- (Alternate) RE Jim Wert (Metro Atlanta)

In the event that the Overtures Committee does not recommend that the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly suspend *RAO* 9-4, or the Assembly itself declines to approve a recommendation to suspend, then this Overture recommends that the Moderator of the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly appoint seven (7) men to this Study Committee from this list of eleven (11), with the rest as advisory members, and appoint its convener.

## Rationale

There is likely to be no small number of overtures being proposed this year to the General Assembly pertaining to judicial procedures beginning with investigation through the completion of formal judicial process. Furthermore, the overtures being drafted have dependencies upon one another: some items are being proposed to move from *BCO* 32 to *BCO* 31, and 35 to 32, etc. The only way to achieve these kinds of systematic (and helpful) changes is to work on multiple overtures *en masse*. Approving this Overture will enable more extensive review, discussion, and debate on the matters than would be possible during the normal work of the Overtures Committee and will result in a report helpful for the 52nd GA Overtures Committee when it considers the postponed 2023 overtures. **It is our hope that this overture will encourage other presbyteries to consider submitting additional proposed changes beyond our own.**

We understand that the main reason the *RAO* limits committee membership to seven relates to funding by the Administrative Committee, which has historically borne the full burden of any study committee. Additionally, *Robert's Rules of Order (RONR)* helpfully explains that larger committee composition may be desirable in certain circumstances:

“When a special committee is appointed for deliberation or investigation, however, it should often be larger, and it should represent, as far as possible, all points of view in the organization, so that its opinion will carry maximum weight. When such a committee is properly selected, its recommendations will most often reflect the will of the assembly” (12<sup>th</sup> ed., §50:18).

The proposed membership of this committee has been carefully selected to broadly represent the variety of views within our fellowship, and each member has demonstrated the ability to work collaboratively and collegially. Each one

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

at some time or another served on Review of Presbytery Records and/or Overtures Committee and has in his own right expertise and experience in the *BCO* and to varying degrees with judicial process. It should be noted that the proposed membership of this committee consists of:

- three current SJC members, two of whom served as judges, and one as clerk, on a recent trial;
- two current CCB members and one alternate;
- five former trial representatives;
- three trained legal professionals;
- three General Assembly Moderators.

Because the Study Committee proposed in this Overture does not require funding from the Administrative Committee, and due to the extended and deliberative nature of the proposed items to be referred to it, we believe it should be relatively simple to suspend *RAO* 9-4. Therefore, this Overture also proposes the 51st General Assembly Overtures Committee recommend that the 51st General Assembly vote to suspend *RAO* 9-4 in this instance so that the committee can include eleven members. Their biographical sketches and relevant service to the Presbyterian Church in America are listed below:

**TE Per Almquist**, Northern New England. BA Johns Hopkins ('96); M.Div. Covenant Theological Seminary ('99); DMin Reformed Theological Seminary, dissertation "Presbyterian Polity in Practice: A Commentary on the Book of Church Order;" Sr. Pastor/planter, Free Grace Presbyterian Church, Lewiston, Maine. Presbytery committees served: Recording clerk Northern New England Presbytery, Chm. Ministerial Relations and Review of Sessional Records. GA committees served: Chm/Vice Chm Review of Presbytery Records, Nominating Committee; Chairman, Committee on Constitutional Business; various Committees of Commissioners.

**RE Dan Barber**, Central Indiana. B.S. Psychology, Georgia College (1998); M.Div., Covenant Seminary (2011) with an emphasis in Educational Ministries. Product specialist and technology evangelist for NetApp, Inc. CDM Permanent Committee Class of 2026; Review of Presbytery Records Class of 2022; Overtures Committee 2022, 2023. Ruling Elder, 2013–2014, The Kirk of the Hills (St. Louis, MO); 2019–2021, Redeemer Presbyterian Church (Indianapolis, IN); 2021–Present,

Fountain Square Presbyterian Church (Indianapolis; also Clerk of Session). 2022–Present, Moderator, Central Indiana Presbytery. Review of Session Records team, CIP, 2021–Present. Served as a respondent and/or representative in multiple cases for both Presbytery and General Assembly before the Standing Judicial Commission in both complaints and judicial process. Authored/co-authored several judicially-related overtures considered and/or passed by multiple General Assemblies.

**RE Howie Donahoe.** Pacific Northwest. B.S. USAF Academy, M.A. Arizona State; AF pilot 8 yrs., airline pilot 35 yrs.; PCA member 41 years, eight churches, four presbyteries; RE 37 years; SJC member for 24 years. Moderator of 47th GA in Dallas. Appointed study committees on Sexuality & on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault. Six terms on the SJC: classes of 2002 (elected '98), 2006, 2010, 2015, 2019, 2024, and will have served on the SJC a total of 25 years in June 2024.

**TE Jacob Gerber,** Platte Valley. B.A. University of Nebraska-Lincoln (2006). M.Div., Beeson Divinity School (2009). Ph.D. Candidate, Puritan Reformed Theological Seminary (Present). Professional Parliamentarian, Credentialed as a Professional Registered Parliamentarian (National Association of Parliamentarians) and a Certified Professional Parliamentarian-Teacher (American Institute of Parliamentarians) before Retirement (2001–2011). Author, *Parliamentary Procedure for Presbyters: A Beginner's Guide* (Presbyterian Polity, 2023). Interim Pastor for Crete Berean Church (Crete, NE; 2011) and First Evangelical Covenant Church (Lincoln, NE; 2011–2013). Assistant Pastor at Redeemer Presbyterian Church (PCA) (2011–2015). Senior Pastor at Harvest Community Church (PCA) (2015–Present). Stated Clerk, Platte Valley Presbytery (2018–Current). PCA General Assembly Service: Floor Clerk (2017); Overtures Committee (2018; 2023); Covenant Theological Seminary CoC (2019); Mission to the World CoC (Secretary; 2021); Review of Presbytery Records (2020–Present); Ad-Hoc Rules Subcommittee for RPR (2021–2022); Secretary for RPR (2023–2024); Assistant Representative for RPR before SJC for BCO 40-5 Cases (2023).

**TE Fred Greco,** Houston Metro. BA University of Buffalo, Buffalo, NY; MA University of Chicago, Chicago, IL; JD University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI; MDiv Reformed Theological Seminary. Currently serves as senior pastor of Christ Church, Katy, TX, 2006-present. Previously



worked as an attorney focusing on corporate, real estate, and employment law. Current member of Standing Judicial Commission, 2009-present; service on SJC includes as secretary (2011-13) and chairman (2014-17; 2019–2022). Chaired numerous panels and has worked to improve efficiency of SJC using technology. General Assembly Moderator (50th); other service includes Nominating Committee; Theological Examining Committee (2004-05); and numerous committees of commissioners, including Administration and Overtures. Presbytery service includes Moderator (2009-11) and chairman of Ministerial Relations and Candidates & Credentials Committees.

**TE Larry Hoop**, Ohio Valley. B.A. Miami University (1972); M.Div. Trinity Evangelical Divinity School (1984); D.Min. Covenant Theological Seminary (2004). Campus Staff, IVCF, OH (1972-80); Director of Christian Education (1983-85) and Associate Pastor (1985-88), Westminster Presbyterian Church, Elgin, IL; Pastor, Colfax Center Presbyterian Church, Holland, IA (1988-2012); Supply Pastor, Russellville (OH) Presbyterian Church (2014-17) and Wheat Ridge (West Union, OH) Presbyterian Church (2014-22). Church and Presbytery Relations Representative, PCA Administrative Committee (2015-21); byFaith News Editor (2021- ). Stated Clerk, Northern Illinois Presbytery (1987-88), Ohio Valley Presbytery (2015 - ). GA Service: CCB (Alternate, 2001-02; Member, 2002-06, 2007-11, 2013-17, 2018-23; secretary, 2008-11; Chairman, 2014-17, 2021-23); RPR (1991-93, 2019-22; vice-chairman, 1992; secretary, 1993); Nominating Committee (2023- ); CoCs: Bills and Overtures/Overtures (1987, 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001-03, 2008-09; secretary, 1997), IRC (1998, 2014-16, chairman, 2016), MTW (2004, chairman), CTS (2005, 2012), RUF (2006), AC (2007, 2010-11), MNA (2013). Has served as Presbytery Prosecutor and Respondent, and Representative of Complainant, arguing three cases before SJC Judicial Panels and two before the full SJC.

**RE Trevor Laurence**, Piedmont Triad. B.A. Religion, University of Florida (2009); M.A., Christian Thought, Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary (2013); Ph.D., Theological Ethics, University of Exeter (2020). Executive Director, Catechesia Institute (2019– ); Research Associate, Centre for the Study of Bible and Violence (2019– ). Author, *Cursing with God: The Imprecatory Psalms and the Ethics of Christian Prayer* (Baylor University Press, 2022); Co-Editor, *Violent Biblical Texts: New*

*Approaches* (Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2022). Church Planter and Pastor, Trinity Church, Winston-Salem, NC (2012–2016); Ruling Elder, Trinity Church, Winston-Salem, NC (2016– ). Presbytery Service: Leadership Development Team, Piedmont Triad Presbytery (2017–2019); Moderator (2023). General Assembly Service: Overtures Committee (2019, 2021–2023).

**TE Paul Lee**, Korean Northeastern. Previous service in Korean Eastern: Philadelphia Shepherding Committee, Chair (May 2005 – Jun 2007); Youth Committee, Member (Nov 2002 – Feb 2006); Candidate Examining Committee, Member (Jan 2006 – Oct 2011), Chair (Dec 2008 – Jun 2009); Presbytery Stated Clerk, Jun 2009 – Oct 2011. Korean Northeastern Presbytery (formed Oct 2011 out of Korean Eastern): Candidate Examining Committee, Secretary (Feb 2012 – Sep 2014), Chair (Jun 2013 – current); Presbytery Stated Clerk, Oct 2013 – current. General Assembly service includes: GA Recording Clerk, 2015-2018 (43-46 GA), 2021-2023 (48GA-50GA) GA Computing Clerk, 2019 (47GA); Standing Judicial Commission, Member (2019-2024 term); Interchurch Relations Committee, Member (2016-2018); Theological Exam Committee, Alternate (2009, 2010); Nominating Committee Appointee (2011, 2014, 2015-17, 2018-2023); Chair (2017); Review of Presbytery Records Committee Appointee (2010, 2014-2023) and Alternate (2011); Secretary (2016, 2017), Assistant Secretary (2018), Vice Chair (2019, 2020-21), Chair (2022, 2023); Overtures Committee, Appointee (2011, 2014-2023), Secretary (2018); Floor Clerk, Appointee (2010 and 2011); Communion Elder, Appointee (2010, 2011, 2014, and 2015).

**RE E. J. Nusbaum**, Rocky Mountain. Active-duty infantry officer from 1979 to 1985. Naval Reserve Officer from 1988 to 2007. Retired as a Captain (O-6) on 31 December 2007. Ordained as a Ruling Elder in 1987. Clerk of Session for 6 years. RMT MNA committee from 1998–2021, Shepherding Committee (Current), Moderator 2010–2011. CoC 21 of the last 24 assemblies, including Administration (26th GA), Ridge Haven (27<sup>th</sup> and 49<sup>th</sup>), Chairman of the Bills and Overtures Committee (29th GA); Overtures Committee for nine assemblies. Committee for Constitutional Business (2002–2007; 2008–2012) and the Standing Judicial Commission (2013-2022). Moderator of the 35th GA.

**RE Bryce Sullivan**, Nashville. B.S. Psychology, Georgia State University; MA, Psychology, and Ph.D. Clinical Psychology, Ohio State University (1997). Dean and Professor, Belmont University. RE Center Grove Church, Edwardsville, IL (Illiana). RE Covenant Presbyterian Church Nashville (Nashville). OC (2016, 2017, 2018, 2022); CC Board (2014-2018); RPR (2012, 2019-2022); Chair, CoC CTS (2012); CCB (alternate, 2021; member, 2022-present). Nashville Presbytery service: Moderator (2023), Leadership Development (credentialing, 2020-present), Judicial Commission (2021-2023), Campus Ministry (2010-2016), and Standing Rules. Covenant Presbyterian Church Committees: Personnel, Discipleship, Missions, Congregational Care, and Church Corporation. Member, National Association of Parliamentarians.

**TE Steve Tipton**, Gulf Coast. B.A. California State University, Fullerton; MDiv, Reformed Theological Seminary; PhD, Evangelical Theological Faculty, Leuven. Serves as Senior Pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church, Panama City FL (2022 -). Served as Senior Pastor of Hillcrest Presbyterian Church, Volant PA (2010-2022). Served in Ascension Presbytery on the Administration Committee (2010-2022, Chairman 2012-2014, 2017), as Moderator (2019), and on several Judicial and Study Committees. Serves Gulf Coast Presbytery as Assistant Parliamentarian (2022 -). Invited to moderate a meeting of Central Indiana Presbytery for a difficult and sensitive matter. Service to the General Assembly includes: Overtures Committee (2013 & 2021); Review of Presbytery Records Committee (2012-2022, Chair 2018, Vice-Chair 2020-2022); Assistant Parliamentarian (47th GA, 2019); Assisting the PCA Stated Clerk in answering submitted BCO/Polity questions; and various Committees of Commissioners: RUM (2011); CTS (2012); AC (2014, 2016, 2018); RBI (2015, Chairman 2017); IRC (2019); MNA (2022). Taught Ecclesiology for a seminary in Asia (2018). Author of several articles on polity and church related matters.

**RE Richard Wolfe**, Arizona. University of California, Berkeley (BA), Rutgers Law School, Camden, NJ (JD). Labor law attorney at the Staff Judge Advocate's Office, Fort Huachuca (16 years) after prior employment with Army's 1<sup>st</sup> ID and 3<sup>rd</sup> ID in Germany (20 years). Captain, Staff Judge Advocate, honorable discharge 1985. RE at Grace Presbyterian Church, Sierra Vista (10 years). Stated Clerk, AZP (2017–Present). Came to understand the doctrines of grace attending Tenth

Presbyterian Church, Philadelphia, while in law school, when Doctor James Boice was pastoring, who married Barbara and him 42 years ago.

**RE Jim Wert**, Metro Atlanta. B.A. in Political Science and German, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill (1980); M.B.A., Baker Scholar, Harvard Business School (1985). Managing Partner, Wert & Associates (2013-present). Over 33 years of experience across marketing, financial, and management consulting fields; 16 years of board service on various internationally focused non-profits, including church planting partnership. GA: Moderator of the 43<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly (2015); chairman of Host Committee (2018); Overtures Committee (2009-2017, 2022); PCA Strategic Planning Committee (2001-2005); byFaith Oversight Committee (2018–present); PCA 50th Anniversary Celebration Committee chair (2021-2023); Theological Examining Committee alternate (2023). Presbytery: Moderator (2010, 2012, 2024); Credentials Committee (2001-present); MNA (2009-present); Presbytery prosecutor for a complex case involving a TE (2015-2016). Founding member, Intown Community Church; PCA member 45 years (officer 41 years).

*Adopted by the Central Indiana Presbytery on November 10, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Taylor Bradbury, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 5** from Piedmont Triad Presbytery (to MNA)  
 “Adjust Piedmont Triad and Catawba Valley Presbytery Boundaries”

---

**Whereas**, a presbytery composed of Churches with similar geographic and ministry contexts can lead to more efficient oversight, cooperation, and connection between particular congregations in the presbytery; and

**Whereas**, fostering a sense of connectionalism and cooperation of churches, teaching elders, and ruling elders beyond the local congregation is a hallmark of historic Presbyterianism; and

**Whereas**, *the Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries*, as adopted by the 26<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, include “regional cohesiveness,” “member churches hav[ing] a potential for

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

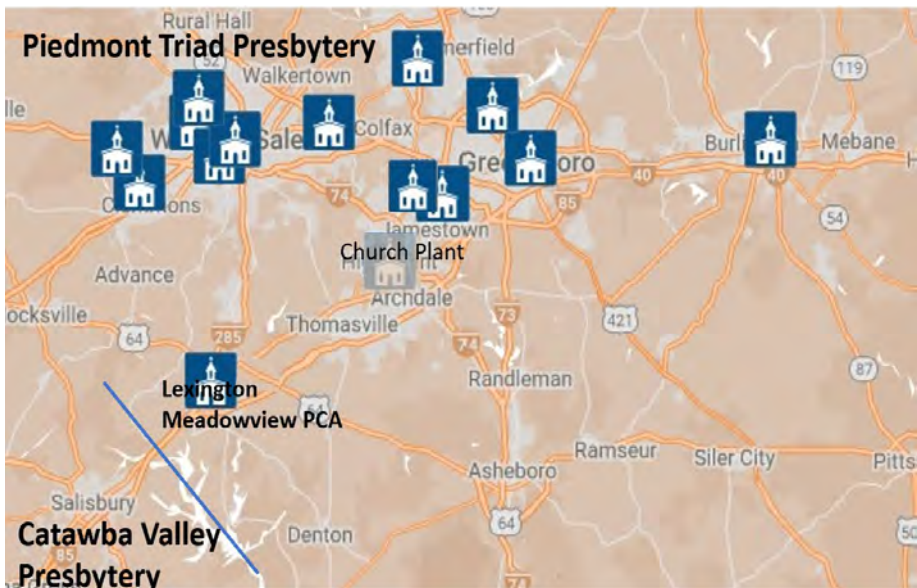
shared ministries,” and “member churches hav[ing] a common commitment to the region;” and

**Whereas,** the ministry context of Meadowview is in a rural small-town setting which is made up of multi-generational families since the founding of the Church.

**Whereas,** Piedmont Triad Presbytery is primarily made up of Churches along the I-40 Corridor between the cities of Winston-Salem and Greensboro and their surrounding suburbs, making MRPC the only Church in PTP that is in a rural and small town setting.

**Whereas,** Meadowview in Lexington, NC has demographic, historic, cultural, and economic affinity with many of the Churches in Catawba Valley Presbytery.

**Whereas,** MRPC sits on the southwest corner and edge of Piedmont Triad Presbytery and the next town over is in Catawba Valley Presbytery.



**Whereas,** MRPC has interest in planting churches south of them including in Salisbury, NC, which is in Catawba Valley Presbytery

**Whereas**, the current Membership in each Presbytery is as follows:

**Piedmont Triad Presbytery Churches & Ministries - CURRENT**

1. Christ Church Greensboro, 414 N. Church St, Greensboro, NC 27401
2. Covenant Grace Church, 4747 Lake Brandt Rd, Greensboro, NC 27455
3. Friendly Hills Church, 1450 Guilford College Road, Jamestown, NC 27282
4. Grace Presbyterian Church Kernersville, 360 Hopkins Rd, Kernersville, NC 27284
5. Great Commission Church, 1450 Guilford College Road, Jamestown, NC 27282
6. Hope Presbyterian Church, 2050 N Peace Haven Rd, Winston-Salem, NC 27106
7. Immanuel (mission church), 155 W. Westwood Ave, High Point, NC 27262
8. New Hope Presbyterian Church, 3540 Clemmons Rd, Clemmons, NC 27012
9. Northside Presbyterian Church, 1805 Vaughn Rd, Burlington, NC 27217
10. Redeemer Presbyterian Church, 1046 Miller St, Winston-Salem, NC 27103
11. Salem Presbyterian Church, 600 Holly Ave, Winston-Salem, NC 27101
12. Soma Valley, 819 Williams Rd, Lewisville, NC 27023
13. Summer Oaks Church, 2315 Scalesville Rd., Summerfield, NC 27358
14. Trinity Church, 4555 Shattalon Drive, Winston-Salem, NC 27106
15. RUF Winston-Salem State University, Winston-Salem, NC
16. RUF Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, NC
17. \*Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church, 1 Graceway Dr., Lexington, NC 27295

\*Meadowview PCA would be the only church to move to Catawba Valley Presbytery with this boundary change.

**Catawba Valley Presbytery Churches & Ministries - CURRENT**

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Back Creek Presbyterian Church, 2145 Back Creek Church Road, Mount Ulla, NC 28125
2. Christ Church at Rivers Edge, 901 East Catawba Avenue, Belmont, NC 28012-0821
3. First Presbyterian Church, 512 Old Mt. Holly Road, Stanley, NC 28164
4. Grace Covenant Presbyterian Church, 3710 North Center Street, Hickory, NC 28601
5. Goshen Presbyterian Church, 380 Woodlawn Avenue, Belmont, NC 28012-2138
6. Grace Church, 2007 Stallings Road, Harrisburg, NC 28075
7. Lakeshore Church PCA, 8083 Hope Drive, Denver, NC 28037
8. Harbor Church PCA, P.O. Box 4025, Mooresville, NC 28117
9. Harvest Church, 710 Lithia Inn Road, Lincolnton, NC 28092-8786
10. Prosperity Presbyterian Church, 5533 Prosperity Church Road, Charlotte, NC 28269
11. New Hope Presbyterian Church, 602 Stevens Street, China Grove, NC 28023
12. NorthCross Church, 11020 – H Bailey Road, PO Box 2275, Cornelius, NC 28031
13. Providence Presbyterian Church, 246 Branchview Drive NC, Concord, NC 28025
14. Shearer Presbyterian Church, 684 Presbyterian Road, Mooresville, NC 28115
15. SouthLake Church PCA, 13820 Hagers Ferry Road, Huntersville, NC 28078
16. StoneBridge Church Community, 3700 Prosperity Church Road, Charlotte, NC 28269
17. RUF – Davidson College, Davidson, NC

**Whereas,** PTP will still meet the numeric “Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries” in that upon MRPC joining with CVP there will be in PTP:

- over 10 Churches and Mission Churches (14 Total = 13 churches and 1 mission church)
- a total communicate membership of over 1000 (1810)
- at least 3 churches with membership over 125 (4 Churches > 125, 2 Churches 100-125)

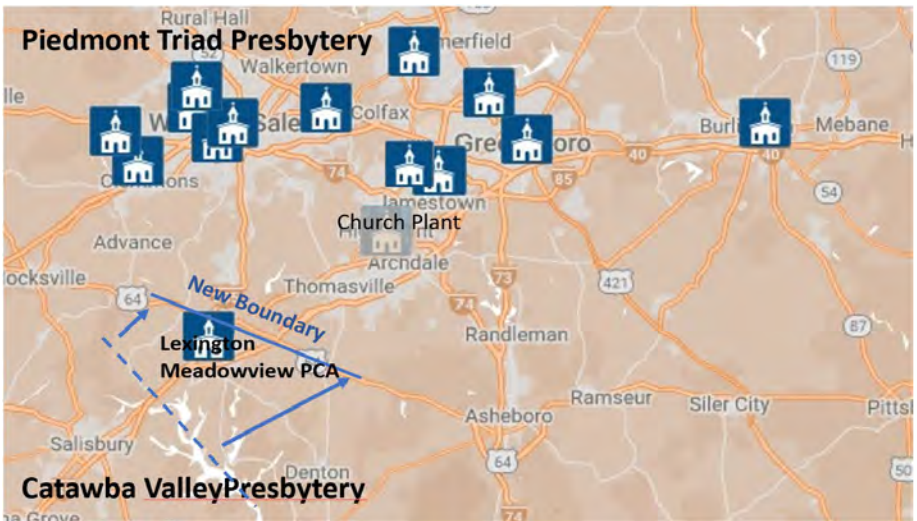
## APPENDIX U

**Whereas,** Catawba Valley Presbytery expressed support for Meadowview to pursue this boundary move at their September 23<sup>rd</sup> Stated meeting as reflected in their minutes as follows:

*“It was moved and seconded that by unanimous voice vote, CVP encouraged the Session of Meadowview to pursue this overture.”*

(Minutes of the Catawba Valley Presbytery Stated Meeting, 9/23/23)

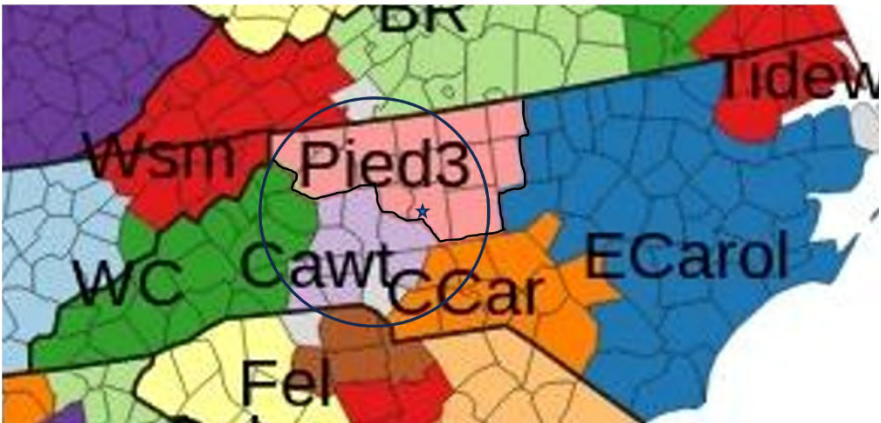
**Whereas,** if the southern boundary in Davidson County were moved to Hwy 64, only Meadowview Presbyterian Church would be affected.



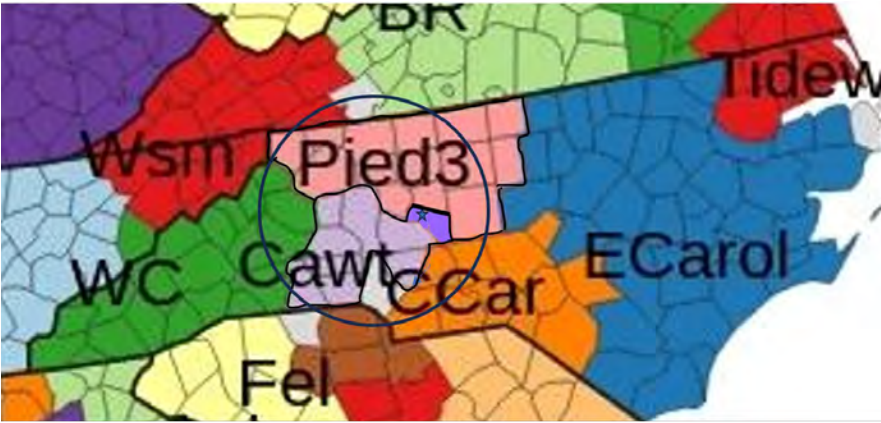


**Whereas**, the current and future maps of the Presbyteries in North Carolina will be:

Current NC Presbytery Boundaries



New NC Presbytery Boundaries



**Now therefore be it resolved**, that the Presbytery of Piedmont Triad Presbytery Overture the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to restructure the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery (PTP) and Catawba Valley Presbytery (CVP) such that CVP will extend North to Hwy 64 in Davidson County and PTP will extend South to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, effective July 1, 2024.

*Adopted by Piedmont Triad Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 11, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Ethan Smith, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 6** from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* Sections to Require Background Checks for Church Office”

---

[Editorial Note: This overture is similar to Overtures 16, 17, 23, and 24.]

**Whereas** the Scriptures declare that elders and deacons must be “above reproach: (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:7), “self-controlled” (1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:8), “not violent but gentle” (1 Tim. 3:3), “not quick tempered” (Titus 1:7), and “proven blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10); and

**Whereas**, regarding elders, 1 Timothy 3:7 says, “he must be well thought of by outsiders, so that he may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil”; and

**Whereas** the sixth commandment requires us to “comfort and succor the distressed and protect and defend the innocent” (WLC 135); and

**Whereas** the ninth commandment forbids us from “concealing the truth, undue silence in a just cause, and holding our peace when iniquity calleth for either a reproof from ourselves, or complaint to others,” and from “hiding, excusing, or extenuating of sins when called to a free confession” (WLC 145); and

**Whereas** the church must be a community that creates a safe environment for children where they can learn about the Lord (Proverbs 22:6; Mark 9:42); and

**Whereas**, on six separate occasions the Ad-Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault recommended that Presbyteries and churches require background checks to better protect their members – including the statement, “Churches protect their members with policies that take into consideration the most vulnerable in the congregation” by including, but not limited to, “Presbyteries enacting policies to require background checks and abuse training for all ordinands and transfers, and policies to protect whistleblowers against retribution.” (DASA Report, pg. 2314); and

**Whereas** an ordained minister coming into a new Presbytery is relatively unknown to the members of the Presbytery; and

**Whereas** *BCO* 13-6 requires Presbyteries to examine ministers seeking admission to the presbytery regarding their Christian experience...

Therefore, **be it resolved** that the following sections of the *BCO* be amended as follows:

13-6. Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery from other Presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be examined on Christian experience, and also touching their views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4 and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. Before receiving the minister from a Presbytery in the PCA or from another denomination, the Presbytery shall obtain and review with the candidate an “Identity History Summary”<sup>1</sup> from the FBI and a state/local background check or a “Vulnerable Sector Check”<sup>2</sup> from the Canadian Government. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4. Presbyteries shall also require ordained ministers coming from other

---

<sup>1</sup> The FBI Identity History Summary is a listing of certain information taken from fingerprint submissions kept by the FBI. It provides a uniform reporting process for the United States.

<sup>2</sup> Vulnerable Sector Check is a federally mandated standard set by the national Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The process determines whether or not an applicant has a record suspension (formerly known as pardons) for a sexual offence.

denominations to state the specific instances in which they may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with BCO 21-4 (see BCO 21-4.e,f).

BCO 18.3 The Presbytery shall obtain and review with the applicant an “Identity History Summary” from the FBI and a state/local background check or a “Vulnerable Sector Check” from the Canadian Government. The applicant shall appear before the Presbytery in person, and shall be examined by the Presbytery on experiential religion and on his motives for seeking the ministry.

*BCO 19-2. Examination for Licensure.*

The examination for licensure shall be as follows:

- a. The Presbytery shall obtain and review with the candidate an “Identity History Summary” from the FBI and a state/local background check or a “Vulnerable Sector Check” from the Canadian Government.

The rest of 19-2 shall be renumbered accordingly.

*BCO 21-4*

- c. Trials for ordination shall consist of:
  - (1) The Presbytery shall obtain and review with the candidate an “Identity History Summary” from the FBI and a state/local background check or a “Vulnerable Sector Check” from the Canadian Government.

The rest of 21-4.c shall be renumbered accordingly.

*BCO 24-1.* Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and deacon in the following manner: At such times as determined by the Session, communicant members of the congregation may submit names to the Session, keeping in mind that each prospective officer should be an active male member who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Nominees for the office of ruling elder and/or deacon shall receive instruction in the qualifications and work of the office. The session should obtain and

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

review with the candidate an “Identity History Summary” from the FBI and a state/local background check or a “Vulnerable Sector Check” from the Canadian Government.

*Adopted by Susquehanna Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 18, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Tucker York, stated clerk*

---

<b>OVERTURE 7</b> from Ascension Presbytery	(to CCB, OC, AC, CC, CDM,
“Amend RAO 11-5 to Clarify Process	CTS, GEN, MNA, MTW,
for RAO Amendments”	PCAF, RH, RUF)

---

**Whereas**, as RAO 11-5 is difficult to follow; and

**Whereas**, it appears to some that RAO 11-5 is internally inconsistent. The first sentence requires all overtures proposing amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the Overtures Committee. This indicates that all overtures proposing changes to the RAO fall within the jurisdiction of the Overtures Committee. The third sentence of 11-5, however, says that any overture “having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency” shall be referred to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency, unless the overture proposes an amendment to the Constitution (which does not include the RAO); and

**Whereas**, RAO 12-1 and 15-1 state that the Overtures Committee is to consider and make recommendations on all overtures proposing amendment to the Constitution and all other overtures referred by the Stated Clerk; and

**Whereas**, at the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, there was debate regarding whether an overture proposing an RAO change that would impact permanent Committees and Agencies should be referred by the Stated Clerk to the Overtures Committee or to the relevant permanent Committees and Agencies; and,

**Whereas**, the permanent Committees and Agencies, and from them, the relevant Committees of Commissioners, have the expertise necessary to speak to the impact of a proposed change to the *RAO* that touches on the nature or responsibilities of the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies); and

**Whereas**, the Overtures Committee has the authority to perfect proposed amendments in ways that are not available to Committees of Commissioners; and

**Whereas**, any minority of the Overtures Committee (*RAO* 15-6.s) has the right to bring a minority report, encompassing a different answer to the overture, to the Assembly, which minority report can allow for floor debate on the substance of a proposal in a way that is not available for a recommendation coming from a Committee of Commissioners; and

**Whereas**, the members of the Overtures Committee should hear from affected committees or agencies before finalizing recommendations on *RAO* changes that impact those committees or agencies; and

**Whereas**, the members of the permanent Committees and Agencies, the Committees of Commissioners, and the staff of the permanent Committees and Agencies may speak on the floor of General Assembly, and thus can express agreement or disagreement with any recommendation from the Overtures Committee, including presenting argumentation that the recommendation of the Overtures Committee not be adopted (*RAO* 15-8.e); and

**Whereas**, having recommendations from multiple committees may lead to incompatible recommendations, as well as debate as to which Committee's recommendation is to take precedence, as was seen at the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly.

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the Presbytery of the Ascension hereby overtures the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to amend *RAO* 11-5 by deleting the entirety of the current *RAO* 11-5 and replacing it with the following:

- 11-5.** All overtures shall be published in the *Commissioner Handbook* with reference for consideration indicated. The Stated Clerk shall refer overtures as follows. The Stated Clerk's referral shall be final unless redirected by a vote of the General Assembly.
- a. All overtures requesting amendment of the *Book of Church Order* or the *Rules of Assembly Operations* shall be referred to the Committee on Constitutional Business for its advice to the relevant Committee(s) as listed below.
  - b. All overtures proposing amendment to the Constitution shall be referred to the Overtures Committee. The Stated Clerk may also refer such overtures to other Committees of Commissioners, other permanent Committees or Agencies, or other ad interim or special committees for advice only to the Overtures Committee.
  - c. All overtures proposing amendment to the *Rules of Assembly Operations* having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred to the Overtures Committee and to the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) that would be impacted by the proposed change. In such cases the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) and the relevant Committee(s) of Commissioners shall be given the opportunity to meet with the Overtures Committee to share their proposed response(s). Such opportunity shall occur at a mutually convenient time or at the beginning of the Overtures Committee's Tuesday afternoon session. The General Assembly shall act on the overture on the basis of the recommendation of the Overtures Committee, recognizing that the members of the permanent Committee(s) or Agency(ies) and the relevant Committee(s) of Commissioners will be able to enter into floor debate on that recommendation.
  - d. Any other overture having to do with the nature or responsibilities of a permanent Committee or Agency shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the appropriate permanent Committee or Agency, ad interim committee, or special committee.
  - e. All overtures concerning presbytery boundaries or the formation of a new presbytery shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the permanent Committee on Mission to North America.
  - f. All other overtures shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to the Overtures Committee.

*Adopted by the Presbytery of the Ascension at its stated meeting of November 4, 2023.*

*Attested by /s/ RE Fredrick Neikirk, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 8** from Covenant Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Change Boundaries of Covenant and Mississippi Valley Presbyteries”

---

**Whereas**, the geographic center of Covenant Presbytery has shifted significantly north and west in recent years as evidenced by the frequency of stated meetings in the Memphis area and parts of Arkansas; and

**Whereas**, Choctaw, the county in Mississippi where Old Lebanon (the only PCA church in the county) is located, is on the southernmost border of Covenant Presbytery and borders The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley on its southern and its western border; and

**Whereas**, the Session of Old Lebanon wants to have a more regular participation in the stated meetings of Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, the Session of Old Lebanon finds this participation difficult due to the locations where many of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery are held; and

**Whereas**, the locations of the stated meetings of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley are usually closer to Ackerman, MS, and often significantly so, than the locations of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Covenant Presbytery has in the past acted in similar situations to allow the transfer of churches in Winona, MS; Columbia, TN; Fayetteville, AR; Charleston, AR; and Stamps, AR, to presbyteries adjacent to Covenant Presbytery, and to receive a PCA mission in Joplin, MO, into Covenant Presbytery from an adjacent presbytery;

**Therefore be it resolved**, that Covenant Presbytery, with the agreement of the Session of Old Lebanon Presbyterian Church, Ackerman, MS,



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

overtures the 2024 General Assembly to transfer Choctaw County in Mississippi from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the geographic bounds of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.

*Adopted by Covenant Presbytery at its 159<sup>th</sup> Stated Meeting, October 3, 2023.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Robert Browning, Stated Clerk of Covenant Presbytery*

---

**OVERTURE 9**, from Metro Atlanta Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Add Great Commission Requirement to *BCO* 12-5”

---

**Whereas** sessions of churches are to watch over the flock of God and equip them for works of service and mission, and

**Whereas** sessions of churches are to instruct members in the truths of the Gospel and the need for sharing the good news of Christ, and

**Whereas** the Book of Church Order delineates duties of session of churches in BCO 12 but does not specifically call sessions to these responsibilities,

**Therefore**, the Book of Church Order shall be amended to read as follows  
(Insert into 12-5e)

12-5 e. ...to determine the best measures for promoting the spiritual interests of the church and congregation, including living in obedience to the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20) (new language indicated by underlining)

**Rationale:**

MAP landed more toward the philosophy of “comprehensive simplicity,” as well as leveraging existing *BCO* content, rather than trying to articulate a new set of Session responsibilities. “Obedience to the Great Commission” is an important and necessary addition, and also well established in the PCA as a definitional and common standard.

*Adopted by Metro Atlanta Presbytery at its stated meeting, October 3, 2023*  
*Attested by /s/ Randy Schlichting, stated clerk.*

---

**OVERTURE 10**, from Metro Atlanta Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Add Presbytery TE Care to BCO 13-9”

---

**Whereas** presbyteries are to watch over Teaching Elders and further equip them for works of service and mission, and

**Whereas** presbyteries are to instruct Teaching Elders in the truths of the Gospel and the need for sharing the good news of Christ, and

**Whereas** presbyteries are called to minister to those Teaching Elders in their midst who are hurting emotionally, physically, and spiritually, and

**Whereas** the Book of Church Order delineates duties of presbyteries in *BCO* 13 but does not specifically call presbyteries to these responsibilities or have a plan,

**Therefore**, the *Book of Church Order* shall be amended to read as follows  
(Insert into 13-9g)

13-9 g. ...in general, to order whatever pertains to the spiritual welfare of the churches and each teaching elder under its care.  
(new language indicated by underlining)

**Rationale:**

The spiritual care of a Presbytery’s Teaching Elders merits explicit attention in the *BCO*, and the current *BCO* 13 has a logical spot to emphasize this responsibility (among others) as it lists a presbytery’s powers and responsibilities in the current 13-9.

*Adopted by Metro Atlanta Presbytery at its stated meeting, October 3, 2023*  
*Attested by /s/ Randy Schlichting, stated clerk.*

---

**OVERTURE 11** from Mississippi Valley Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Change Boundaries of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbyteries”

---

**Whereas** the geographic center of Covenant Presbytery has shifted significantly north and west in recent years as evidenced by the frequency of stated meetings in the Memphis area and parts of Arkansas; and

**Whereas** Choctaw, the county in Mississippi where Old Lebanon (the only PCA church in the county) is located, is on the southernmost border of Covenant Presbytery and borders The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley on its southern and its western border; and

**Whereas** the Session of Old Lebanon wants to have a more regular participation in the stated meetings of Presbytery; and

**Whereas** the Session of Old Lebanon finds this participation difficult due to the locations where many of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery are held; and

**Whereas** the locations of the stated meetings of The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley are usually closer to Ackerman, MS, and often significantly so, than the locations of the stated meetings of Covenant Presbytery; and

**Whereas** The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley has in the past acted in similar situations to receive churches in Winona, MS; Delhi, LA; and Ruston, LA, from adjacent presbyteries;

**Therefore, be it resolved,** The Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley joins with Covenant Presbytery (and with the agreement of the Session of Old Lebanon Presbyterian Church, Ackerman, MS) to overture the 2024 General Assembly to transfer Choctaw County, Mississippi, from the geographic bounds of Covenant Presbytery to the geographic bounds of the Presbytery of the Mississippi Valley.

*Adopted by Mississippi Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 7, 2023*

*Attested by /s/ TE Chris Wright, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 12** from Catawba Valley Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Adjust Catawba Valley and Piedmont Triad Presbytery Boundaries”

---

**Whereas**, a presbytery composed of Churches with similar geographic and ministry contexts can lead to more efficient oversight, cooperation, and connection between particular congregations in the presbytery; and

**Whereas**, fostering a sense of connectionalism and cooperation of churches, teaching elders, and ruling elders beyond the local congregation is a hallmark of historic Presbyterianism; and

**Whereas**, *the Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries*, as adopted by the 26th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, include “regional cohesiveness,” “member churches hav[ing] a potential for shared ministries,” and “member churches hav[ing] a common commitment to the region;” and

**Whereas**, Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church in Lexington, NC, has demographic, historic, cultural, and economic affinity with many of the Churches in Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church sits on the southwest corner and edge of Piedmont Triad Presbytery and the next town over is in Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Meadowview Reformed Presbyterian Church has interest in planting churches south of them including in Salisbury, NC, which is in Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

**Whereas**, Piedmont Triad Presbytery passed an Overture at their November 11, 2023 Stated Meeting to move the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery and Catawba Valley Presbytery, thereby moving Meadowview into the bounds of Catawba Valley Presbytery; and

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Whereas,** Piedmont Triad Presbytery's Overture to the 2024 General Assembly outlines the Churches in both presbyteries, the maps reflecting this change; and

**Whereas,** Piedmont Triad Presbytery's Overture to the 2024 General Assembly highlights that Piedmont Triad Presbytery will still meet the numeric "Guidelines for Dividing Presbyteries" adopted by the 26<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

**Now therefore be it resolved,** that Catawba Valley Presbytery Overtures the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to restructure the boundary between Piedmont Triad Presbytery and Catawba Valley Presbytery such that Catawba Valley Presbytery will extend North to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, NC, and Piedmont Triad Presbytery will extend South to Hwy 64 in Davidson County, NC, effective July 1, 2024; and that all existing PCA churches and church plants of the aforementioned territory will come into the Catawba Valley Presbytery, and that all teaching elders and churches be received following a successful theological views examination, effective July 1, 2024.

*Adopted by Catawba Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting January 27, 2024*  
*Attested by /s/ TE Scott Deneen, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 13** from Calvary Presbytery (to OC)  
"Commend and Encourage Distribution of Commission Letter Regarding Gender Reassignment for Minors"

---

That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly commend as biblically faithful the letter written by the PCAGA50 Moderator's Commission, humbly petitioning leaders of United States Government "to protect the lives and welfare of minor children from the physical, mental, and emotional harms associated with medical and surgical interventions for the purpose of gender reassignment. Furthermore, we call upon you to use your positions to promote the health, bodily integrity, and wellbeing of minors who are suffering from gender dysphoria and related conditions."

APPENDIX U

That the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly further encourage PCA Sessions and Presbyteries to communicate with their own respective regional and/or municipal governments the same.

*Adopted unanimously by Calvary Presbytery at its stated meeting on January 27, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ Melton L. Duncan, Stated Clerk*

January 21, 2024

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, DC 20500

The Honorable John G. Roberts, Jr.  
Chief Justice  
Supreme Court of the United States  
1 First Street NE  
Washington, DC 20543

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Republican Leader  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leaders of the United States Government:

We, the Presbyterian Church in America, the largest body of confessional Presbyterian and Reformed churches in North America, consisting of more than 1,500 congregations and 374,000 members across the United States and Canada, humbly petition you to protect the lives and welfare of minor children from the physical, mental, and emotional harms associated with medical and surgical interventions for the purpose of gender reassignment. Furthermore, we call upon you to use your positions to promote the health, bodily integrity, and wellbeing of minors who are suffering from gender dysphoria and related conditions.

We recognize the growing nationwide distress and concern over interventionist practices targeting children. While we acknowledge complexities around these issues, we share those concerns and urgently appeal to you to protect the Nation’s children. The basis for our appeal is that all people—young and old, male and female—are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:26–27; James 3:9). This unique status accords all human beings with inherent dignity, a dignity that extends to both soul *and* body. For over two thousand years, the Christian Church in all her branches has stood on the teaching that the value of the human body arises from its source, which is from God, and its purpose, which is to bear God’s image. We believe current gender reassignment interventions for children are *not* in keeping with the high value of human bodies—a value determined not by circumstance, ability, or human judgment, but by the determination of our wise Creator who constituted each person a body-soul unity (Genesis 2:7; Psalm 139:13–16).

We also ground our humble petition in God’s love for children. He expressed his love when the Son of God said, “Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God” (Mark 10:14 ESV). Indeed, his deep love for children is revealed in comparing them to those who are greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Because of this love, it is a grave sin to harm children (Matthew 18:1-6). In his kindness, God has provided parents and the civil magistrate for the protection of children (Ephesians 6:1–4; Romans 13:1–4).

Until recently, an obligation to protect children has been widely acknowledged in Western society. The duty to protect children from harm is to be met by authorities in familial and civic contexts who recognize the vulnerabilities unique to childhood. While these vulnerabilities can be preyed upon by powerful external forces, they are also susceptible to the internal confusions and instabilities often accompanying childhood.

As Christians, we recognize that we live in a fallen world in which some children and adults experience a perceived incongruence between their biological sex and their internal sense of gender. These feelings of gender incongruence cause severe psychological distress often associated with debilitating anxiety and depression. We genuinely sympathize with the parents and loved ones of those who experience this kind of suffering—many of them in our churches.

However, experts disagree on the nature and causes of gender dysphoria. Persons who try to change their biological sex through the process of transitioning—including psychotherapy, lifelong hormonal treatments, and extensive nongenital and genital surgeries—are attempting the impossible. This reality merely reflects the divine design, as God created human beings distinctly male and female (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 19:4; Mark 10:6). Since the sexual binary is rooted in creation and determined by God, it cannot be changed; therefore, it is not surprising that transition attempts carry many long-term risks. Among these risks, which are often irreversible, include conditions such as sterility, infertility, cancer, cardiovascular disease, strokes, blood clots, pituitary apoplexy, pseudotumor cerebri, and diminished bone density.

For children, the stakes are even higher. Since the brain has not yet fully developed during puberty and adolescence, minor children are not mentally and emotionally ready to give informed consent to life-altering and non-reversible medical procedures. And with the increase in depression, anxiety, isolation, and alienation of children and adolescents in the United States and Canada—exacerbated by the use of social media and, more recently, COVID-19 policies—young people often experience fluctuating emotions and internal confusion. Teenage girls especially have been susceptible to rapid onset gender dysphoria, a recent phenomenon involving large numbers of teen girls claiming to have gender dysphoria. The increased diagnosis of gender dysphoria in girls has been driven by social contagion from current social, educational, and cultural influences. Children whose minds and personalities are still developing do not yet possess the perspective or maturity to make these irreversible decisions; they should be given time to accept their biological sex, which occurs in the majority of teens allowed to progress through natural puberty.

Although we respect the expertise of medical professionals, it is striking that traditionally, medical students had to affirm the Hippocratic Oath, which includes the commitment: “I will abstain from all intentional wrong-doing and harm, especially from abusing the bodies of man or woman.” This priority of not harming others is ultimately grounded in the triune God who is love (1 John 4:8), from whence he calls us to love each other. Reflecting this nature of God, one of the greatest commandments is that we love our neighbors as ourselves (Matthew 22:39). As Scripture states, “Love does no harm to a neighbor” (Romans 13:10 NIV; cf. Exodus 20:13). Providing medical



intervention for the purposes of transitioning does irreversible harm and injustice to all people, but especially minor children.

For these reasons, we condemn the practice of surgical and medical gender reassignment, especially of minors, and we humbly petition you to protect the lives and welfare of minor children.

Sincerely,  
Members of the Commission Appointed by the Moderator,  
50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (PCA)

---

**OVERTURE 14** from the Presbytery of Northwest Georgia (to CCB, OC,  
“Amend *RAO* 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data CC, CTS)  
from Higher Ed Institutions”

---

**Whereas**, the Lord Jesus Christ charged Peter with the keys of the kingdom (Matt 16:19) and our confessional standards further outline this important responsibility as being held by Church officers (WCF, Ch XXX); and

**Whereas**, elsewhere in Scripture elders are exhorted to “shepherd the flock of God” (1 Pet 5:2) by exercising “oversight”; and

**Whereas**, it is impossible for commissioners to provide sufficient oversight without sufficient information and data;

**Therefore**, be it resolved that the Presbytery of Northwest Georgia hereby overtures the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly to amend *RAO* 4-21.d by adding the following guidance as a final numbered subsection (additions underlined):

***RAO 4-21.d.5)***

5) If a Committee or Agency is a higher education institution, the minutes shall include the following data, updated annually and delineated by degree program: total student enrollment, number of students by full-time or part-time status, number of students by gender, and number of students by learning modality (whether in-person, online, or hybrid). The minutes should indicate that the data have been reviewed by the respective Committee or Board.

*Adopted by the Northwest Georgia Presbytery at its 53rd Stated Meeting,  
January 20, 2024.*

*Attested: /s/ TE Robby Baxter, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 15** from the Session of West End (to CCB, OC)  
Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, Virginia  
“Amend *BCO* 7-2 to Specify Ordination for Biological Males Only”

---

[Note: This overture was adopted by the Session of West End Presbyterian Church, in Hopewell, Virginia; submitted to James River Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 20, 2024, by TE Eric Dugan, commissioner to the Presbytery; and rejected by the Presbytery at that meeting. (*RAO* 11-10).]

**Whereas** our culture is wrestling with gender identity issues and has difficulty defining both male and female, and

**Whereas** that same culture now permits those who are biologically one gender to be accepted as the other or to be defined by another entirely different gender identity, and

**Whereas** the Bible teaches only two sexes and that each have different, but complementary, roles in Christ’s church, and

**Whereas** one’s gender is tied to their biological sex: “God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them” (Genesis 2:27), and

**Whereas** there are denominations which currently ordain such persons and do so in opposition to God’s Word, and

**Whereas** there has been confusion about gender and sex, including among those who profess to hold evangelical and even reformed theological positions and who may wish to hold ordination in the PCA;

**Therefore, be it resolved** to amend *BCO* 7-2 by adding to the final sentence of the paragraph the word “biological” before the words “men only,” as follows:

“The ordinary and perpetual classes of office in the Church are elders and deacons. Within the class of elder are the two orders of teaching elders and ruling elders. The elders jointly have the government and spiritual oversight of the Church, including teaching. Only those elders who are specially gifted, called and trained by God to preach may serve as teaching elders. The office of deacon is not one of rule, but rather of service both to the physical and spiritual needs of the people. In accord with Scripture, these offices are open to biological men only.”

*Adopted by the session of West End PCA Church in Hopewell, VA at its stated meeting, April 25, 2023*

*Submitted by the Session of West End Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, Virginia, to James River Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 20, 2024.*

*Rejected by James River Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 20, 2024 (RAO 11-10).*

*Attested by /s/ RE Chris Rohde, stated clerk, James River Presbytery.*

*Approved for submission to the Presbyterian Church in America’s General Assembly by the Session of West End Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, Virginia, at its stated meeting on January 23, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ RE Gary Kimball, Clerk of Session.*

---

**OVERTURE 16** from Warrior Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, 24-1 to Require Background Checks”

---

[Editorial Note: This overture is similar to Overtures 6, 17, 23, and 24.]

**Whereas**, the qualifications for elders and deacons include being “above reproach” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:7), “self-controlled” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:8), “not violent but gentle” (1 Tim. 3:3),” not ... quick-tempered” (Titus 1:7), and “prove themselves blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10); and

**Whereas**, the qualifications for elders include being “well thought of by outsiders” (1 Tim. 3:7); and

**Whereas**, the qualification of every believer is to “keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable” (1 Pet. 2:12); and

**Whereas**, our confession warns leaders against the “careless exposing, or leaving [those in their care] to wrong, temptation, and danger” (*WLC* 130); and

**Whereas**, under the *Book of Church Order* church courts are to perform “a careful examination” of church officers including as to their “personal character” (21-4.c; 24-1.a) and “Christian experience” (13-6); and

**Whereas**, the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault to the 49th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (the “DASA Report”) implores that “Churches protect their members with policies that take into consideration the most vulnerable in the congregation,” including “Presbyteries enacting policies to require background checks and abuse training for all ordinands and transfers, and policies to protect whistleblowers against retribution” (*M49GA* [2022], 965, 965 n.11) (See attachment for possible examples of such policies); and

**Whereas**, the DASA Report further recommends, “Candidates for the gospel ministry and others employed for spiritual oversight (Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, etc.) should be examined carefully to determine their godly character. Presbyteries and Sessions are encouraged to carefully investigate a candidate for leadership roles including but not limited to the candidate’s knowledge of theology. *Background checks*, social media checks, and careful reference checks should be used to screen for abusive leadership” (*ibid.*, 1183); and

**Whereas**, the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly resolved that churches prevent types of abuse “by screening staff and volunteers” (*M42GA* [2014], 59); and

**Whereas**, the 42<sup>nd</sup> General Assembly resolved that churches “must cooperate with those authorities as they ‘bear the sword’ to punish those who do evil ‘in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered ... to

offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever” (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; *WCF* 23.3)” (*ibid.*); and

**Whereas**, our confession’s instruction that “there are some circumstances concerning ... government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence” (*WCF* 1.6) includes the wisdom and prudence of background checks; and

**Whereas**, our confession does not require submission to unlawful or unbiblical standards (*WCF* 23.4) nor thereby require the government’s involvement in the business of the church (*WCF* 23.3); and

**Whereas**, presbyteries and sessions of the PCA are called to order and conduct all trials and examinations of candidates for church office utilizing their own discretion and wisdom due to the authority and right of their office (*BCO* 13, 21, and 24);

**Therefore, be it resolved** that *BCO* 13-6 be amended by the addition of a second paragraph:

**13-6. ...**

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of the candidate’s Christian experience (if seeking admission from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America) or acquaintance with experiential religion (if seeking admission from other denominations [see *BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(a)]). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that *BCO* 21-4.c.(1) be amended by adding a final unnumbered paragraph to the subsection:

**21-4.c.(1) . . .**

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate’s

experiential religion (BCO 21-4.c.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.

So that the unnumbered paragraphs will read

“A Presbytery may accept a seminary degree which includes study in the original languages in lieu of an oral examination in the original languages.

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate’s experiential religion (BCO 21-4.c.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.”

**Be it further resolved** that BCO 24-1 be amended by inserting a second unnumbered paragraph after subsection e and before the unnumbered paragraph that begins “Notwithstanding the above...”

**24-1.e... .**

A Session shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Session, as part of its examination of a candidate’s Christian experience (BCO 24-1.a.). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that Presbyteries and Sessions are hereby encouraged to adopt policies for conducting mandatory background checks on every candidate for office.

*Adopted by Warrior Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 23, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Michael Perry, stated clerk*

## **Attachment**

### **Sample Policies for Presbyteries and Sessions**

The following is an example of a policy that could be adopted or amended by a Presbytery to adhere with local laws and regulations:

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Prior to any candidate coming before the Presbytery for examination for ordination or transfer of credentials, the [insert committee name] Committee shall order a background check on the candidate ordinarily at the cost of the Presbytery. The report of the background check shall only be received by the Committee in executive session. The candidate shall be furnished with a copy of the background check and given the opportunity to respond to any content in the background check. The Committee shall report to the Presbytery (1) that it has received the report of the background check, and no concerns were raised; (2) that it has received the report of the background check, and potential concerns were satisfactorily explained by the candidate without reflecting negatively on his *BCO* 13-6 or 21-4.c.(1)(a) examination; or (3) that it has received the report of the background check, and potential concerns should be weighed by the Presbytery in the candidate's *BCO* 13-6 or 21-4.c.(1)(a) examination. Any details of possible concerns found in the background check may be disclosed only to the Presbytery and/or the Session of the church calling the candidate when in executive session. Such details may be disclosed outside the Committee only at the Committee's discretion or upon the request of the Presbytery or Session properly seeking the information.

The following is an example of a policy that could be adopted by a Session:

Prior to any candidate coming before the Session for examination for the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon, the Session shall order a background check on the candidate at the cost of the Session. The report of the background check shall only be received by the Session in executive session. The candidate shall be furnished with a copy of the background check and given the opportunity to respond to any content in the background check. Information learned should ordinarily only be considered as part of the Session's examination of the candidate's personal character under *BCO* 24-1.a. and should not ordinarily be disclosed to the congregation.

---

**OVERTURE 17** from The Ohio Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for  
Church Office”

---

[Editorial Note: This overture is similar to Overtures 6, 16, 23, and 24.]

**Be it resolved** that *BCO* 13-6 be amended by adding a final paragraph to the end of the section:

**13-6. . . .**

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of the candidate’s Christian experience (if seeking admission from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America) or acquaintance with experiential religion (if seeking admission from other denominations [see *BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(a)]). The candidate shall be permitted to address the results of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that *BCO* 21-4.c.(1) be amended by adding a final unnumbered paragraph to the end of the subsection:

**21-4.c.(1) . . .**

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate’s experiential religion (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the results of the background check.

So that the unnumbered paragraphs will read

“A Presbytery may accept a seminary degree which includes study in the original languages in lieu of an oral examination in the original languages.

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate’s experiential religion (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.”



**Be it further resolved** that *BCO* 24-1 be amended by inserting a second unnumbered paragraph after subsection e. and before the unnumbered paragraph that begins, “Notwithstanding the above . . .”:

**24-1.e. . .**

A Session shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Session, as part of its examination of a candidate’s Christian experience (*BCO* 24-1.a.). The candidate shall be permitted to address the results of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that Presbyteries and Sessions are hereby encouraged to adopt policies for conducting mandatory background checks on every candidate for office.

## **RATIONALE:**

It is well-established that performing background checks is an important part of a global safety policy for churches,<sup>1</sup> but they can also shed light on the character of a candidate for office. Performing a background check provides additional information to the supervising court regarding the biblical and confessional criteria for office. The results of the background check are not dispositive of a man’s fitness for ministry. It should be used as one piece in the examination of a man’s Christian character.

Biblically, the qualifications for elders and deacons includes being “above reproach” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:7), “self-controlled” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:8), “not violent but gentle” (1 Tim. 3:3), “not . . . quick-tempered” (Titus 1:7), and “proven blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10). For elders Scripture requires they “must be well thought of by outsiders” (1 Tim. 3:7). The Scriptural command to every believer is to “keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable” (1 Pet. 2:12). Thus the *Book of Church Order* states that church courts must perform “a careful examination” including “personal character” (21-4.c; 24-1.a) and “Christian experience” (13-6).

---

<sup>1</sup> See, e.g., Richard R. Hammar, *Pastor, Church & Law*, 5th ed. (Carol Stream, IL: Christianity Today, 2019), 918–947.

Furthermore, our confession warns leaders against the “careless exposing, or leaving [those in their care] to wrong, temptation, and danger” (WLC 130).

The use of background checks has previously been encouraged and recommended by the General Assembly and its Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault:

- The report of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault to the Forty-Ninth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (the “DASA Report”) implores that “Churches protect their members with policies that take into consideration the most vulnerable in the congregation,” including “Presbyteries enacting policies to require background checks and abuse training for all ordinands and transfers, and policies to protect whistleblowers against retribution” (*M49GA* [2022], 965, 965 n.11).
- The DASA Report further recommends, “Candidates for the gospel ministry and others employed for spiritual oversight (Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, etc.) should be examined carefully to determine their godly character. Presbyteries and Sessions are encouraged to carefully investigate a candidate for leadership roles including but not limited to the candidate’s knowledge of theology. Background checks, social media checks, and careful reference checks should be used to screen for abusive leadership” (*ibid.*, 1183).
- The 42nd General Assembly resolved that churches prevent types of abuse “by screening staff and volunteers” (*M42GA* [2014], 59).
- The 42nd General Assembly resolved that churches “must cooperate with those authorities as they ‘bear the sword’ to punish those who do evil ‘in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered ... to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever’ (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; WCF 23.3)” (*ibid.*).

### **Response to Common Objections:**

There are two objections to this proposal— noted in responses to Overture 6 at the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly from South Texas Presbytery—that warrant consideration and response:

- “Some candidates who have nothing to hide may refuse to submit to a background check, because they do not trust the State and do not believe the church should be looking to the state for the approval of

candidates. This liberty of conscience should be left free and not bound by extra-biblical rules.” (*M50GA*,108)

- “It is also not clear what will happen if a candidate refuses to submit to a criminal background check. If a man refuses to be fingerprinted or undergo a background check for reasons of conscience, is he disqualified for office? Is refusal to submit to a criminal background check by the civil magistrate is not a legitimate ground to disqualify a man for office. Thus, the overture would add an extra-Biblical requirement for officers.” (*M50GA*, 108–109)

Of the qualifications for church officers in 1 Timothy 3, the majority correspond to moral character. Only two are related to theological ability (as reflected in “able to teach” and “hold the mysteries of the faith”). Hence, the *Book of Church Order* reflects this importance by stating church courts must perform “a careful examination” including “personal character” (21-4.c; 24-1.a) and “Christian experience” (13-6). At the 50th General Assembly, the PCA again stressed the importance of moral character by amending our constitution stating church courts should give “specific attention to potential notorious concerns” and “to his practical struggle against sinful actions, as well as to persistent sinful desires” (*BCO* 21-4.c(e); 24-1). It is, therefore, clear from the recent debates and votes that the presbyteries of the PCA desire more reflection on the moral character of candidates’ ministries. Background checks are consistent with the recent emphasis on moral character within the PCA and its officers.

Further, the concept of “extra-biblical” in the objections is not properly defined or defended in the reasoning given by the Overtures Committee of the 50th General Assembly. For instance, neither examination in church history nor the *Book of Church Order* are required by a clear scriptural command; nonetheless they are requirements for ordination, along with many other things that are not explicitly named in Scripture (*BCO* 21-4.c; 24-1). This is because they are consistent with the instruction of scripture and the qualification of church officers. And this distinction between *command* and *consistent with* applies across our confession (WCF 1.6) and *Book of Church Order*. In particular, we confess “there are some circumstances concerning the ... government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence” (WCF 1.6). While background checks might not find any direct command in Scripture, they are consistent with biblical instructions to walk properly in the world since an officer “must

be well thought of by outsiders” (1 Tim. 3:7) and Christians are instructed to “keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable” (1 Pet. 2:12). Though background checks might conform to guidance “common to human actions and societies” this requirement is not derived in an effort to please the world or the state. Perhaps counterintuitively, Paul says officers must be well thought of by outsiders so that they “may not fall into disgrace, into a snare of the devil” (1 Tim. 3:7). It is therefore pastorally wise to care for our church bodies *and our candidates* by requiring presbyteries and sessions to perform background checks.

Given the Scriptural consistency as well as consistency of recent amendments to the PCA’s *Book of Church Order*, background checks should not be considered as binding or violating men’s consciences unlawfully (PP 1 and PP 7). Instead, they are a consistent application of Scriptural standards for officers. If approved by the General Assembly and Presbyteries as a desired application of Scriptural principles, they would be capable of binding the conscience of officers (PP 1) who “promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord” (*BCO* 21-5; 24-6).

Candidates for office who cannot submit to the standards of their courts are not to be considered lesser brethren (Rom. 14:22) but should not be viewed as qualified to serve in the PCA if they cannot fulfill vows to their brethren.

### **Lower Court Policies:**

The General Assembly ought not dictate the particular procedures Presbyteries and Sessions implement in performing background checks. Each Presbytery and Session will have local considerations that dictate how it can wisely fulfill this new constitutional requirement. However, the following forms are examples of the kinds of policies that could be adopted or amended to fit the needs of the court and to adhere to local laws and regulations.

#### **Sample Presbytery policy:**

Prior to any candidate coming before the Presbytery for examination for ordination or transfer of credentials, the [insert committee name] Committee shall order a background check on the candidate ordinarily at the cost of the Presbytery. The report of the background check shall only be received by the Committee in executive session. The candidate shall be furnished with a copy of the background check and given the opportunity to respond to the results of the background check. The

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Committee shall report to the Presbytery (1) that it has received the report of the background check, and no concerns were raised; (2) that it has received the report of the background check, and potential concerns were satisfactorily explained by the candidate without reflecting negatively on his *BCO* 13-6 or 21-4.c.(1)(a) examination; or (3) that it has received the report of the background check, and potential concerns should be weighed by the Presbytery in the candidate's *BCO* 13-6 or 21-4.c.(1)(a) examination. Any details of possible concerns found in the background check may be disclosed only to the Presbytery and/or the Session of the church calling the candidate when in executive session. Such details may be disclosed outside the Committee only at the Committee's discretion or upon the request of the Presbytery or Session properly seeking the information.

### **Sample Session policy:**

Prior to any candidate coming before the Session for examination for the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon, the Session shall order a background check on the candidate at the cost of the Session. The report of the background check shall only be received by the Session in executive session. The candidate shall be furnished with a copy of the background check and given the opportunity to respond to the results of the background check. Information learned should ordinarily only be considered as part of the Session's examination of the candidate's personal character under *BCO* 24-1.a. and should not ordinarily be disclosed to the congregation.

*Adopted by The Ohio Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 3, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Jason Piland, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 18** from The Ohio Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility”

---

[Editorial Note: This overture is similar issue to Overture 1 but proposes an alternative amendment.]

**Be it resolved** that *BCO* 35-1 and 35-8 be amended as follows (underlines for additions, strikethroughs for deletions):

**35-1.** All persons of ~~proper age and intelligence~~ are competent witnesses, ~~except such as do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments~~ and a witness may testify only after making an oath or giving affirmation to testify truthfully (*BCO* 35-8). ~~Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency.~~

**35-8.** ~~The~~ A witness’s oath or affirmation to a witness shall be administered by the Moderator after warning the witness of the obligation to testify truthfully in the following or like terms. The Moderator shall inform the witness that regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or affirmation is made in the presence of God, and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

**Do you solemnly promise, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?**

If, however, ~~at any time a witness should present himself before a court, who for conscientious reasons prefers to swear or affirm in any other manner, he should be allowed to do so.~~ a witness cannot take an oath either because he does not have Christian faith necessary to invoke the name of God rightly or because he conscientiously objects to swearing an oath, the Moderator shall then ask the witness to affirm the following:

**Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?**

The amended sections will then read as follows:

**35-1.** All persons are competent witnesses, and a witness may testify only after making an oath or giving affirmation to testify truthfully (BCO 35-8).

**35-8.** A witness's oath or affirmation shall be administered by the Moderator after warning the witness of the obligation to testify truthfully. The Moderator shall inform the witness that regardless of whether he believes in God or in a future state of rewards and punishments, his oath or affirmation is made in the presence of God, and God will judge him on the truthfulness of his answers. The Moderator shall then ask the witness the following:

**Do you solemnly promise, in the presence of God, that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness, as you shall answer it to the great Judge of the living and the dead?**

If, however, a witness cannot take an oath either because he does not have Christian faith necessary to invoke the name of God rightly or because he conscientiously objects to swearing an oath, the Moderator shall then ask the witness to affirm the following:

**Do you solemnly promise that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, according to the best of your knowledge in the matter in which you are called to witness?**

## Rationale:

This overture is an attempt to improve upon the work of the Piedmont Triad Presbytery in Overture 1. By making this Overture, The Ohio Presbytery does not comment on the substance of Overture 1 in expanding witness eligibility.

In short, while Overture 1 intends to expand witness eligibility, it actually opens the door to narrow eligibility. While removing the category of witness “competency” and expanding a court’s ability to prohibit any witness from testifying, nothing in the amended *BCO* 35 prohibits a court from barring atheists—and many other kinds of people—from testifying. Indeed, the potential abuse of the amended *BCO* 35 is significant: nothing in the text prohibits a court from barring anyone from testifying for any reason.

Our current *BCO* maintains the important distinction between a witness’s *competency* and a witness’s *credibility*. *Competency* is a determination of a witness’s fitness to testify at all. It is a binary determination by the court: a witness is either qualified (competent) or not qualified (incompetent) to take the stand and give testimony. Consistent with our historic practice,<sup>1</sup> a court should only be able to disqualify a witness from testifying for expressly delineated reasons. Our current *BCO* provides three reasons: improper age, improper intelligence, and “not believ[ing] in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments” (35-1). The *BCO* is clear that a challenge to a witness taking the stand is permitted only on these grounds.

---

<sup>1</sup> Not only is this an American Presbyterian practice traceable in our heritage to at least 1879 (*The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church in the United States* [Richmond, VA: Presbytery Committee of Publishing, 1879]), it is the long-standing common law practice as well, going back before the 18<sup>th</sup> century (William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Law of England*, Book 3 [Oxford: Clarendon, 1767], 370). However, the movement in American legal systems has been toward removing all barriers to competency, thereby making more people eligible to serve as witnesses. (See, e.g., Note on Fed. Rules Evid. 601; Christopher B. Mueller and Laird C. Kirkpatrick, *Evidence*, 5th ed. [New York: Wolters Kluwer, 2012], 437–438.) This overture follows Overture 1 and the general American trend, but it would be easy to retain the categories of incompetency for improper age and intelligence:

**35-1.** All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses, ~~except such as do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments~~ and a witness may testify only after making an oath or giving affirmation to testify truthfully (BCO 35-8). Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency.



Witness *credibility*, on the other hand, is a separate concept. Credibility is the determination of whether one's testimony is truthful or not, a determination that is made by the court trying a case (*BCO* 35-5). If two witnesses' stories differ, which one will the court believe? The one that is more credible. This determination is not made by an official motion, but it is implicitly decided during deliberations when a court comes to a judgment at the end of a trial.

A related concept is an objection not to a witness taking the stand, but an objection to *specific testimony* of a witness. Objecting to particular questions asked to a witness or to particular statements by a witness is always permitted, and that does not require the language found in *BCO* 35-1 or Overture 1. Objections may be raised to frivolous or irrelevant questions or testimony (*BCO* 35-7). Also, the court has the right to use its discretion as to which questions are appropriate to ask (e.g., whether leading questions are appropriate or eliciting hearsay is permissible) (*BCO* 35-7). None of these are challenges to competency.

The challenges raised to a witness under *BCO* 35-1 are only challenges to that witness's competency, not challenges to his credibility (which is offered through other testimony) or challenges to particular testimony (which any party may raise). The *BCO* 35-1 competency challenges can only be made regarding that person's age, intelligence, or belief in God.

Maintaining narrow grounds of incompetency is intentional and best suits the interests of justice. Historically, the PCA has permitted only these very narrow categories to proscribe how the prosecutor and the accused can conduct his case. He has the right to call his own witnesses that can best make his argument to the court. Therefore, the rules limiting who can take the witness stand are very narrow, allowing parties the maximum freedom in developing their case. This freedom in advocacy is essential in ensuring justice for both victims and accused individuals in our church courts.

Overture 1, however, still permits objections to a witness taking the stand, but it does not tether those objections to the concept of competency any longer. Instead, Overture 1 does not describe the situations when a witness may be rightly barred from testifying, so a court is left to its own discretion in making that determination. All limitations, except for the court's will, are removed. Granting this level of new discretion to courts creates an unjust system. It is not difficult to imagine scenarios where a court would bar witnesses just because they are considered uncouth in the eyes of the court, even though those

individuals have important information to assist the court in its pursuit of the truth.

Consider the hypothetical case of an abusive pastor. Individuals who he has abused have left the PCA church, and some have left the faith altogether. At his trial, the pastor objects to all of these former members testifying because they are “disgruntled” and left the church angrily and without seeking reconciliation and restoration. Thus, he argues to the court, they are not fit to testify. Under the current *BCO*, those who left the faith likely will not be permitted to testify, but the others will. While the intent of Overture 1 is to permit all of these former members to testify, regardless of belief in God, Overture 1 actually sets up the possibility of a court to bar all of these former “disgruntled” members from testifying. A Presbytery could agree with the accused and bar all of them from testifying. Without their critical testimony, there is no case against the pastor, and he is acquitted of all charges. Truth is not found out, a man is not called to account for his sin, and victims continue to suffer.

Overture 1 leaves a massive loophole that can easily be used (even unintentionally) to drastically narrow who can testify in church courts. To reach Overture 1’s intended result—to expand who can testify in church courts—the mechanism of objecting untethered from competency must be removed.<sup>2</sup>

*Adopted by The Ohio Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 3, 2024.  
Attested by /s/ TE Jason Piland, Stated Clerk*

---

<sup>2</sup> Overture 1 also changes the categories of “oath” and “affirmation” to “oath” and “promise.” This is an unnecessary change that weakens the import and gravity of the affirmation. An “affirmation” is a legal category that has the same legal effect as an oath (see, e.g., Fed. Rules Evid. 603). It triggers rights and obligations in the exact same way that oaths do. There is no reason to use the word “promise” in the place of “affirmation.”

---

**OVERTURE 19** from the Session of Fountain Square (to CCB, OC)  
Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana  
“Amend *BCO* 41 to allow Venue Change in Judicial Cases”

---

[Note: This overture was passed by the Session of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church on February 1, 2024, submitted to Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting on February 9, 2024, and rejected by Central Indiana Presbytery at that meeting. (The relevant extract of the Presbytery minutes has been provided to the Stated Clerk of the PCA according to RAO 11-10.)]

**Resolved** that the *Book of Church Order (BCO)* 41 be amended as follows, and that these proposed amendments be referred to the Study Committee proposed in Overture 4 to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America: (deletions are denoted throughout by ~~striketroughs~~, additions are underlined)

**“41-1.** A reference is a written representation and application ~~made~~ requested by a ~~lower~~ court of original jurisdiction to an adjacent or higher court for advice or other action on a matter pending before ~~the lower court, and is ordinarily to be made to the next higher court~~ it.

**41-2.** Among proper subjects for reference are matters that are new, delicate or difficult; or on which the members of the lower court are very seriously divided or cannot maintain impartiality; or which relate to questions involving the Constitution and legal procedures respecting which the lower court feels the need of guidance.

**41-3.** In making a reference the ~~lower~~ court of original jurisdiction may ask for advice only, or for final disposition of the matter referred; ~~and~~ In particular, it may refer a report regarding a personal offense (BCO 29-3) with request for its investigation and report (BCO 31) by an adjacent court of the same gradation (BCO 11-4), or a judicial case (BCO 32) with request for its trial and decision by the higher court.

**41-4.** A reference may be presented to the ~~higher~~ requested court by one or more representatives appointed by the ~~lower~~ court of original jurisdiction for this purpose. It should be accompanied with so much

of the record as shall be necessary for proper understanding and consideration of the matter referred.

**41-5.** Although references are sometimes proper, in general it is better that every court should discharge the duty assigned it under the law of the Church. A ~~higher~~ requested court is not required to accede to the request of the ~~lower~~ court of original jurisdiction, but it should ordinarily give advice when so requested.

**41-6.** When a court makes a reference, the court of original jurisdiction ~~it~~ ought to have all the testimony and other documents duly prepared, produced and in perfect readiness, so that the ~~higher~~ requested court may be able to fully consider and handle the case with as little difficulty or delay as possible, and should be able and ready to assist with any logistical or financial burdens which may ensue upon acceding to the reference request.”

so that the final text would read:

“**41-1.** A reference is a written representation and application requested by a court of original jurisdiction to an adjacent or higher court for advice or other action on a matter pending before it.

**41-2.** Among proper subjects for reference are matters that are new, delicate or difficult; or on which the members of the lower court are very seriously divided or cannot maintain impartiality; or which relate to questions involving the Constitution and legal procedures respecting which the lower court feels the need of guidance.

**41-3.** In making a reference the court of original jurisdiction may ask for advice only, or for final disposition of the matter referred. In particular, it may refer a report regarding a personal offense (*BCO* 29-3) with request for its investigation and report (*BCO* 31) by an adjacent court of the same gradation (*BCO* 11-4), or a judicial case (*BCO* 32) with request for its trial and decision by the higher court.

**41-4.** A reference may be presented to the requested court by one or more representatives appointed by the court of original jurisdiction for this purpose. It should be accompanied with so much of the record as

shall be necessary for proper understanding and consideration of the matter referred.

**41-5.** Although references are sometimes proper, in general it is better that every court should discharge the duty assigned it under the law of the Church. A requested court is not required to accede to the request of the court of original jurisdiction, but it should ordinarily give advice when so requested.

**41-6.** When a court makes a reference, the court of original jurisdiction ought to have all the testimony and other documents duly prepared, produced and in perfect readiness, so that the requested court may be able to fully consider and handle the case with as little difficulty or delay as possible, and should be able and ready to assist with any logistical or financial burdens which may ensue upon acceding to the reference request.”

## **RATIONALE**

For small Presbyteries and Sessions, it can be particularly difficult to perform an investigation properly, let alone to execute a trial. This provision provides the ability in certain circumstances for a court to transfer a case to another court of the same gradation (*BCO* 11-4) without having to send it up to a “higher court”—thus ensuring that the higher courts can function in a more appellate capacity.

In the cases originaive against Teaching Elders, where the only higher court is the General Assembly, reference to that court functionally eliminates the right of appeal, since there no court higher than that of the General Assembly. Implementing the ability for courts to reference a case “horizontally” preserves the right of appeal and ultimately upholds biblical justice without increasing the already high workload of the Standing Judicial Commission.

Nothing in this proposed language requires accession by the requested court.

*Adopted by the Session of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church on February 1, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ RE Dan Barber, Clerk of Session, Fountain Square Presbyterian Church.*

*Submitted to Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting on February 9, 2024.*

*Rejected by Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting on February 9, 2024. [The relevant extract of the Presbytery minutes has been provided to the Stated Clerk of the PCA according to RAO 11-10.]*

*Attested by /s/ Taylor Bradbury, Stated Clerk, Central Indiana Presbytery*

---

**OVERTURE 20** from the Session of Fountain Square (to CCB, OC)  
Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana  
“Proposed Systematic Changes to *BCO* 31, 32, and 35”

---

[Note: This overture was passed by the Session of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church on February 1, 2024, submitted to Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting on February 9, 2024, and rejected by Central Indiana Presbytery at that meeting. (The relevant extract of the Presbytery minutes has been provided to the Stated Clerk of the PCA according to RAO 11-10.)]

**BE IT RESOLVED** that the *Book of Church Order (BCO)* Chapters 31, 32, and 35 be amended as follows, and that these proposed amendments be referred to the Study Committee proposed in Overture 4 to the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America: (deletions are denoted throughout by ~~strike throughs~~, additions are underlined).

## **CHAPTER 31**

### *Investigations and ~~t~~The Parties in Cases of Process*

**31-1.** It is incumbent on every member of a court of Jesus Christ engaged in church discipline (*BCO* 27) to bear in mind the inspired injunction:

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).  
[Editorial note: current *BCO* 32-1]

**31-12.** Original jurisdiction (the right first or initially to hear and determine) in relation to ministers of the Gospel shall be in the Presbytery of which the minister is a member, except in cases as provided in *BCO* 34-1. Such original jurisdiction in relation to church members shall be in the Session of the church of which he/she is a member, except in cases as provided in *BCO* 33-1. Any report received by an Officer (*BCO* 7-2) regarding an alleged offense (*BCO* 29) shall be forwarded without delay to Clerk of the court of original jurisdiction. The Clerk of the court shall, within seven (7) calendar days of receipt, notify the accused person (and any associated entity, e.g., RUF, MNA, etc.) that a report has been filed against him."

**31-3.** ~~The original and only parties in a case of process are the accuser and the accused. The accuser is always the Presbyterian Church in America, whose honor and purity are to be maintained. The prosecutor, whether voluntary or appointed, is always the representative of the Church, and as such has all its rights in the case. In appellate courts the parties are known as appellant and appellee. [Editorial note: this paragraph is moved to proposed 31-8] Great caution ought to be exercised in receiving accusations from any person who is known to indulge a malignant spirit towards the accused; who is not of good character; who is himself under censure or process; who is deeply interested in any respect in the conviction of the accused; or who is known to be litigious, rash or highly imprudent. [Editorial note: moved from current 31-8]~~

**31-24.** It is the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care over those subject to their authority. They shall with due diligence and great discretion demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character, and ~~. This duty is more imperative when~~ those who deem themselves aggrieved by injurious reports ~~shall~~ may ask for an investigation. Reports regarding an alleged personal offense (*BCO* 29-3) in which there is an alleged victim shall ordinarily be initiated by the court no more than thirty (30) days from receipt by the Clerk of the court and shall be completed without undue delay. ~~If such investigation, however originating, should result in raising a strong presumption of the guilt of the party involved, the court shall institute process, and shall appoint a prosecutor to prepare the~~

~~indictment and to conduct the case. This prosecutor shall be a member of the court, except that in a case before the Session, he may be any communing member of the same congregation with the accused.~~  
[Editorial note: move to 31-7]

**31-5.** The court shall ensure that those investigating meet a basic standard of conduct for impartiality, and the court may hire a third party to aid in investigation. When the allegations involve personal offenses (BCO 29-3) against women, the court shall ordinarily ensure that the investigative body includes female advisory members.

A member shall recuse himself from any investigation in which the member's impartiality might reasonably be questioned, including but not limited to the following circumstances:

- i. The member has personal bias or prejudice concerning a party or a party's representative;
- ii. The member has personal knowledge of facts that are in dispute in the proceeding, or has investigated the facts of a matter independently;
- iii. The member was a witness concerning the matter. [Editorial note: these paragraphs are a new insertion]

**31-6:** Upon completion of an investigation ([editorial: proposed] BCO 31-4), a report shall be prepared by the court and considered by it outside the presence of any persons directly involved, and the approved report shall be transmitted to all such persons at the same time. Neither the court at large, nor the accused shall have access to evidence collected (testimony recordings, documents, etc.) apart from what is contained within the report, unless it is brought forth by the prosecutor at trial. [Editorial note: this paragraph is a new insertion]

**31-7.** If such investigation, however originating, should result in raising a strong presumption of the guilt of the party involved, the court shall institute process ([editorial: proposed] BCO 32-2) and conduct the case. This prosecutor shall be a member of the court, except that in a case before the Session, he may be any communing member of the same congregation with the accused.



**31-38.** The original and only parties in a case of process are the accuser and the accused. In every case the Church is the injured and accusing party, against the accused. Thus, the accuser is always the Presbyterian Church in America, whose honor and purity are to be maintained. The prosecutor, whether voluntary or appointed, is ‘always the representative of the Church, and as such has all its rights in the case. In appellate courts the parties are known as appellant and appellee. The accused may obtain representation ([editorial: proposed] BCO 32-7) when formal process begins ([editorial: proposed] BCO 32-1).

**31-4.** Every indictment shall begin: **~~“In the name of the Presbyterian Church in America,”~~** and shall conclude, **~~“against the peace, unity and purity of the Church, and the honor and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the King and Head thereof.”~~** ~~In every case the Church is the injured and accusing party, against the accused. [Editorial: moved to proposed BCO 32-2]~~

**31-59.** An injured party shall not become a prosecutor of personal offenses without having tried the means of reconciliation and of reclaiming the offender, required by Christ.

“Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” (Matthew 18:15-16).

A church court, however, may judicially investigate personal offenses as if general when the interest of religion seem to demand it. So, also, those to whom private offenses are known cannot become prosecutors without having previously endeavored to remove the scandal by private means.

**31-610.** When the offense is general, the case may be conducted either by any person appearing as prosecutor or by a prosecutor appointed by the court.

**31-711.** When the prosecution is instituted by the court, the previous steps required by our Lord in the case of personal offenses are not necessary. There are many cases, however, in which it will promote the interests of religion to send a committee to converse in a private manner with the offender, and endeavor to bring him to a sense of his guilt, before instituting actual process.

~~**31-8.** Great caution ought to be exercised in receiving accusations from any person who is known to indulge a malignant spirit towards the accused; who is not of good character; who is himself under censure or process; who is deeply interested in any respect in the conviction of the accused; or who is known to be litigious, rash or highly imprudent.~~

**31-912.** Every voluntary prosecutor shall be previously warned, that if he fail to show probable cause of the charges, he may himself be censured as a slanderer of the brethren.

**31-103.** When a member of a church court is under process, all his official functions may be suspended at the court's discretion; but this shall never be done in the way of censure. When a report is made (BCO 31-1) alleging a serious personal offense or public scandal by a member of the court, the court shall ordinarily suspend the accused from some or all of his official functions, which may include the right to attend and vote in unrelated matters of the court, for the duration of the resulting investigation, but this shall never be done in the way of censure. The court may by separate action continue such suspension if the investigation results in a strong presumption of guilt (BCO 31-2). The court shall in no way prevent the accused from attending meetings of the court regarding his case, nor restrict him from access to the minutes of the same distributed to other members of the court.

**31-114.** In the discussion of all questions arising in his own the case, the ~~accused~~ parties shall exercise the rights of ~~defendant~~ the parties only, not of judge. In light of the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care for their constituents ([editorial: proposed] BCO 31-24), it is wise for the court to appoint men, and women when appropriate, to assist in providing care for both parties.

Any man so appointed shall not have the right to vote in any matters related to the case.

31-15. In all judicial matters, the court shall ordinarily operate in Closed Session. A Closed Session shall be understood as a meeting or portion of a meeting wherein only commissioners, and others specifically invited by the court, are present. The proceedings shall not be secret, but rather discussion of such matters outside of the meeting shall be at the discretion of each commissioner, and the minutes of such a closed session may be read and approved in open session. However, no person present at a closed session shall later identify in any manner the views, speeches or votes of a member during the closed session, apart from that member's written permission.

## CHAPTER 32

### *General Provisions Applicable to all Cases of Process*

~~32-1. It is incumbent on every member of a court of Jesus Christ engaged in a trial of offenders, to bear in mind the inspired injunction: "Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted" (Galatians 6:1). [Editorial: moved to proposed BCO 31-1]~~

~~32-2. Process against an offender shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charge; or unless the court finds it necessary, for the honor of religion, itself to take the steps provided for in BCO 31-24 through 31-6. Process begins when the court appoints a prosecutor, which should ordinarily be done immediately after finding a strong presumption of guilt by investigation, or after receiving charges directly."~~

32-2. An indictment is the written account of charges and specifications formally prepared by the prosecutor. Every indictment shall begin: **"In the name of the Presbyterian Church in America,"** and shall conclude, **"against the peace, unity and purity of the Church, and the honor and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the King and Head thereof."** In drawing the indictment, the times,

places and circumstances should, if possible, be particularly stated, that the accused may have an opportunity to make his defense (cf. BCO 32-11). [Editorial: the first sentence is new; the rest is from existing 31-4, 32-5]

**32-3.** A citation is a notice for a party or a witness to appear before the court, and shall be issued and signed by the moderator or clerk by order and in the name of the court. It is appropriate that with each citation the moderator or clerk call the attention of the parties to the Rules of Discipline (*BCO* 27 through 46) and assist the parties to obtain access to them. ~~When a charge is laid before the Session or Presbytery, it shall be reduced to writing, and nothing shall be done at the first meeting of the court, unless by consent of parties, except:~~

- ~~1. to appoint a prosecutor;~~
- ~~2. to order the indictment drawn and a copy, along with names of witnesses then known to support it, served on the accused; and~~
- ~~3. to cite the accused to appear and be heard at another meeting which shall not be sooner than ten days after such citation.~~

~~At the second meeting of the court the charges shall be read to the accused, if present, and he shall be called upon to say whether he be guilty or not.~~

~~If the accused confesses, the court may deal with him according to its discretion; if he plead and take issue, the trial shall be scheduled and all parties and their witnesses cited to appear. The trial shall not be sooner than fourteen (14) days after such citation. Accused parties may plead in writing when they cannot be personally present. Parties necessarily absent should have counsel assigned to them.~~ [Editorial: the remainder of this is moved to later in the chapter]

**32-4.** The citation shall be issued and signed by the moderator or clerk by order and in the name of the court. He shall also issue citations to such witnesses as either party shall nominate to appear on his behalf. Indictments and citations shall be delivered in person or in another manner providing verification of the date of receipt; electronic delivery alone is sufficient when receipt is acknowledged by the recipient. Compliance with these requirements shall be deemed to

have been fulfilled if a party cannot be located after diligent inquiry or if a party refuses to accept delivery.

~~32-5. In drawing the indictment, the times, places and circumstances should, if possible, be particularly stated, that the accused may have an opportunity to make his defense. Any person refusing to obey a citation shall be cited a second time. This second citation shall be accompanied with a notice that if he does not appear at the time appointed (unless providentially hindered, which fact he must make known to the court) he shall be dealt with for his contumacy~~ ([Editorial: proposed] BCO 32-10).

~~32-6. a. When an accused person shall refuse to obey a citation, he shall be cited a second time. This second citation shall be accompanied with a notice that if he does not appear at the time appointed (unless providentially hindered, which fact he must make known to the court) he shall be dealt with for his contumacy (cf. BCO 33-2; 34-4).~~

~~b. When an accused person shall appear and refuse to plead, or otherwise refuse to cooperate with lawful proceedings, he shall be dealt with for his contumacy (cf. BCO 33-2; 34-4). On all questions arising in the progress of a case, the discussion shall first be between the parties; and when they have been heard, they may be required to withdraw from the court until the members deliberate upon and decide the point.~~ [Editorial: added language taken from current *BCO* 32-14]

~~32-7. The time which must elapse between the serving of the first citation on the accused person, and the meeting of the court at which he is to appear, shall be at least ten (10) days. The time allotted for his appearance on the subsequent citation shall be left to the discretion of the court, provided that it be quite sufficient for a seasonable and convenient compliance with the citation. In cases of process before any church court, no professional representative shall be permitted to appear on behalf of any party, nor assist with oral or written arguments, nor engage in communications regarding the case. A person shall be considered a professional representative when: the representative is functioning in an attorney/client relationship, or the representative is remunerated specifically for his representation.~~

- a. In accordance with the preceding provisions, the accused may obtain representation, and parties necessarily absent shall

have representation assigned to them. Representatives for either party shall be communing members in good standing and may continue until the conclusion of the case in a higher court. Representatives shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case or vote in any related judicial matters decided by the court. Representatives for either party may appoint assistants according to these same provisions.

- b. In cases originating before a Session, a party may be represented by any communing member of the same particular church. If the Session judges that a party will not be well-served by representation from that body, the Session may request a representative from its Presbytery. In cases originating before any other court, a party may be represented by any member of that court. [Editorial: revision of current *BCO* 32-19, with a portion taken from current *BCO* 32-3]

~~32-8. When the offense with which an accused person stands charged took place at a distance, and it is inconvenient for the witnesses to appear before the court having jurisdiction, that court may either (a) appoint a commission of its body, or (b) request the coordinate court contiguous to the place where the facts occurred to take the testimony for it, or (c) have the testimony taken by videoconference, which shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can see and hear each other at the same time, and which allows for live cross examination by both parties. The accused shall always have reasonable notice of the time and place of the meeting of this commission or coordinate court. If deemed expedient there may be a committee appointed, which shall be called the Judicial Committee, and whose duty it shall be to digest and arrange all the papers, and to prescribe, under the direction of the court, the whole order of the proceedings (cf. [editorial: proposed] *BCO* 32-11). The members of this committee shall be entitled, notwithstanding their performance of this duty, to sit and vote in the case as members of the court.~~ [Editorial: added language taken from current *BCO* 32-11]

~~32-9. When an offense, alleged to have been committed at a distance, is not likely otherwise to become known to the court having jurisdiction, it shall be the duty of the court within whose bounds the~~

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

~~facts occurred, after satisfying itself that there is probable ground for accusation, to send notice to the court having jurisdiction, which shall at once proceed against the accused; or the whole case may be remitted for trial to the coordinate court within whose bounds the offense is alleged to have been committed. Minutes of the trial shall be kept by the clerk, which shall exhibit the charges, the answer, record of the testimony, as defined by BCO 35-9, and all such acts, orders, and decisions of the court relating to the case, as either party may desire, and also the judgment. The clerk shall without delay assemble the Record of the Case which shall consist of the charges, the answer, the citations and returns thereto, and the minutes herein required to be kept.~~

- a. When a case is removed by appeal or complaint, the lower court shall transmit “the Record” thus prepared to the higher court with the addition of the notice of appeal or complaint, and the reasons therefor, if any shall have been filed.
- b. Nothing which is not contained in this “Record” shall be taken into consideration by the higher court. On the final decision of a case in a higher court, the judgment shall be sent down to the court in which the case originated.

The parties shall be allowed copies of the Record of the Case at their own expense if they demand them. [Editorial: added language taken from current BCO 32-18 with minor edits]

**32-10.** ~~Before proceeding to trial, courts ought to ascertain that their citations have been duly served. Contumacy is noncompliance with a lawful directive of the court (failure to appear for a citation, refusal to testify or provide evidence, etc.). Any officer or private member of the church found by the court to be noncompliant may be censured for contumacy (BCO 33-2; 34-4).~~ Contumacy is noncompliance with a lawful directive of the court (failure to appear for a citation, refusal to testify or provide evidence, etc.). Any officer or private member of the church found by the court to be noncompliant may be censured for contumacy (BCO 33-2; 34-4). [Editorial: the first sentence is an adaptation from current BCO 32-6; the remainder of the added language taken from current BCO 35-14 with edits]

**32-11.** ~~In every process, if deemed expedient there may be a committee appointed, which shall be called the Judicial Committee, and whose duty it shall be to digest and arrange all the papers, and to~~

prescribe, under the direction of the court, the whole order of the proceedings. The members of this committee shall be entitled, notwithstanding their performance of this duty, to sit and vote in the case as members of the court. Process occurs throughout a series of meetings of the court leading to and concluding with trial. Nothing shall be done at the first meeting of the court except as specified below, unless by consent of the parties:

- a. At the first meeting of the court, the court shall (1) appoint a prosecutor; (2) order the indictment drawn, and a copy, along with names of witnesses then known to support it, served on the accused; and (3) cite the accused to appear and be heard at another meeting which shall not be sooner than ten days after such citation.
- b. At the second meeting of the court, the court shall (1) read at least the charges to the accused, if present, and (2) he shall be called upon to say whether he be guilty or not.
  - i. If the accused confesses, the court may deal with him according to its discretion.
  - ii. If the accused does not confess, the trial shall be scheduled and all parties and their witnesses cited to appear. The trial shall not be sooner than fourteen (14) days after such citation. Accused parties may plead in writing when they cannot be personally present.  
[Editorial: added language expanded and adapted from current *BCO* 32-3]

The accused or a member of the court may object to the consideration of a charge, for example, if he thinks the passage of time since the alleged offense makes fair adjudication unachievable. The court should consider factors such as the gravity of the alleged offense as well as what degradations of evidence and memory may have occurred in the intervening period. [Editorial: added language taken from current *BCO* 32-20]



**32-12.** Before proceeding to trial, the court shall delineate any trial rules to be observed by both parties not contained herein (e.g., points of order or objections which will be observed, manner to present evidence, etc.) at least fourteen (14) days prior to trial commencement, to which both parties shall assent. Courts ought also to ascertain that their citations have been duly served. [Editorial: added language expanded and taken from current *BCO* 32-10]

~~When the trial is about to begin, it shall be the duty of the moderator solemnly to announce from the chair that the court is about to pass to the consideration of the case, and to enjoin on the members to recollect and regard their high character as judges of a court of Jesus Christ, and the solemn duty in which they are about to engage.~~ [Editorial: this paragraph is moved to proposed *BCO* 32-15]

**32-13.** In order that the trial may be fair and impartial, ~~the~~ witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused (as permitted by *BCO* 32-8~~14~~), or at least after he shall have received due citation to attend. Witnesses may be cross-examined by both parties, and any questions asked must be pertinent to the issue (*BCO* 35-7). Every member sitting as a judge shall maintain a high standard of integrity, independence, and competence:

- i. He shall not render judgment on any matter pending before his court on anything other than the Constitution of the Church and the facts presented by the Record of the Case and other materials properly before him, and he shall not vote without having read the entirety of the Record of the Case and all other documents properly filed by the parties, and has heard the arguments of the parties and the discussion as to the merits of the matters in controversy.
- ii. He shall not express his opinion of the merits of any case pending trial to either party, or to any person not a member of the court, or absent himself from any sitting without the permission of the court, or satisfactory reasons rendered.
- iii. He shall not make any public or private statement that might reasonably be expected to affect the outcome of a matter which has been filed under the Rules of Discipline (*BCO* 27

through 46) with a court. Notwithstanding the foregoing, he may make statements regarding the principles of the form of government and discipline, the requirements of the BCO, the Rules of Assembly Operation, and Robert's Rules. If such statements seem to the member especially liable to be construed to address a matter before the court, a member making such public or private statements shall expressly qualify the statements indicating that they are limited to the subject matters permitted by this subsection and are not made with a view to the matter.

- iv. He shall be objective and open-minded with respect to all issues and all parties.

Pending the trial of a case, any member of the court who cannot meet these requirements shall be thereby disqualified from taking part in subsequent proceedings. A member shall recuse himself from sitting as a judge when his impartiality might reasonably be questioned ([Editorial: proposed]BCO 31-5). [Editorial: language adapted from the Operating Manual of the Standing Judicial Commission §2]  
A member of the court shall not be disqualified from sitting as a judge by having given testimony in the case, unless a party makes an objection, and the court subsequently determines that such member should be disqualified. The elder against whom the objection has been made shall retain the right to vote in the determination of qualification. Either party may, for cause, challenge the right of any member to sit in the trial of the case, which question shall be decided by the other members of the court. [Editorial: language taken from current BCO 35-13 and 32-16]

~~**32-14.** On all questions arising in the progress of a trial, the discussion shall first be between the parties; and when they have been heard, they may be required to withdraw from the court until the members deliberate upon and decide the point. [Editorial: moved to BCO 32-6]~~  
An offense may take place outside the court of original jurisdiction.

- a. When it is inconvenient for the witnesses to appear before the court having jurisdiction, that court may either:

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- i. appoint a commission of its body, or
- ii. request the coordinate court contiguous to the place where the facts occurred to take the testimony for it, or
- iii. have the testimony taken by videoconference, which shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can see and hear each other at the same time, and which allows for live cross-examination by both parties.

The accused shall always have reasonable notice of the time and place of the meeting of this commission or coordinate court. [Editorial: taken and adapted from current *BCO* 32-8]

- b. When it is not likely otherwise to become known to the court having jurisdiction, it shall be the duty of the court within whose bounds the facts occurred, after satisfying itself that there is probable ground for accusation, to send notice to the court having jurisdiction, which shall at once proceed against the accused; or the whole case may be remitted for trial to the coordinate court within whose bounds the offense is alleged to have been committed. [Editorial: taken and adapted from current *BCO* 32-9]

**32-15.** When a court of first resort proceeds to the trial of a case, the following order shall be observed:

1. The moderator shall charge the court that it is about to pass to the consideration of the case, and to enjoin on the members to recollect and regard their high character as judges of a court of Jesus Christ, and the solemn duty in which they are about to engage. [Editorial: additional language taken from current *BCO* 32-12]
2. The indictment shall be read, and the answer of the accused heard; the reading of the indictment may be waived by consent of the parties.
3. The witnesses for the prosecutor and then those for the accused shall be examined.

4. The parties shall be heard: first, the prosecutor, and then the accused, and the prosecutor shall close.
5. The roll shall be called, and the members may express their opinion in the case.
6. The vote shall be taken, the verdict announced, and judgment entered on the records.

**32-16.** ~~Either party may, for cause, challenge the right of any member to sit in the trial of the case, which question shall be decided by the other members of the court.~~ [Editorial: moved to proposed *BCO* 32-13]

**32-17.** ~~Pending the trial of a case, any member of the court who shall express his opinion of its merits to either party, or to any person not a member of the court; or who shall absent himself from any sitting without the permission of the court, or satisfactory reasons rendered, shall be thereby disqualified from taking part in the subsequent proceedings.~~ [Editorial: moved to proposed *BCO* 32-13]

**32-18.** ~~Minutes of the trial shall be kept by the clerk, which shall exhibit the charges, the answer, record of the testimony, as defined by *BCO* 35-7, and all such acts, orders, and decisions of the court relating to the case, as either party may desire, and also the judgment.~~

~~The clerk shall without delay assemble the Record of the Case which shall consist of the charges, the answer, the citations and returns thereto, and the minutes herein required to be kept.~~

~~The parties shall be allowed copies of the Record of the Case at their own expense if they demand them.~~

~~When a case is removed by appeal or complaint, the lower court shall transmit "the Record" thus prepared to the higher court with the addition of the notice of appeal or complaint, and the reasons therefor, if any shall have been filed.~~

~~Nothing which is not contained in this "Record" shall be taken into consideration by the higher court. On the final decision of a case in a higher court, the judgment shall be sent down to the court in which the case originated.~~ [Editorial: moved to proposed *BCO* 32-9]

**32-19:** ~~No professional counsel shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court; but an accused person may,~~

~~if he desires it, be represented before the Session by any communing member of the same particular church, or before any other court, by any member of that court. A member of the court so employed shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case. [Editorial: moved to proposed BCO 32-7]~~

~~**32-20.** The accused or a member of the court may object to the consideration of a charge, for example, if he thinks the passage of time since the alleged offense makes fair adjudication unachievable. The court should consider factors such as the gravity of the alleged offense as well as what degradations of evidence and memory may have occurred in the intervening period. [Editorial: moved to proposed BCO 32-11]~~

## CHAPTER 35

### *Evidence*

#### **35-1...**

**35-4.** The testimony of more than one witness shall be necessary in order to establish any charge; yet if, in addition to the testimony of one witness, corroborative evidence be produced, or if several credible witnesses bear testimony to different similar acts, belonging to the same general charge, the offense may be considered to be proved.

**35-5.** It belongs to the court to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence. All evidence to be presented at trial, along with witness names, shall be exchanged by the parties at least fourteen (14) days before the trial is scheduled to commence.

**35-6.** No witness afterwards to be examined, unless a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party object.

**35-7.** Witnesses shall be examined first by the party introducing them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; after which any member of the court, or either party, may put additional interrogatories. No question shall be put or answered except by permission of the

moderator, subject to an appeal to the court. [Editorial note: new paragraph]

The court shall not permit questions frivolous or irrelevant to the charge at issue, including assertions or questions regarding the character of the witness not in question, and any finding by the court that such an assertion or question was made shall be stricken from the Record of the Case.

### **35-8...**

**35-10.** The records of a court or any part of them, whether original or transcribed, if regularly authenticated by the moderator and clerk, or by either of them, shall be deemed good and sufficient evidence in every other court. In like manner, testimony taken by one court (including testimony written or recorded during investigation) and regularly authenticated shall be received by every other court.

**35-11.** ~~In like manner, testimony taken by one court and regularly certified shall be received by every other court as no less valid than if it had been taken by itself.~~ Evidence relevant to the issue at charge shall be automatically admitted by the court when its authenticity is not in dispute or can be easily ascertained by the court.

**35-12.** When it is not convenient for a court to have the whole or perhaps any part of the testimony in any particular case taken in its presence, a commission shall be appointed, or coordinate court requested, to take the testimony in question, which shall be considered as if taken in the presence of the court.

Due notice of the commission or coordinate court or videoconference, and of the time and place of its meeting, shall be given to the opposite party, that he may have an opportunity of attending. If the accused shall desire on his part to take testimony at a distance for his own exculpation, he shall give notice to the court of the time and place at which it shall be taken, in order that a commission or coordinate court, as in the former case, may be appointed for the purpose. Testimony may be taken on written interrogatories by filing the same with the clerk of the court having jurisdiction of the case, and giving two weeks' notice thereof to the adverse party, during which

time he may file cross-interrogatories, if he desire it. Testimony shall then be taken by the commission or coordinate court in answer to the direct and cross-interrogatories, if such are filed, and no notice need be given of the time and place of taking the testimony.

~~35-13. A member of the court shall not be disqualified from sitting as a judge by having given testimony in the case, unless a party makes an objection, and the court subsequently determines that such member should be disqualified. The elder against whom the objection has been made shall retain the right to vote in the determination of qualification. [editorial: moved to proposed BCO 32-13] A member of the court who is the prosecutor in the case (BCO 31-2) is disqualified from sitting as a judge. [editorial: moved to proposed BCO 32-7]~~

~~35-14. An officer or private member of the church refusing to testify may be censured for contumacy. [Editorial: moved to proposed BCO 32-10]~~

~~35-15.~~ If after trial before any court new testimony be discovered, which the accused believes important, it shall be his right to ask a new trial and it shall be within the power of the court to grant his request.

~~35-164.~~ If, in the prosecution of an appeal, new evidence be offered which, in the judgment of the appellate court, has an important bearing on the case, it shall be competent for that court to refer the case to the lower court for a new trial; or, with the consent of parties, to admit the evidence and proceed with the case.

so that the final text would read:

## CHAPTER 31

### *Investigations and the Parties in Cases of Process*

**31-1.** It is incumbent on every member of a court of Jesus Christ engaged in church discipline (*BCO* 27) to bear in mind the inspired injunction:

“Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in the spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted” (Galatians 6:1).

**31-2.** Original jurisdiction (the right first or initially to hear and determine) in relation to ministers of the Gospel shall be in the Presbytery of which the minister is a member, except in cases as provided in *BCO* 34-1. Such original jurisdiction in relation to church members shall be in the Session of the church of which he/she is a member, except in cases as provided in *BCO* 33-1. Any report received by an Officer (*BCO* 7-2) regarding an alleged offense (*BCO* 29) shall be forwarded without delay to Clerk of the court of original jurisdiction. The Clerk of the court shall, within seven (7) calendar days of receipt, notify the accused person (and any associated entity, e.g., RUF, MNA, etc.) that a report has been filed against him.”

**31-3.** Great caution ought to be exercised in receiving accusations from any person who is known to indulge a malignant spirit towards the accused; who is not of good character; who is himself under censure or process; who is deeply interested in any respect in the conviction of the accused; or who is known to be litigious, rash or highly imprudent.”

**31-4.** It is the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care over those subject to their authority. They shall with due diligence and great discretion demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character, and those who deem themselves aggrieved by injurious reports may ask for an investigation.” Reports regarding an alleged personal offense (*BCO* 29-3) in which there is an alleged victim shall ordinarily



be initiated by the court no more than thirty (30) days from receipt by the Clerk of the court and shall be completed without undue delay.

**31-5.** The court shall ensure that those investigating meet a basic standard of conduct for impartiality, and the court may hire a third party to aid in investigation. When the allegations involve personal offenses (*BCO* 29-3) against women, the court shall ordinarily ensure that the investigative body includes female advisory members.

A member shall disqualify himself from any investigation in which the member's impartiality might reasonably be questioned, including but not limited to the following circumstances:

- a. The member has personal bias or prejudice concerning a party or a party's representative;
- b. The member has personal knowledge of facts that are in dispute in the proceeding, or has investigated the facts of a matter independently;
- c. The member was a witness concerning the matter.

**31-6:** Upon completion of an investigation (*BCO* 31-4), a report shall be prepared by the court and considered by it outside the presence of any persons directly involved, and the approved report shall be transmitted to all such persons at the same time. Neither the court at large, nor the accused shall have access to evidence collected (testimony recordings, documents, etc.) apart from what is contained within the report, unless it is brought forth by the prosecutor at trial.

**31-7.** If such investigation, however originating, should result in raising a strong presumption of the guilt of the party involved, the court shall institute process (*BCO* 32-2) and conduct the case. This prosecutor shall be a member of the court, except that in a case before the Session, he may be any communing member of the same congregation with the accused.

**31-8.** The original and only parties in a case of process are the accuser and the accused. In every case the Church is the injured and accusing party, against the accused. Thus, the accuser is always the Presbyterian Church in America, whose honor and purity are to be maintained. The

prosecutor, whether voluntary or appointed, is always the representative of the Church, and as such has all its rights in the case. In appellate courts the parties are known as appellant and appellee. The accused may obtain representation (*BCO* 32-7) when formal process begins (*BCO* 32-1).

**31-9.** An injured party shall not become a prosecutor of personal offenses without having tried the means of reconciliation and of reclaiming the offender, required by Christ.

“Moreover, if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother but if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established” (Matthew 18:15-16).

A church court, however, may judicially investigate personal offenses as if general when the interest of religion seem to demand it. So, also, those to whom private offenses are known cannot become prosecutors without having previously endeavored to remove the scandal by private means.

**31-10.** When the offense is general, the case may be conducted either by any person appearing as prosecutor or by a prosecutor appointed by the court.

**31-11.** When the prosecution is instituted by the court, the previous steps required by our Lord in the case of personal offenses are not necessary. There are many cases, however, in which it will promote the interests of religion to send a committee to converse in a private manner with the offender, and endeavor to bring him to a sense of his guilt, before instituting actual process.

**31-12.** Every voluntary prosecutor shall be previously warned, that if he fail to show probable cause of the charges, he may himself be censured as a slanderer of the brethren.

**31-13.** When a member of a church court is under process, all his official functions may be suspended at the court's discretion; but this shall never be done in the way of censure. When a report is made (*BCO* 31-1) alleging a serious personal offense or public scandal by a member of the court, the court shall ordinarily suspend the accused from some or all of his official functions, which may include the right to attend and vote in unrelated matters of the court, for the duration of the resulting investigation, but this shall never be done in the way of censure. The court may by separate action continue such suspension if the investigation results in a strong presumption of guilt (*BCO* 31-2). The court shall in no way prevent the accused from attending meetings of the court regarding his case, nor restrict him from access to the minutes of the same distributed to other members of the court.

**31-14.** In the discussion of all questions arising in the case, the parties shall exercise the rights of the parties only, not of judge. In light of the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care for their constituents (*BCO* 31-4), it is wise for the court to appoint men, and women when appropriate, to assist in providing care for both parties. Any man so appointed shall not have the right to vote in any matters related to the case.

**31-15.** In all judicial matters, the court shall ordinarily operate in Closed Session. A Closed Session shall be understood as a meeting or portion of a meeting wherein only commissioners, and others specifically invited by the court, are present. The proceedings shall not be secret, but rather discussion of such matters outside of the meeting shall be at the discretion of each commissioner, and the minutes of such a closed session may be read and approved in open session. However, no person present at a closed session shall later identify in any manner the views, speeches or votes of a member during the closed session, apart from that member's written permission.

## **CHAPTER 32**

### *General Provisions Applicable to all Cases of Process*

**32-1.** Process against an offender shall not be commenced unless some person or persons undertake to make out the charge; or unless the court

finds it necessary, for the honor of religion, itself to take the steps provided for in *BCO* 31-4 through 31-6. Process begins when the court appoints a prosecutor, which should ordinarily be done immediately after finding a strong presumption of guilt by investigation, or after receiving charges directly.”

**32-2.** An indictment is the written account of charges and specifications formally prepared by the prosecutor. Every indictment shall begin: **“In the name of the Presbyterian Church in America,”** and shall conclude, **“against the peace, unity and purity of the Church, and the honor and majesty of the Lord Jesus Christ, as the King and Head thereof.”** In drawing the indictment, the times, places and circumstances should, if possible, be particularly stated, that the accused may have an opportunity to make his defense (cf. *BCO* 32-11).

**32-3.** A citation is a notice for a party or a witness to appear before the court, and shall be issued and signed by the moderator or clerk by order and in the name of the court. It is appropriate that with each citation the moderator or clerk call the attention of the parties to the Rules of Discipline (*BCO* 27 through 46) and assist the parties to obtain access to them.

**32-4.** Indictments and citations shall be delivered in person or in another manner providing verification of the date of receipt; electronic delivery alone is sufficient when receipt is acknowledged by the recipient. Compliance with these requirements shall be deemed to have been fulfilled if a party cannot be located after diligent inquiry or if a party refuses to accept delivery.

**32-5.** Any person refusing to obey a citation shall be cited a second time. This second citation shall be accompanied with a notice that if he does not appear at the time appointed (unless providentially hindered, which fact he must make known to the court) he shall be dealt with for his contumacy (*BCO* 32-10).

**32-6.** On all questions arising in the progress of a case, the discussion shall first be between the parties; and when they have been heard, they

may be required to withdraw from the court until the members deliberate upon and decide the point.

**32-7.** In cases of process before any church court, no professional representative shall be permitted to appear on behalf of any party, nor assist with oral or written arguments, nor engage in communications regarding the case. A person shall be considered a professional representative when: the representative is functioning in an attorney/client relationship, or the representative is remunerated specifically for his representation.

- a. In accordance with the preceding provisions, the accused may obtain representation, and parties necessarily absent shall have representation assigned to them. Representatives for either party shall be communing members in good standing and may continue until the conclusion of the case in a higher court. Representatives shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case or vote in any related judicial matters decided by the court. Representatives for either party may appoint assistants according to these same provisions.
- b. In cases originating before a Session, a party may be represented by any communing member of the same particular church. If the Session judges that a party will not be well-served by representation from that body, the Session may request a representative from its Presbytery. In cases originating before any other court, a party may be represented by any member of that court.

**32-8.** If deemed expedient there may be a committee appointed, which shall be called the Judicial Committee, and whose duty it shall be to digest and arrange all the papers, and to prescribe, under the direction of the court, the whole order of the proceedings (cf. *BCO* 32-11). The members of this committee shall be entitled, notwithstanding their performance of this duty, to sit and vote in the case as members of the court.

**32-9.** Minutes of the trial shall be kept by the clerk, which shall exhibit the charges, the answer, record of the testimony, as defined by *BCO*

35-9, and all such acts, orders, and decisions of the court relating to the case, as either party may desire, and also the judgment. The clerk shall without delay assemble the Record of the Case which shall consist of the charges, the answer, the citations and returns thereto, and the minutes herein required to be kept.

- c. When a case is removed by appeal or complaint, the lower court shall transmit “the Record” thus prepared to the higher court with the addition of the notice of appeal or complaint, and the reasons therefor, if any shall have been filed.
- d. Nothing which is not contained in this “Record” shall be taken into consideration by the higher court. On the final decision of a case in a higher court, the judgment shall be sent down to the court in which the case originated.

The parties shall be allowed copies of the Record of the Case at their own expense if they demand them.

**32-10.** Contumacy is noncompliance with a lawful directive of the court (failure to appear for a citation, refusal to testify or provide evidence, etc.). Any officer or private member of the church found by the court to be noncompliant may be censured for contumacy (*BCO* 33-2; 34-4).

**32-11.** Process occurs throughout a series of meetings of the court leading to and concluding with trial. Nothing shall be done at the first meeting of the court except as specified below, unless by consent of the parties:

- a. At the first meeting of the court, the court shall (1) appoint a prosecutor; (2) order the indictment drawn, and a copy, along with names of witnesses then known to support it, served on the accused; and (3) cite the accused to appear and be heard at another meeting which shall not be sooner than ten days after such citation.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- b. At the second meeting of the court, the court shall (1) read at least the charges to the accused, if present, and (2) he shall be called upon to say whether he be guilty or not.

  - i. If the accused confesses, the court may deal with him according to its discretion.
  - ii. If the accused does not confess, the trial shall be scheduled and all parties and their witnesses cited to appear. The trial shall not be sooner than fourteen (14) days after such citation. Accused parties may plead in writing when they cannot be personally present.

The accused or a member of the court may object to the consideration of a charge, for example, if he thinks the passage of time since the alleged offense makes fair adjudication unachievable. The court should consider factors such as the gravity of the alleged offense as well as what degradations of evidence and memory may have occurred in the intervening period.

**32-12.** Before proceeding to trial, the court shall delineate any trial rules to be observed by both parties not contained herein (e.g., points of order or objections which will be observed, manner to present evidence, etc.) at least fourteen (14) days prior to trial commencement, to which both parties shall assent. Courts ought also to ascertain that their citations have been duly served.

**32-13.** In order that the trial may be fair and impartial, witnesses shall be examined in the presence of the accused (as permitted by *BCO* 32-14), or at least after he shall have received due citation to attend. Witnesses may be cross-examined by both parties, and any questions asked must be pertinent to the issue (*BCO* 35-7). Every member sitting as a judge shall maintain a high standard of integrity, independence, and competence:

- i. He shall not render judgment on any matter pending before his court on anything other than the Constitution of the Church and the facts presented by the Record of the Case and other materials properly before him, and he shall not vote without

having read the entirety of the Record of the Case and all other documents properly filed by the parties, and has heard the arguments of the parties and the discussion as to the merits of the matters in controversy.

- ii. He shall not express his opinion of the merits of any case pending trial to either party, or to any person not a member of the court, or absent himself from any sitting without the permission of the court, or satisfactory reasons rendered.
- iii. He shall not make any public or private statement that might reasonably be expected to affect the outcome of a matter which has been filed under the Rules of Discipline with a court. Notwithstanding the foregoing, he may make statements regarding the principles of the form of government and discipline, the requirements of the *BCO*, the *Rules of Assembly Operation*, and *Robert's Rules*. If such statements seem to the member especially liable to be construed to address a matter before the court, a member making such public or private statements shall expressly qualify the statements indicating that they are limited to the subject matters permitted by this subsection and are not made with a view to the matter.
- iv. He shall be objective and open-minded with respect to all issues and all parties.

Pending the trial of a case, any member of the court who cannot meet these requirements shall be thereby disqualified from taking part in subsequent proceedings. A member shall recuse himself from sitting as a judge when his impartiality might reasonably be questioned (*BCO* 31-5).

A member of the court shall not be disqualified from sitting as a judge by having given testimony in the case, unless a party makes an objection, and the court subsequently determines that such member should be disqualified. The elder against whom the objection has been made shall retain the right to vote in the determination of qualification. Either party may, for cause, challenge the right of any member to sit



in the trial of the case, which question shall be decided by the other members of the court.

**32-14.** An offense may take place outside the court of original jurisdiction.

- a. When it is inconvenient for the witnesses to appear before the court having jurisdiction, that court may either:
  - iv. appoint a commission of its body, or
  - v. request the coordinate court contiguous to the place where the facts occurred to take the testimony for it, or
  - vi. have the testimony taken by videoconference, which shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can see and hear each other at the same time, and which allows for live cross-examination by both parties.

The accused shall always have reasonable notice of the time and place of the meeting of this commission or coordinate court.

- b. When it is not likely otherwise to become known to the court having jurisdiction, it shall be the duty of the court within whose bounds the facts occurred, after satisfying itself that there is probable ground for accusation, to send notice to the court having jurisdiction, which shall at once proceed against the accused; or the whole case may be remitted for trial to the coordinate court within whose bounds the offense is alleged to have been committed.

**32-15.** When a court of first resort proceeds to the trial of a case, the following order shall be observed:

1. The moderator shall charge the court that it is about to pass to the consideration of the case, and to enjoin on the members to recollect and regard their high character as judges of a court

of Jesus Christ, and the solemn duty in which they are about to engage.

2. The indictment shall be read, and the answer of the accused heard; the reading of the indictment may be waived by consent of the parties.
3. The witnesses for the prosecutor and then those for the accused shall be examined.
4. The parties shall be heard: first, the prosecutor, and then the accused, and the prosecutor shall close.
5. The roll shall be called, and the members may express their opinion in the case.
6. The vote shall be taken, the verdict announced, and judgment entered on the records.

## CHAPTER 35

### *Evidence*

#### **35-1.** ...

**35-4.** The testimony of more than one witness shall be necessary in order to establish any charge; yet if, in addition to the testimony of one witness, corroborative evidence be produced, or if several credible witnesses bear testimony to different similar acts, belonging to the same general charge, the offense may be considered to be proved.

**35-5.** It belongs to the court to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence. All evidence to be presented at trial, along with witness names, shall be exchanged by the parties at least fourteen (14) days before the trial is scheduled to commence.

**35-6.** No witness afterwards to be examined, unless a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party object.

**35-7.** Witnesses shall be examined first by the party introducing them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; after which any member of the court, or either party, may put additional interrogatories. No question shall be put or answered except by permission of the

moderator, subject to an appeal to the court. [Editorial note: new paragraph]

The court shall not permit questions frivolous or irrelevant to the charge at issue, including assertions or questions regarding the character of the witness not in question, and any finding by the court that such an assertion or question was made shall be stricken from the Record of the Case.

**35-8. ...**

**35-10.** The records of a court or any part of them, whether original or transcribed, if regularly authenticated by the moderator and clerk, or by either of them, shall be deemed good and sufficient evidence in every other court. In like manner, testimony taken by one court (including testimony written or recorded during investigation) and regularly authenticated shall be received by every other court.

**35-11.** Evidence relevant to the issue at charge shall be automatically admitted by the court when its authenticity is not in dispute or can be easily ascertained by the court.

**35-12.** When it is not convenient for a court to have the whole or perhaps any part of the testimony in any particular case taken in its presence, a commission shall be appointed, or coordinate court requested, to take the testimony in question, which shall be considered as if taken in the presence of the court.

Due notice of the commission or coordinate court or videoconference, and of the time and place of its meeting, shall be given to the opposite party, that he may have an opportunity of attending. If the accused shall desire on his part to take testimony at a distance for his own exculpation, he shall give notice to the court of the time and place at which it shall be taken, in order that a commission or coordinate court, as in the former case, may be appointed for the purpose. Testimony may be taken on written interrogatories by filing the same with the clerk of the court having jurisdiction of the case, and giving two weeks' notice thereof to the adverse party, during which time he may file cross-interrogatories, if he desire it. Testimony shall then be taken by the commission or coordinate court in answer to the

direct and cross-interrogatories, if such are filed, and no notice need be given of the time and place of taking the testimony.

**35-13.** If after trial before any court new testimony be discovered, which the accused believes important, it shall be his right to ask a new trial and it shall be within the power of the court to grant his request.

**35-14.** If, in the prosecution of an appeal, new evidence be offered which, in the judgment of the appellate court, has an important bearing on the case, it shall be competent for that court to refer the case to the lower court for a new trial; or, with the consent of parties, to admit the evidence and proceed with the case.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the following references be updated accordingly:

- *BCO* 38-3, update “31-2” to “31-3”
- *BCO* 42-6, update “31-10” to “31-13”
- *BCO* 35-3, 38-1, 42-10, update “32-19” to “32-7”
- *BCO* 38-3.a, update “32-3” to “32-11”
- *BCO* 33-2, 34-4 update “32-6” to “32-10”
- All references to these same chapters within the Appendices
- All references to these same chapters within the *OMSJ*

## **RATIONALE**

These three chapters have enjoyed no small number of attempted and successful overtures and throughout their history. Even so, still much confusion abounds for many lower courts, resulting and an overabundance of work for the higher courts upon review and control, complaint and appeal. We believe that much of this can be mitigated in the future by adding structure that will bring clarity to the process, while offering new emendations—as the Assembly did recently to *BCO* 35— which will prove very helpful to future investigations and cases of process.

Should all these changes be adopted as proposed, the result would be the retaining of most of the current text (with some additions throughout), relocating items together throughout these three chapters, several entirely new

paragraphs, totaling 1102 additional words with the *Rules of Discipline*, as allocated below:

- 400 words regarding impartiality (123 in 31-5; 277 in 32-13);
- 103 words regarding the reporting of allegations;
- 80 words regarding reporting of results of an investigation;
- 126 words regarding non-censure suspension;
- 110 words regarding the adoption of closed session; and
- 283 words regarding various sundry changes throughout the remainder.

It would further demonstrate a new logical flow for the lower courts to better follow in handling any judicial cases arising before them:

#### Chapter 31

- 31-1 Solemn warning when beginning judicial procedures (Existing 32-1)
- 31-2 Original jurisdiction and notification of reports (Existing 31-1)
- 31-3 Caution in receiving accusations (Existing 31-8)
- 31-4 Initiation and timeliness of investigations (Existing 31-2, ¶1)
- 31-5 Impartiality of the investigative body
- 31-6 Investigative Committee Findings and Documents
- 31-7 Actions of the court upon finding a strong presumption of guilt (Existing 31-2, ¶2)
- 31-8 Parties in a case of process (Existing 31-3)
- 31-9 Requirements for prosecution of personal offenses (Existing 31-5)
- 31-10 Requirements for prosecution of general offenses (Existing 31-6)
- 31-11 Requirements for prosecution when instituted by the court (Existing 31-7)
- 31-12 Voluntary prosecutors (Existing 31-9)
- 31-13 Administrative suspension (Existing 31-10)
- 31-14 Care for the parties and voting rights (Existing 31-11 with expansion)
- 31-15 Closed Session for Judicial process

The result is a chapter that follows the flow of actual investigations through the initiation of process, with some changes to existing paragraphs for better fit: for example, current *BCO* 31-8 is moved to 31-2, which is where considering of accusations would normally begin, upon their reception. The bulk of the additions aim to provide some additional clarity to the investigative process, which currently occupies the minority of the text in this chapter. These changes will also result in less complaints to the higher courts while simultaneously providing a modest increase in direction for investigations—without being too prescriptive—maintaining the current *BCO* posture of discretion for decision-making by a court of original jurisdiction, being closest to whatever investigation and process is occurring.

## Chapter 32

- 32-1 Initiation of formal process (Current 32-2)
- 32-2 Indictments (Current 31-4, 32-5, reference to 32-20)
- 32-3 Citations (Current 32-3, 32-4 in part)
- 32-4 Delivery of citations and indictments (Current 32-4 in part)
- 32-5 Refusal to obey citations (adaptation of current 32-6, 35-12; reference to 32-10)
- 32-6 Progress of a case (Current 32-14)
- 32-7 Prohibition against professional counsel (Current 32-19)
- 32-8 Judicial Committees (Current 32-11)
- 32-9 Minutes (Current 32-18)
- 32-10 Contumacy (adaptation of current 32-6 in part)
- 32-11 Meetings of the court (adapted from current 32-3, 32-20)
- 32-12 Pretrial matters (Current 32-10, with expansion)
- 32-13 Trial impartiality (expansion of current 32-13, 32-16, 35-13, based on *OMSJC* 2)
- 32-14 Offenses taking place at a distance (adapted from current 32-8, 32-9)
- 32-15 The trial (adapted from current 32-12, 32-15)

If all proposed changes are adopted, items that appear in multiple locations within the chapter—for example, citations or indictments, which appear both here in current *BCO* 32-3 and 32-5, as well as 31-3—would be collocated in the same section, or at least in adjacent sections. The resulting structure is in a natural flow regarding judicial process and provides a helpful outline within

the *BCO* itself for presbyters in conducting court cases (in addition to the helpful procedural checklists already provided elsewhere): Sections 1–10 explain the individual elements of judicial process (citations, indictments, representation, recordkeeping, contumacy, etc.), while Sections 11–15 delineate the formal meetings of the court from the first to the last culminating with the trial and decision itself.

## Chapter 35

- 35-1 Witness competency
- 35-2 Rights of the accused
- 35-3 Accommodations for witness testimony
- 35-4 Proving a charge
- 35-5 Judging credibility of evidence
- 35-6 Sequestration of witnesses
- 35-7 Examination of witnesses at trial
- 35-8 Witness oath
- 35-9 Recording of testimony and the Record of the Case
- 35-10 Admissibility of evidence from other courts
- 35-11 Admissibility of other evidence
- 35-12 Testimony taken at a distance
- 35-13 Right to request a new trial
- 35-14 Evidence offered during appeal

The bulk of the reorganization of *BCO* 35 occurred during the work of the Overture Committee to the 49<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, ratified at the 50<sup>th</sup>, wherein we significantly reworked the first five sections along the same lines as what has been proposed for *BCO* 31 and 32. The substantive changes in *BCO* 35 do no materially alter the topic of each section.

**Itemized Rationale.** The following brief description of each proposed change and the rationale for it is offered.

***Proposed BCO 31-1: Solemn Warning When Beginning Judicial Procedure.*** Moved from *BCO* 32-1 to the first chapter where most cases originate.

**Rationale:** Commenting on what today is our *BCO* 32-1 (in Ramsay it is §172), Ramsay offers this wisdom: “The trial proper begins with

the charge of the Moderator to the court (183), while the process begins with the determination of the court that there shall be a judicial prosecution, and judicial procedure begins with the determination of the court to investigate; but this principle, while especially imperative during the trial proper, applies throughout the whole judicial procedure, as indeed in all dealing with offenders.”

The warning to brothers about engaging in the restorative process of ecclesiastical discipline is certainly apropos both at the start of a trial, but even as much at the start of any judicial process; hence, it is proposed to be moved here. As such, the word “trial” is replaced by “church discipline.”

***Proposed BCO 31-2: Notification of Reports Against Christian Character.***

Requires Officers of the PCA to immediately forward any report received to the Stated Clerk of the court of original jurisdiction, who shall notify the accused within seven days. Also requires that coordinating agencies/entities (e.g., RUF, MTW, Presbytery, etc.) be notified when an allegation regarding the Christian character of an officer is submitted to the court of original jurisdiction.

**Rationale:** Reports often come at inopportune times. As such, notification of the report to the accused and the broader court of original jurisdiction can be significantly delayed, perhaps by months. This is unfair to all involved—the accusers, the accused, and the court. Timeliness is of significant importance in all judicial matters. In addition, as was proposed at the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, there needs to be some direction regarding reporting of allegations to agencies which are associated but do not have original jurisdiction, which is also answered in this proposal.

No language is here offered as to whether the initial report is to be shared with anyone, including the accused or any other agency/entity; that is to be determined by the body through its investigative and deliberative processes.

***Proposed BCO 31-3.*** Moves the consideration of accusers earlier in the chapter, from 31-8 to 31-3, as the consideration often begins upon receiving the initial report against a member.



***Proposed BCO 31-4 The Imperative Duties of an Investigation and Timeliness of Such.*** Clarifies that the duties of church courts to investigate all reports regarding the Christian character (alleged morality-related offenses) equally and sets a standard for timeliness to begin such an investigation.

**Rationale:** All reports against the Christian character of any individual under the care of our Church are equally important in the sight of God (1 Timothy 5:21). The justice of the Lord Jesus Christ and our responsibilities as His under-shepherds demand that regardless of who is aggrieved by the accusations, each court take its responsibility equally seriously. Likewise, the court should avoid the appearance of favoritism, and this phrase has been interpreted by some as “circling the wagons” to protect an accused person—who undoubtedly will argue he is aggrieved by any reports against him. Finally, the current language creates a potential subjective standard to be met by investigating bodies which may be used by an accused person as grounds for complaint and/or dismissal of a strong presumption of guilt.

These small changes remove the appearance of any favoritism in the process from a rules perspective and yet preserve the right of someone to ask themselves for an investigation because they are aggrieved by injurious reports against them.

Regarding timeliness, Overture 25 to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly attempted a similar change. The changes here propose that an investigation should *ordinarily* begin within 30 days of receipt of the report by the Clerk. This is a reasonable time frame; and “begin” simply means the court “taking up” or “considering” whether or not to pursue an investigation, along the lines of the requirement in *BCO* 43-2 regarding “consideration” of complaints, as it has discretion in this matter.

***Proposed BCO 31-5: Timely and Impartial Investigations.*** Investigations shall begin in a timely manner and shall be performed by individuals who meet a basic standard for impartiality, and allows for third-parties to be hired to aid in investigation. Also clarifies that the court should ordinarily involve female

advisors when considering allegations of a moral nature brought by female parishioners.

**Rationale:** *BCO* 11-3 teaches us “All Church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing only as the Constitution may provide.” Our high court has long had a well-defined standard for conduct of Commission members (*OMSJC* §2). The changes proposed here codifies a basic standard of impartiality in part from what is used by our high court. Since all courts are one in the same in nature and SJC members are chosen from said lower courts themselves, it is perfectly reasonable to assume that a basic standard for impartiality may reasonably be likewise expected of the lower courts.

Two other items here proposed including the allowance for outside third parties as well as the ordinary addition of female advisory members on the investigative body when there are accusations of personal sin against a woman—as is the case for the majority of “normal” investigation in the courts of the world—but stops short of being exclusively the only option, again, preserving the discretion of the court of original jurisdiction.

***Proposed BCO 31-6: Investigative Committee Findings and Documents.*** Clarifies that neither the accused nor court members at large have the right to investigative documents (witness testimony, evidence, etc.) and that the Investigative Report shall be distributed to all parties at the same time.

**Rationale:** Years and years of discussion on the Review of Presbytery Records as to what a “full and accurate record” (*BCO* 13-11) actually means when it comes to judicial process, but more specifically investigations and complaints, for which there is less definition and more flexibility in our current language. These proposed changes codify prior SJC rulings in specific cases, providing guidance to the lower courts who may not be familiar with them. As a matter of practice, nothing in this proposed language limits the ability of a court or its investigative body to engage in further follow-up conversations with individuals involved in an investigation after delivering their report.

Further, the proposed language does not infringe on the right of the accused or hinder him/her in making a sufficient defense. If the investigation results in a strong presumption of guilt, then the evidence collected by the investigative body will be passed along to the prosecutor, and from there the formal process will take over. The SJC explained this succinctly in its decision in Case 2021-06, p.7:

... the SJC does not agree with the Complainant that he would necessarily have the right to “the minutes and documents of the BCO 31-2 Committee.” An investigative committee might interview several people who may or may not have ended up being significant for determining whether there was a strong presumption of guilt in a certain matter. Likewise, a committee might collect a range of documents that are not germane to their investigation. Surely it would be inappropriate to disclose each witness, all testimony, and every document to an accused individual upon his request. Those witnesses, documents, and evidence that are germane to the charges and specifications will be made known in the indictment; at that point, the accused should have access to those materials to prepare a defense (BCO 32-4, 5, 8).

***Proposed BCO 31-7: Finding of a Strong Presumption of Guilt.*** This proposal retains the full language of the second paragraph of current BCO 31-2, and simply moves it to its own section, given the expansion of the earlier investigative procedures. This keeps it within the normal flow of the investigative process.

***Proposed BCO 31-8 through 31-12.*** These paragraphs represent a renumbering of current BCO 31-3 and 31-5 through 31-9, with no changes to text or order, respectively. Existing BCO 31-4 is proposed to be moved to BCO 32 in another overture, except for the last sentence, which is incorporated into proposed 31-8, where it fits contextually very well.

***Proposed BCO 31-13: Ordinary Automatic Administrative Leave in Reports Alleging a Serious Personal Offense or Public Scandal.*** This paragraph clarifies that certain kinds of reports received by courts should ordinarily result in a type of “Administrative Leave” during investigation in cases alleging serious immorality or public scandal, and clarifies what this leave may or may

not include, while still giving significant discretion to the court and seeking to protect an accused person's rights as a member of that court.

**Rationale:** Overture 8 to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly attempted to get at this outcome. This proposal does several things differently. First, it *ordinarily* places an accused person under suspension for serious morality-related allegations—what qualifies as “serious” is best determined by the court (no change is envisioned here regarding doctrinal reports; these too may still warrant a suspension of a Teaching Elder). The proposed language here specifically gives no examples of what might be serious, because each case is unique: a financial crime may be serious enough, for example. No position is taken with regard to pay, which is a matter to be decided by the various courts which may be involved.

This also further clarifies that during this leave the accused shall be allowed into any proceedings regarding his case, but he may, as part of his “administrative suspension” be disallowed from attendance and voting in other matters before the court. It has been observed by the SJC that Sessions have some discretion in disallowing certain members to attend given special circumstances (e.g., SJC Case 2011-11); and, if all courts are one in the same in nature (*BCO* 11-3), then such may be applied to other courts as well. To pick up on the same example from earlier, if a Teaching Elder was accused of embezzlement from his church, and he was also on an Admin or Finance committee, or even was Treasurer of the Presbytery, the court should be able to suspend him from those duties.

***Proposed BCO 31-14: Disallow the Accused from Voting in His Own Defense.*** This paragraph represents a renumbering of current *BCO* 31-11, with no changes to the text.

***Proposed BCO 31-15: Adoption of Closed Session for Judicial Matters.*** Establishes a *BCO*-wide provision for Closed Session (in which the SJC normally operates) and specifies that judicial process—including investigations—shall take place in Closed Session by default.

**Rationale:** Closed Session is the normal mode of operation for the Standing Judicial Commission. As such, it is a good model for lower

courts. Executive Session—solely a machination of *Robert’s Rules of Order (RONR)*—is often misunderstood by courts and court members, and has and does create a lot of confusion. Further, Executive Session itself creates practical issues, too, when, for example, a pastor is charged: can he not tell his Session? Can he not tell his congregation? Etc. Closed Session mitigates many of these issues. Nothing in the proposed language here prevents the entering into an Executive Session if the court deems it necessary. In either Closed or Executive sessions, it remains to the court to determine “who should be invited.” This also further specifies that all judicial matters normally operate this way, eliminating significant confusion with regard to *RONR* provisions on this matter.

***Proposed BCO 32-1: Initiation of Formal Process.*** Identifies how formal process begins and codifies previous SJC rulings (following Ramsay) that process begins when the court appoints a prosecutor, whether in the case of charges being filed directly, or upon finding a strong presumption of guilt after an investigation.

**Rationale:** There is some confusion among presbyters regarding when process “officially” begins. However, Ramsay is normally appealed to on this point, who explains that it begins when the prosecutor is appointed. This simply codifies that interpretation for clarity and directs that the court should ordinarily appoint a prosecutor without delay, as delays in such appointment can cause additional judicial problems.

***Proposed BCO 32-2: Indictments.*** Explains what an indictment is and its form and collocates all indictment references together from *BCO* 31 and 32.

**Rationale:** The first sentence is new, and simply explains the element itself. The remainder of this section is pulled verbatim from current *BCO* 31-4 and 32-5.

***Proposed BCO 32-3: Citations.*** Explains what a citation is and its form.

**Rationale:** Most of the changes to 32-3 consist in relocating the remainder of current *BCO* 32-3 to later in the chapter, to coincide with the new flow of the chapter. The first sentence also incorporates the

two elements from current *BCO 32-4* on who shall sign the citation and the fact that citations shall also be issued to trial witnesses.

***Proposed BCO 32-4: Delivery of Citations and Indictments.*** Explains the method of serving both indictments and citations and explains in what circumstances exclusively digital delivery is acceptable.

**Rationale:** The struck content was relocated into proposed *BCO 32-3*. The only new item here is clarification that exclusively electronic delivery is acceptable if the recipient acknowledges receipt. This may be worked out ahead of time by the parties and court, and follows the general practice where electronic items are counted as received on the day the clerk finds them in his email as long as a paper copy is likewise mailed—this simply makes the latter step of sending a paper copy unnecessary in most circumstances.

***Proposed BCO 32-5: Refusal to Obey Citations.*** Explains what the court is to do when a citation is ignored.

**Rationale:** This section represents a split of current *BCO 32-6* into two parts, this being the first, and the remainder appearing later in proposed *BCO 32-10*. The only substantive change here is the replacement of the word “accused” with “any person” which helpfully clarifies that contumacy may apply to anyone refusing to appear before a court with respect to judicial process, having been properly cited to do so.

***Proposed BCO 32-6: Progress of a Case.*** This is simply a renumbering of current *BCO 32-14*.

***Proposed BCO 32-7: Prohibition Against Professional Counsel.*** Defines professional representation during process, and specifies the requirements of such a representative for both parties.

**Rationale:** This came in its original form from two presbyteries to the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly but its genesis was the recent SJC trial. There were several deficiencies in the first iteration. Simply put, this current proposal codifies existing CCB interpretation and application of the

current language of *BCO* 32-19. The full language of the CCB's advice is quoted below from *M27GA*, p. 148:

## **V. ADVICE TO STATED CLERK**

### **SC Advice 1**

#### **Question**

“Does *BCO* 32-19 forbid parties in cases on appeal or complaints taken to a higher court to secure the professional services of attorneys (either members of the PCA or not members of the PCA) to prepare their appeal or complaint, prepare briefs, and handle correspondence and communications with an ecclesiastical court or its clerk.”

#### **Response**

Yes *BCO* 32-19 forbids professional counsel from formal involvement (that is, acting in an attorney/client relationship) in cases of process in the courts of the church. Parties in such cases may, of course, seek help anywhere they can find it, but the parties should not be “represented” by professional counsel “as such” in any case, including correspondence about the case.

Respectfully submitted,

/s/ Robert C Cannada, Jr., Chairman

/s/ Frank D. Moser, Secretary

*Received as information*

The deficiencies of the previous version (the prohibitions were considered by many to be too broad) have been removed, and the additions (counsel may continue throughout the duration of the case; representation at the Session level may be obtained through presbytery) were initially welcome from the previous iteration. This proposal strictly limits itself to codifying the longstanding (now 24 years) advice given to the Assembly on such matters.

Additionally, clarification is provided for assistants in proposed 32-7a, and the only provisions applying to them likewise apply to trial representatives: that they are members in good standing and they shall not be allowed to likewise vote in the judicial matters in which they are assisting.

The last sentence of current *BCO* 32-3 is incorporate herein since it applies to representation, following the rationale of collocating items together topically throughout this chapter.

***Proposed BCO 32-8: Judicial Committees.*** This is a renumbering of current *BCO* 32-11 with an update to the reference therein to the new appropriate provision of *BCO* 32.

***Proposed BCO 32-9: Minutes and Records.*** This is a renumbering of current *BCO* 32-18 with some added structure.

**Rationale:** The current 32-18 is composed of five separate paragraphs, and the new format will make individual items more easily referenceable in judicial decisions.

***Proposed BCO 32-10: Contumacy.*** Explains what contumacy is and who may be censured in that case.

**Rationale:** The first sentence attempts to explain at the most basic level what contumacy is, and then establishes some examples—without limiting contumacy to just those examples—via adaptation from the language currently in *BCO* 32-6 (refusing to appear, appearing and refusing to plead). The current language contains a provision “or otherwise refuse to cooperate with lawful proceedings” which is nebulous at best, and serves as a kind of catchall for any kind of contumacy within formal process. With this new sentence explaining what contumacy is, that “catchall” becomes unnecessary and thus is dropped.

The remainder of the added language is taken from current *BCO* 35-14, replacing “refusing to testify” with “found by the court to be noncompliant.”

***Proposed BCO 32-11: Meetings of the Court.*** Delineates the basic meetings of the court and what happens at each of those meetings.

**Rationale:** The first sentence is new and explanatory to describe the meetings of the court. The remainder of proposed *BCO* 32-11



including subparagraphs A and B is taken almost verbatim from current *BCO* 32-3. The only substantive change here is the replacing of “if he plead and take issue” with “if the accused does not confess” since neither the words “plea” nor “plead” are present anywhere else in the text.

This section is concluded with the exact language of current *BCO* 32-20, which explains how the accused might object to the consideration of a charge, which typically happens very early in the court’s process (though it may continue throughout if the question is undecided), here collocated with the early meetings of the court for clarity.

***Proposed BCO 32-12: Pretrial Matters.*** Explains that courts may provide additional trial rules not contained within the *BCO* (which gives minimal guidance) and requires that any such rules must be agreed to by both parties along the same timeline for the commencement of trial.

**Rationale:** This stipulation follows the same timeline for trials, so it introduces no essential delays in the process. It does codify the practice of some PCA courts in stipulating additional parameters for any specific proceeding—a flexibility that is allowed by the *BCO* in providing courts of original jurisdiction latitude to use their discretion in these matters. For example, a court may provide a rule that “heresay” will not ordinarily be allowed. There is no specific prohibition in the *BCO* against it, though it is generally frowned upon, and not considered nearly as weighty as original first-person evidence and testimony.

The result of the court implementing such parameters at the beginning will 1) serve to head off future appeals, the parties having agreed beforehand, and 2) set expectations for both parties as to what the court will be allowing or disallowing, whatever the case may be. The PCA does not have an extensive rulebook in this regard, so codifying the ability for courts and standing judicial bodies to do this is very helpful.

***Proposed BCO 32-13: Trial Impartiality and Requirements of Judges.*** Preserves the existing language, further establishes the requirements for impartiality in any trial, and consolidates current *BCO* 32-17 and 35-13 into this section.

**Rationale:** The only statements around impartiality at trial currently pertain to the examination of witnesses, the language of which is herein retained.

*BCO* 11-3 teaches us “All Church courts are one in nature, constituted of the same elements, possessed inherently of the same kinds of rights and powers, and differing only as the Constitution may provide.” Our high court has long had a well-defined standard for conduct of Commission members (*OMSJC* §2). The changes proposed here codifies a basic standard for competency, independence, and impartiality for judges in judicial cases, based in large part on what is used by our high court. Since all courts are one and the same in nature and SJC members are chosen from said lower courts themselves, it is perfectly reasonable to expect that these standards should be expected of judges in the lower courts as well.

Accordingly, language is herein adapted from *OMSJC* §2 in four paragraphs beginning with the end of the current language in *BCO* 32-13. These paragraphs attempt to offer the same standard of conduct for lower court judges as there is for those in higher courts. These provisions also coincide with the proposals for impartiality with regard to Investigations (proposed *BCO* 31-4 through 31-7).

The sixth paragraph represents an incorporation of current *BCO* 32-17, commonly referred to as the prohibition against “circularizing the court”—though this phraseology is often confusing to presbyters. This paragraph concludes with an adaptation from *OMSJC* §2 on when a member shall recuse himself.

This section concludes with the incorporation of current *BCO* 35-13 which also pertains to the disqualification of judges, and thus makes the most sense to be placed here in the revised structure of these chapters. No substantive changes are made.

***Proposed BCO 32-14: Offenses Taking Place at a Distance.*** This language represents a renumbering of current *BCO* 32-8 and 32-9, consolidating them into one section, both of which pertain to offenses occurring outside the court

of original jurisdiction, and offering a more pleasant formatting of the content therein.

***Proposed BCO 32-15: The Trial.*** Delineates the steps to be taken at the trial proper, which remain unaltered from this same section currently.

**Rationale:** Step 1 incorporates the current language of *BCO* 32-12 nearly exactly since it pertains to that same step. The only other alteration is a single additional phrase is added to Step 2 noting that the reading of the indictment may be waived by the court, having already been read to the accused at the second meeting of the court.

The remainder of the current *BCO* 32 (§16–20) have already been incorporated in the preceding proposals, and thus are stricken hereafter.

***Proposed BCO 35-4: Affirm that a Pattern of Offenses Satisfies Evidentiary Criteria.*** Clarifies, in accordance with historical Presbyterian interpretation, that multiple individual witnesses to a single general charge may be used to satisfy the requirements of “two or three witnesses” as a pattern of offense.

**Rationale:** It can be an issue as to whether each separate *act* requires two witnesses to be considered proven, even under the current provision which allows for one of those witnesses to be a piece of corroborating evidence. The additional language here clarifies that singular acts under the same general charge function to satisfy the charge, and the language is taken directly from the 1821 PCUSA *Book of Discipline*, VI.VI.

***Proposed BCO 35-5: Clarification Regarding Evidentiary Discovery.*** Clarifies that the court shall direct both parties to exchange all evidentiary materials and witnesses at least fourteen (14) days ahead of the scheduled commencement of the trial.

**Rationale:** This is a practice that has been in use by some courts in the PCA, and it appears to be a good practice which should be codified for all. Nothing in this proposal would preclude rebuttal evidence of any kind, which should be disclosed as soon as possible under this same principle. The court here has discretion to order discovery

exchange earlier, but it must do so at least two weeks beforehand, which corresponds to the 14-day provision of existing *BCO* 32-3 (proposed *BCO* 32-11) for the scheduling of such trial after the second meeting of the court.

***Proposed BCO 35-7: Prohibiting Blanket Character Attacks in the Name of Credibility.*** Specifies that while a party shall not be hindered from making his or her case, character attacks unrelated to the indictment or specific testimony by either party shall not be permitted by the court and directs the court how to proceed if it occurs.

**Rationale:** A party should be allowed to present its case—that is not in question. But what should not be allowed by any church court is attacks on the character of anyone testifying that are unrelated to their testimony or the issue at charge.

T. David Gordon’s entire article on this point is convincing, but here we shall only quote it in part (*M27GA*, p. 125):

**The Issue is the Law, not the Parties**

I suppose it should be evident to the reader that judges are responsible to rule and decide in terms of the law of the Church, not in terms of their perception of who are the “good guys” and/or the “bad guys.” Sadly, experience teaches that again, shepherds are fairly astute at identifying the deceitfulness of the human heart, but they are less astute at judging matters of law. Regrettably, those who sit in judgment often expect or even encourage arguments related to the moral character of the parties in question. Such comments are almost never proper or germane (and a judicious moderator of a trial will rule them out of order, and not permit them).

If the issue involved is an individual’s moral character, then, of course, some comments about moral character are germane. But even here, they are only germane in a relatively narrow arena. If an elder is on trial for adultery, it is irrelevant to ask whether he pays his taxes, gives money to the Church, etc. He is not on trial for these other matters; he is on trial for adultery. Similarly, if an individual complains against an action of one of the courts, the moral character of the complainant or of the

court in question is irrelevant. The only relevant question is whether the court erred in the specific way that it has been alleged to have erred. Neither party should be obliged to prove its moral standing in any complaint. Since no one is permitted to complain who is not a member in good standing of the Church (*BCO* 43-1), it must be assumed that the person filing the complaint is already deemed by the court to be in good standing. And, since the court itself is constituted by those who have been deemed wise and exemplary, its moral character similarly is not at issue. If good people break some specific law of the Church, the Church's courts must render a judgment of guilt; if bad people keep some specific law of the Church, the Church's courts must render a judgment of innocence.

This is what the Bible teaches when God is spoken of as no “respector of *persons*” (a wonderful translation of the more-contemporary “is not partial”). The point in these passages is that God's justice cannot be perverted by *personal* considerations. God is, in this sense, not a juror, but a judge. The issue for him is always whether his own inflexible, faultless *standard* has been violated or not; the issue is never whether other *personal* considerations can cause the demands of justice to be perverted. “For the LORD your God is God of gods and Lord of lords, the great God, mighty and awesome, who is not partial and takes no bribe, who executes justice for the orphan and the widow, and who loves the strangers, providing them food and clothing” (Deut.10:17-18). Thus, when we exercise justice impartially, we are imitating God. “You shall not render an unjust judgment; you shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great: with justice you shall judge your neighbor” (Lev. 19:15). “You must not be partial in judging: hear out the small and the great alike; you shall not be intimidated by anyone, for the judgment is God's.” (Deut. 1:17). Biblically, justice is administered only when there is an entire disregard for the *persons* involved; whether they be small or great, rich or poor, strangers or friends.

Ironically, then, what is often the *shepherd's* greatest strength (an ability to “size people up” in terms of their moral or spiritual condition) is the *judge's* greatest weakness. To be genuinely useful as an elder, one must wear two hats, and develop two sets of skills. To be a good shepherd of souls, one must develop good instincts, and one must cultivate empathy and sympathy; in short, one must be a “people person.” To be an administrator of justice, one must develop a capacity to put personal considerations aside, for the purposes of administering law impartially. Although this challenge may appear beyond the capacity of mere mortals, we must remember that though we are indeed mere creatures, we are creatures made in the image of our God, Who is Himself both a compassionate Shepherd and an impartial Judge.

Further, this proposal allows the court itself to enforce this provision, and does not rely solely on the ability of one party to recognize it in the heat of the moment. And it thus directs the court what to do with the Record of the Case when such an instance occurs.

***Proposed BCO 35-10 and 35-11: Clarification Regarding Evidentiary Admissibility.*** Clarifies which evidence shall be automatically admitted by the court.

**Rationale:** In the case of a complaint, typically both parties would stipulate evidence for automatic admittance to the Record of the Case, and the ROC is thus created by agreement. In cases of process, however, this process simply does not work: why would an accused person ever stipulate to a single piece of evidence? The burden lies squarely on the prosecution; the accused is innocent until proven guilty, and as such any man so accused is likely not to stipulate to any evidence.

According to the justice of the Lord Jesus, from whose sight nothing is hidden, evidence that is relevant on its face should be admitted automatically by the court when its authenticity is not in dispute.

This also provides a path for the admission of material such as police reports, medical records, etc. which today may require testimony to

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

admit into evidence. This can be an issue, as has been brought up multiple times in the last few years, because the author of such a report, for example, may not be determined to be competent to testify according to our rules in *BCO* 35-1. Were these provisions adopted, the court would automatically admit such records so long as their authenticity and relevance was not in dispute, which in the case of things such as police reports, medical records, etc., is relatively easy for the court to determine.

The proposed provisions here further codify that such evidence received as testimony during investigation—investigations themselves are official proceedings of the court—shall be automatically admissible where the authenticity of such is not in question.

These changes cumulatively will have the effect of working to ensure that all relevant evidence is considered by the court in its decision, while helping to protect witnesses from (perhaps multiple) unnecessary retellings of their stories diminishing the right of cross-examination by the opposing party.

***Proposed BCO 35-13 and 35-14: Deletions.*** The current language in *BCO* 35-13 and 35-14 is moved to other proposed sections in *BCO* 31 and *BCO* 32. The remaining section, *BCO* 35-16 is thus renumbered to 35-14.

*Adopted by the Session of Fountain Square Presbyterian Church on February 1, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ RE Dan Barber, Clerk of Session, Fountain Square Presbyterian Church.*

*Submitted to Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting on February 9, 2024. Rejected by Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting on February 9, 2024.*

*[The relevant extract of the Presbytery minutes has been provided to the Stated Clerk of the PCA according to RAO 11-10.]*

*Attested by /s/ TE Taylor Bradbury, Stated Clerk, Central Indiana Presbytery*

---

**OVERTURE 21** from Central Indiana Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Change the Prohibition Against ‘Interlocutory Appeal’ by Complaint in  
*BCO* 43-1”

---

**Resolved** that the *Book of Church Order (BCO)* 43 be amended as follows (deletions are denoted throughout by ~~strike throughs~~, additions are underlined):

“**43-1.** A complaint is a written representation made against some act or decision of a court of the Church. It is the right of any communing member of the Church in good standing to make complaint against any action of a court to whose jurisdiction he is subject, except that no complaint is allowable in a judicial case ~~in which an appeal is pending~~ after process has commenced. If a complaint is filed after process has commenced, adjudication shall be delayed until after the judicial case has been completed, or, if an appeal is filed, after it has been fully adjudicated or withdrawn.”

so that the final text would read:

“**43-1.** A complaint is a written representation made against some act or decision of a court of the Church. It is the right of any communing member of the Church in good standing to make complaint against any action of a court to whose jurisdiction he is subject, except that no complaint is allowable in a judicial case after process has commenced. If a complaint is filed after process has commenced, adjudication shall be delayed until after the judicial case has been completed, or, if an appeal is filed, after it has been fully adjudicated or withdrawn.”

## **RATIONALE**

The SJC noted in a recent decision that lack of clarity within the *BCO* can create “procedural confusion:”

... procedural confusion has come from allowing people to file *BCO* 43-1 complaints against some aspect of the judicial process *after* the court has found a strong presumption of guilt, and thus, after process has commenced. Allowing and adjudicating such pre-trial *BCO* 43-1 complaints could significantly delay a trial, especially if adjudication of each complaint needs to wait for the next meeting of presbytery, or



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

wait for an SJC decision. For example, an accused person might seek to file complaints against:

1. the investigative procedures (as in this Case)
2. the appointment of a particular prosecutor
3. the wording of the indictment
4. the appointment of a particular member of the trial commission
5. the date of the trial
6. any pre-trial rulings of the trial court (allowable defense counsel, witness citations, length of briefs, scheduled length of trial, length of closing arguments, etc.)

Allowing such pre-trial *BCO* 43-1 complaints could also ping-pong matters indefinitely. For example, an accused person might file a *BCO* 43-1 complaint against the appointment of a particular prosecutor. If Presbytery sustains it, then some other presbyter might file a *BCO* 43-1 complaint against that decision. And either of those complainants might take their complaint to the SJC. Theoretically, the matter might never get to trial if objections are handled as *BCO* 43-1 complaints rather than as objections the trial court addresses via *BCO* 32-14. (Case 2021-06, *M49GA*, p. 975).

This codifies this and previous SJC interpretations (Case 2013-03: Complaint of G. Rick Marshall vs. Pacific Presbytery. *M42GA*, p. 548); Case 2015-04: *Thompson v. S. FL.*, *M44GA*, p. 515) that there is no provision for “appeal by complaint” when a case is actively being adjudicated. This proposal adopts a version of the recommendation from a concurring opinion in SJC Case 2021-06 on this matter.

*Adopted by Central Indiana Presbytery on February 9, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ TE Taylor Bradbury, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 22** from the South Florida Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 13-2 to clarify Teaching Elder Presbytery Membership”

---

**Whereas**, *BCO* 8-7 and 13-2 both speak to the location where a Teaching Elder’s presbytery membership should be held; and

**Whereas**, *BCO* 8-7 and 13-2 can be read as inconsistent with each other. *BCO* 8-7 requires a TE’s membership to be held in the presbytery “within whose bounds he *labors*” but *BCO* 13-2 says that his membership is to be held within the “geographical bounds he *resides*”; and

**Whereas**, it is possible to reside in the geographical bounds of one presbytery, but labor in the geographical bounds of a neighboring presbytery; and

**Whereas**, the following sentence of *BCO* 13-2 confirms the intention that a TE be a member of the presbytery where he labors when it says, “When a minister *labors* outside the geographical bounds....”; and

**Whereas**, it is proper and expedient for a presbytery to have jurisdiction over the TEs who labor within its geographical bounds (see Morton Smith, *Commentary on the Book of Church Order*, 142).

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the South Florida Presbytery hereby overtures the 51st General Assembly to amend *BCO* 13-2 as follows (underlining for additions, ~~striketrough~~ for deletions):

13-2. A minister shall be required to hold his membership in the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he ~~resides~~ labors, unless there are reasons which are satisfactory to his Presbytery why he should not do so. When a minister labors outside the geographical bounds of, or in a work not under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery, at home or abroad, it shall be only with the full concurrence of and under circumstances agreeable to his Presbytery, and to the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he labors, if one exists. When a minister shall continue on the rolls of his Presbytery without a call to a particular work for a prolonged period, not exceeding three years, the procedure as set forth in *BCO* 34-10 shall be followed. A minister without call shall make or file a report to his Presbytery at least once each year.

So that the amended section will read as follows:

13-2. A minister shall be required to hold his membership in the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he labors, unless there are reasons which are satisfactory to his Presbytery why he should not do so. When a minister labors outside the geographical bounds of, or in a work not under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery, at home or abroad, it shall be only with the full concurrence of and under circumstances agreeable to his Presbytery, and to the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he labors, if one exists. When a minister shall continue on the rolls of his Presbytery without a call to a particular work for a prolonged period, not exceeding three years, the procedure as set forth in *BCO* 34-10 shall be followed. A minister without call shall make or file a report to his Presbytery at least once each year.

*Adopted by South Florida Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 13, 2024.  
Attested by /s/ TE Robbie Crouse, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 23** from Missouri Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”

---

[Editorial note: This overture is similar to Overtures 6, 16, 17, and 24.]

**Whereas** the qualifications for elders and deacons includes being “above reproach” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:7), “self-controlled” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:8), “not violent but gentle” (1 Tim. 3:3), “not...quick-tempered” (Titus 1:7), and “proven blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10); and

**Whereas** the qualification of every believer is to “keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable” (1 Pet. 2:12); and

**Whereas** our confession warns leaders against the “careless exposing, or leaving [those in their care] to wrong, temptation, and danger” (*WLC* 130); and

**Whereas** the *Book of Church Order* states that church courts perform “a careful examination” including “personal character” (21-4.c; 24-1.a) and “Christian experience” (13-6); and

**Whereas** the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault to the Forty-ninth General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (the “DASA Report”) says, “Churches protect their members with policies that take into consideration the most vulnerable in the congregation” by, at a minimum, “Presbyteries enacting policies to *require background checks* and abuse training for all ordinands and transfers, and policies to protect whistleblowers against retribution” (emphasis added, DASA Report, *M49GA*, p. 949); and

**Whereas** the 42nd General Assembly resolved that churches prevent types of abuse “by screening staff and volunteers” (Overture 6, *M42 GA*, p. 59.); and

**Whereas** the 42nd General Assembly resolved that churches “must cooperate with those authorities as they ‘bear the sword’ to punish those who do evil ‘in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered ... to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever’ (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; *WCF* 23.3)”;

**Therefore, be it resolved** that *BCO* 13-6 be amended by adding language as follows (underlining for additions, ~~strike through~~ for deletions):

**13-6.** When a minister is ~~Ministers~~ seeking admission to a Presbytery from another Presbytery ~~other Presbyteries~~ in the Presbyterian Church in America, or from another denomination, the receiving Presbytery shall cause a state and federal level fingerprint-based background check to be performed on the minister. The results of the background check shall be shared with the members of the receiving Presbytery, with the members of the dismissing Presbytery, and with the calling church or other organization that is calling the minister. He shall be examined on Christian experience, and also touching his ~~their~~ views in theology, the Sacraments, and church

government. If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4 and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4. Presbyteries shall also...

**Therefore, be it further resolved** that *BCO* 21 be amended by adding a new 21-4.b, and renumbering the succeeding paragraphs (underlining for additions):

**21-4. b.** Prior to ordination, the examining Presbytery shall cause a state and federal level fingerprint-based background check to be performed on each candidate. The results of the background check shall be shared with the Presbytery and with the calling church. The fee for the background check shall be paid for by the calling church or organization, or in the case of the ordinand being an evangelist, the Presbytery shall pay the fee.

**Therefore, be it further resolved** that *BCO* 24-1 be amended by adding language as follows (underlining for additions):

**24-1.** ...set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Session shall cause a state and federal level fingerprint-based background check to be performed on each candidate eligible for election. The cost shall be covered by the nominee's church. The results of the background check may be shared with the congregation if deemed prudent by the Session. Nominees for the office of ruling elder and/or deacon shall receive instruction...

So that the amended paragraphs will read as follows:

**13-6.** When a minister is seeking admission to a Presbytery from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America, or from another denomination, the

receiving Presbytery shall cause a state and federal level fingerprint-based background check to be performed on the minister. The results of the background check shall be shared with the members of the receiving Presbytery, with the members of the dismissing Presbytery, and with the calling church or other organization that is calling the minister. He shall be examined on Christian experience, and also touching his views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4 and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. Ordained ministers from other denominations may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4. Presbyteries shall also require ordained ministers coming from other denominations to state the specific instances in which they may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4 (see *BCO* 21-4.e,f).

**21-4.b.** Prior to ordination, the examining Presbytery shall cause a state and federal level fingerprint-based background check to be performed on each candidate. The cost shall be covered by the nominee's church. The results of the background check shall be shared with the Presbytery and with the calling church. The fee for the background check shall be paid for by the calling church or organization, or in the case of the ordinand being an evangelist, the Presbytery shall pay the fee.

**24-1.** Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and deacon in the following manner: At such times as determined by the Session, communicant members of the congregation may submit names to the Session, keeping in mind that each prospective officer should be an active male member who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. The Session shall cause a state and federal level fingerprint-based background check to be performed on each candidate eligible for election. The results of the background

check may be shared with the congregation if deemed prudent by the Session. Nominees for the office of ruling elder and/or deacon shall receive instruction in the qualifications and work of the office. Each nominee shall be examined in:

*Adopted by Missouri Presbytery at its special meeting of February 27, 2024.  
Attested by RE Robert Wilkinson, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 24** from the Presbytery of South Texas (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office”

---

[Editorial Note: This overture is similar to Overtures 6, 16, 17, and 23.]

**Whereas**, the qualifications for elders and deacons include being “above reproach” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:7), “self-controlled” (1 Tim. 3:2 and Titus 1:8), “not violent but gentle” (1 Tim. 3:3), “not ... quick-tempered” (Titus 1:7), and “prove themselves blameless” (1 Tim. 3:10); and

**Whereas**, the qualifications for elders include being “well thought of by outsiders” (1 Tim. 3:7); and

**Whereas**, the qualification of every believer is to “keep your conduct among the Gentiles honorable” (1 Pet. 2:12); and

**Whereas**, our confession warns leaders against the “careless exposing, or leaving [those in their care] to wrong, temptation, and danger” (*WLC* 130); and

**Whereas**, under the *Book of Church Order* church courts are to perform “a careful examination” of church officers including as to their “personal character” (21-4.c; 24-1.a) and “Christian experience” (13-6); and

**Whereas**, the report of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault to the 49th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America (the “DASA Report”) implores that “Churches protect their members with policies that take into consideration the

most vulnerable in the congregation,” including “Presbyteries enacting policies to require background checks and abuse training for all ordinands and transfers, and policies to protect whistleblowers against retribution” (*M49GA* [2022], 965, 965 n.11) (See attachment for possible examples of such policies); and

**Whereas**, the DASA Report further recommends, “Candidates for the gospel ministry and others employed for spiritual oversight (Sunday school teachers, youth leaders, etc.) should be examined carefully to determine their godly character. Presbyteries and Sessions are encouraged to carefully investigate a candidate for leadership roles including but not limited to the candidate’s knowledge of theology. *Background checks*, social media checks, and careful reference checks should be used to screen for abusive leadership” (*ibid.*, 1183); and

**Whereas**, the 42nd General Assembly resolved that churches prevent types of abuse “by screening staff and volunteers” (*M42GA* [2014], 59); and

**Whereas**, the 42nd General Assembly resolved that churches “must cooperate with those authorities as they ‘bear the sword’ to punish those who do evil ‘in such an effectual manner as that no person be suffered ... to offer any indignity, violence, abuse, or injury to any other person whatsoever” (Romans 13:1-7; 1 Peter 2:13-14; *WCF* 23.3)” (*ibid.*); and

**Whereas**, our confession’s instruction that “there are some circumstances concerning ... government of the Church, common to human actions and societies, which are to be ordered by the light of nature and Christian prudence” (*WCF* 1.6) includes the wisdom and prudence of background checks; and

**Whereas**, our confession does not require submission to unlawful or unbiblical standards (*WCF* 23.4) nor thereby require the government’s involvement in the business of the church (*WCF* 23.3); and

**Whereas**, presbyteries and sessions of the PCA are called to order and conduct all trials and examinations of candidates for church office utilizing their own discretion and wisdom due to the authority and right of their office (*BCO* 13, 21, and 24);



**Therefore, be it resolved** that *BCO* 13-6 be amended by adding a final unnumbered paragraph to the end of the subsection:

**13-6. . . .**

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of the candidate's Christian experience (if seeking admission from another Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church in America) or acquaintance with experiential religion (if seeking admission from other denominations [see *BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(a)]). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that *BCO* 21-4.c.(1) be amended by adding a final unnumbered paragraph at the end of the subsection:

**21-4.c.(1) . . .**

A Presbytery shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Presbytery, as part of its examination of a candidate's experiential religion (*BCO* 21-4.c.(1)(a)). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that *BCO* 24-1 be amended by inserting a second unnumbered paragraph immediately after subsection “e” and before the unnumbered paragraph that begins, “Notwithstanding the above . . .”:

**24-1.e. . . .**

A Session shall order and review a background check on each candidate, administered under the specific rules and policies of the Session, as part of its examination of a candidate's Christian experience (*BCO* 24-1.a). The candidate shall be permitted to address the content of the background check.

**Be it further resolved** that Presbyteries and Sessions are hereby encouraged to adopt policies for conducting mandatory background checks on every candidate for office.

*Adopted by South Texas Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 28, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ RE Barry McBee, stated clerk*

## **Attachment**

### **Sample Policies for Presbyteries and Sessions**

The following is an example of a policy that could be adopted or amended by a Presbytery to adhere with local laws and regulations:

Prior to any candidate coming before the Presbytery for examination for ordination or transfer of credentials, the [insert committee name] Committee shall order a background check on the candidate ordinarily at the cost of the Presbytery. The report of the background check shall only be received by the Committee in executive session. The candidate shall be furnished with a copy of the background check and given the opportunity to respond to any content in the background check. The Committee shall report to the Presbytery (1) that it has received the report of the background check, and no concerns were raised; (2) that it has received the report of the background check, and potential concerns were satisfactorily explained by the candidate without reflecting negatively on his *BCO* 13-6 or 21-4.c.(1)(a) examination; or (3) that it has received the report of the background check, and potential concerns should be weighed by the Presbytery in the candidate's *BCO* 13-6 or 21-4.c.(1)(a) examination. Any details of possible concerns found in the background check may be disclosed only to the Presbytery and/or the Session of the church calling the candidate when in executive session. Such details may be disclosed outside the Committee only at the Committee's discretion or upon the request of the Presbytery or Session properly seeking the information.

The following is an example of a policy that could be adopted by a Session:

Prior to any candidate coming before the Session for examination for the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon, the Session shall order a background check on the candidate at the cost of the Session. The report of the background check shall only be received by the Session in executive session. The candidate shall be furnished with a copy of the background check and given the opportunity to respond to any

content in the background check. Information learned should ordinarily only be considered as part of the Session's examination of the candidate's personal character under *BCO* 24-1.a and should not ordinarily be disclosed to the congregation.

---

**OVERTURE 25** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
"Amend *BCO* 31-2 to Expand Who May Assist in an Investigation"

---

**Be it resolved:** That *BCO* 31-2 be amended by the addition of a sentence as follows (new language indicated by underlining):

31-2. It is the duty of all church Sessions and Presbyteries to exercise care over those subject to their authority. They shall with due diligence and great discretion demand from such persons satisfactory explanations concerning reports affecting their Christian character. This duty is more imperative when those who deem themselves aggrieved by injurious reports shall ask an investigation. As circumstances warrant, Sessions and Presbyteries are encouraged to consider utilizing the assistance of experienced or specially qualified outside parties or consultants in investigations in which such assistance could inform the investigative conclusions.

If such investigation, however originating, should result in raising a strong presumption of the guilt of the party involved, the court shall institute process, and shall appoint a prosecutor to prepare the indictment and to conduct the case. This prosecutor shall be a member of the court, except that in a case before the Session, he may be any communing member of the same congregation with the accused.

**Rationale**

There are differing opinions as to whether the *BCO* requires Sessions and Presbyteries alone to conduct 31-2 investigations. This amendment is intended to clarify that a Session or Presbytery has the option of using resources outside the Session or Presbytery in an investigation if it deems it expedient.

Examples of when such an assistance would be helpful include: one Presbytery used a forensic accountant to review evidence and prepare a report on allegations that a minister was culpable in an Amazon return/church reimbursement scheme; when an abuse allegation involves a minor and specialized training in interviewing a minor victim is needed; when a member of a Session or Presbytery is the subject of an investigation and the Session or Presbytery wishes to ensure impartiality in its investigation.

*Adopted by Tennessee Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 10, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ TE Chris Powell, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 26** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 32-19 To Expand Representation of Accused Persons  
 Before Church Courts”

---

**Whereas**, the exercise of discipline is highly important and necessary, and in its proper usage discipline maintains the glory of God, the purity of His Church, the keeping and reclaiming of disobedient sinners (*BCO* 27-3), and

**Whereas**, the ends of discipline, so far as it involves judicial action, are the rebuke of offenses, the removal of scandal, the vindication of the honor of Christ, the promotion of the purity and general edification of the Church, and the spiritual good of offenders themselves (*BCO* 27-3), and

**Whereas**, the power which Christ has given the Church (including the exercise of church discipline) is for building up, and not for destruction, is to be exercised as under a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath (*BCO* 27-4), and

**Whereas**, our robust, biblical processes of church discipline are necessarily unique, sometimes complicated, and foreign to the normal life experience of church members in particular, and

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Whereas**, the current rules for representation limit counsel for church members to members of their local congregation, which may be very small and may not include members well-versed in our polity (e.g., a church plant), and

**Whereas**, elsewhere in the Rules of Discipline (43-5) broader provisions for representation already exist for a complainant, who “may obtain the assistance of a communing member of the Presbyterian Church in America, who is in good standing, in presenting his complaint,” and

**Whereas**, in a small church or Presbytery it may be difficult to secure members to serve as counsel who are disinterested or unconnected to a case, and

**Whereas**, a defendant who is young, female, or a newly received church member may find appearing unrepresented before our church courts daunting and insurmountably difficult, and

**Whereas**, persons involved in cases connected with abuse stand in particular need of assistance and support, and

**Whereas**, no member of a church or court should be frustrated, disadvantaged, or dissuaded from appearing in a discipline case because of the difficulties outlined above;

**Therefore**, be it resolved that *BCO* 32-19 be amended as follows:

No professional counsel shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court; but an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented before ~~the Session~~ any court by a communing member ~~of the same particular church, or before any other court, by any member of that court~~ in good standing of a PCA church or any member in good standing of a PCA court. A member of the court so employed shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case.

So that the amended section would read:

32-19. No professional counsel shall be permitted as such to appear and plead in cases of process in any court; but an accused person may, if he desires it, be represented before any court by a communing member in good standing of a PCA church or any member in good standing of a PCA court. A member of the court so employed shall not be allowed to sit in judgment in the case.

*Adopted by Tennessee Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, February 10, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ TE Chris Powell, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 27** from Potomac Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend *BCO* 13-6 to Add Personal Character and Family Management  
to the Examination of Transferring Ministers”

---

**Whereas**, it is common for personal moral issues to crop up after ordination,  
and

**Whereas**, many ministers have gone through significant family changes  
between callings (e.g..single to married, or childless to father), and

**Whereas**, in 13-6 the *BCO* now requires presbyteries only to examine transfers  
from other presbyteries with regard to their Christian experience and  
their views,

**Therefore, be it resolved** that the first sentence of *BCO* 13-6 be changed to  
read:

Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery from other  
Presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be  
examined on Christian experience (including personal  
character and family management), and also touching their  
views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government.

So that all of *BCO* 13-6 would read:

**13-6.** Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery from other Presbyteries in the Presbyterian Church in America shall be examined on Christian experience (including personal character and family management), and also touching their views in theology, the Sacraments, and church government. If applicants come from other denominations, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4 and require them to answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination. Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO* 21-4. Presbyteries shall also require ordained ministers coming from other denominations to state the specific instances in which they may differ with the *Confession of Faith* and *Catechisms* in any of their statements and/or propositions, which differences the court shall judge in accordance with *BCO* 21-4 (see *BCO* 21-4.e,f).

*Adopted by the Potomac Presbytery at its stated meeting, March 16, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ TE Joel St. Clair, Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 28** from New Jersey Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1. to Eliminate Conflict with *BCO* 40-5”

---

**Whereas** *BCO* 40-5 sets-forth the process by which the General Assembly is to address a report of “any *important delinquency* or grossly unconstitutional proceedings” of a Presbytery (emphasis added); and

**Whereas** *BCO* 40-5, together with *BCO* 15-4 and *RAO* 17-2, mandates that the “first step” the General Assembly take upon receiving and finding such a report credible is to cite the Presbytery to appear in a judicial proceeding; and

**Whereas**, it is the right and duty of the General Assembly to review, at least once a year, the records of the presbyteries of the Presbyterian Church in America (*BCO* 40-1); and

**Whereas** the General Assembly carries out this review through its Committee on Review of Presbytery Records (CRPR); and

**Whereas** *RAO* 16 governs the Committee’s examination of presbytery records, and specifies that the Committee shall note its finding with respect to Presbytery minutes under the categories of exceptions of substance, exceptions of form, and notations, as appropriate; and

**Whereas** *RAO* 16-6.c.1 specifies that exceptions of substance are defined to include “matters of impropriety and *important delinquencies*” (emphasis added); and

**Whereas** *RAO* 16-10.b. specifies that Presbyteries are to respond to the subsequent General Assembly with respect to exceptions of substance; and

**Whereas**, *RAO* 16-10.c. specifies the process by which the subsequent General Assembly may cite a Presbytery with a continuing exception of substance to appear before the SJC for proceedings according to *BCO* 40-5; and

**Whereas** *RAO* 16-6.c.1. and *RAO* 16-10.c. appear to be in conflict with *BCO* 40-5 with respect to how important delinquencies are handled, the former specifying a prolonged and voluntary process of citation under 40-5, the latter specifying immediate and mandatory citation; and

**Therefore be it resolved**, that the 51st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1 such that the paragraph would read, if adopted (striketrough for deletions, underline for additions):

- 1) Exceptions of substance: Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and ~~important~~ substantive delinquencies, and any non-compliance with *RAO* 16-3.e.5. should be reported under this category.

*Adopted by New Jersey Presbytery at its stated meeting, March 16, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ RE Richard Springer, stated clerk*



---

**OVERTURE 29** from the Session of Bryce Avenue (to CCB, OC)  
Presbyterian Church, White Rock, New Mexico  
“Amend *BCO* 53 by Addition to Ensure Only Men Preach”

---

[Note: This overture was adopted by the Session of Bryce Avenue Presbyterian Church, White Rock, New Mexico; submitted to the Rio Grande Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 22, 2024; and rejected by the Presbytery at that meeting (*RAO* 11-10).]

**Whereas**, preaching involves the explanation, defense, and application of Scripture (*BCO* 53-2); and

**Whereas**, Scripture prohibits women from preaching sermons to men (1 Timothy 2:11-12); and

**Whereas**, the *Book of Church Order* applies 1 Timothy 2:11-12 so as to prohibit women from preaching in a church’s worship service (*BCO* 12-5(e)); and

**Whereas**, preaching is an element of a stated worship service (*BCO* 47-9); and

**Whereas**, colleges and seminaries, including Covenant College and Covenant Seminary, hold stated chapel services that involve preaching (*BCO* 53-2); and

**Whereas**, campus ministries, including Reformed University Fellowship, hold stated services that involve preaching (*BCO* 53-2); and

**Whereas**, Scripture’s teaching—whether “expressly set down” or deduced “by good and necessary consequence”—must guide and regulate stated services that include preaching, even those services taking place outside of the local church (*WCF* 1.6); and

**Whereas**, the Presbyterian Church in America would benefit from clarity as to whether women may preach sermons to men in a college/seminary stated chapel service and a campus ministry stated service;

**Therefore, be it resolved** to amend *BCO* 53 by adding a new paragraph, bearing full constitutional authority, which reads as follows:

**BCO 53-7.** No woman is permitted to preach a sermon to men, whether that be in a church’s worship service, a college/seminary stated chapel service, or a campus ministry stated service (1 Timothy 2:11-12; BCO 53-2; cf. BCO 12-5.e).

*Adopted by the Session of Bryce Avenue Presbyterian Church, White Rock, New Mexico, at its stated meeting, December 20, 2023.*

*Submitted by the Session of Bryce Avenue Presbyterian Church, White Rock, New Mexico, to Rio Grande Presbytery through a registered commissioner at its stated meeting, January 22, 2024.*

*Rejected by Rio Grande Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 22, 2024 (RAO 11-10).*

*Attested by TE Dustin Hunt, stated clerk, Rio Grande Presbytery.*

*Approved for submission to the Presbyterian Church in America’s 51st General Assembly by the Session of Bryce Avenue Presbyterian Church in White Rock, New Mexico, at its stated meeting on March 20, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ RE David Forslund, Clerk of Session.*

---

**OVERTURE 30** from Lowcountry Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
“Amend BCO 23-1 To Require that the Presbytery of Jurisdiction Conduct an Exit Interview Prior to Dissolution of Call”

---

**Whereas**, the Presbyterian ecclesiastical system provides beneficial oversight, accountability, and protection in the relationship between churches and ministers; and

**Whereas**, such a system requires transparency and participation on the part of both the church and its ministers; and

**Whereas**, PCA BCO 23-1 states that the “...Presbytery needs to determine if the dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the senior pastor was brought about in Christian love and good order on the part of the parties concerned,” but this pertains only to the narrow situation of a senior pastor and provides no mechanism for explaining how the Presbytery is to do this; and

**Whereas**, some PCA churches use non-disclosure and non-disparagement agreements when dissolving a pastoral call with the effect of avoiding the oversight required by *BCO* 23-1; and

**Whereas**, due to such agreements, in some cases ministers may be unwilling to speak with the Presbytery concerning the reason for their dissolution of call, thereby functioning to both conceal and perpetuate unhealthy church situations; and

**Whereas**, the “Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Domestic Abuse and Sexual Assault,” in “Section Six: The Misuse of Spiritual Authority” warns multiple times (p. 2441, line 13; p. 2443, line 41) of non-disclosure agreements as a form of spiritual abuse; and

**Whereas**, the glory of Christ, the peace and purity of the church, and the well-being of her undershepherds, warrant better care and greater transparency for both the teaching elder and the congregation;

**Therefore, be it resolved** that *Book of Church Order* 23-1 be amended by the lettering of its paragraphs (23-1.a, b, and c), the rewording of its second paragraph (23-1 [b]), and the addition of a fourth section (23-1.d). (Additions underlined, deletions ~~struck through~~):

**23-1**

- a.** When any minister shall tender the resignation of his pastoral charge to his Presbytery, the Presbytery shall cite the church to appear by its commissioners, to show cause why the Presbytery should or should not accept the resignation. If the church fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining its pastor be deemed insufficient, his resignation shall be accepted and the pastoral relation dissolved. If any church desires to be relieved of its pastor, a similar procedure shall be observed.
- b.** ~~But~~ Whether the minister or the church initiates proceedings for a dissolution of the relation, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation called and conducted in the same manner as the call of the pastor. In any case, the minister must not physically leave the field until ~~the Presbytery or its commission empowered to~~

~~handle uncontested requests for dissolution has dissolved the pastoral relationship has been dissolved.~~

- c. The associate or assistant pastors may continue to serve a congregation when the pastoral relation of the senior pastor is dissolved, but they may not normally succeed the senior pastor without an intervening term of service in a different field of labor. However, a congregation by a secret ballot with four-fifths (4/5) majority vote may petition Presbytery for an exception which by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote Presbytery may grant. Presbytery needs to determine if the dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the senior pastor was brought about in Christian love and good order on the part of the parties concerned.

- d. Before any pastoral call may be dissolved by the Presbytery, the teaching elder whose call is in question shall participate in an exit interview conducted by the Presbytery or a committee thereof. This interview shall address the circumstances of the departure, the spiritual and emotional health of the teaching elder and his family, and any concerns for the health of the church from which the minister is departing. Furthermore, no church may hinder any teaching elder from speaking freely and openly with the appointed representatives of the Presbytery. No Presbytery shall omit this interview except in extraordinary cases, and then only with two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Presbytery, and it shall always make a record of the reasons for its omission.

Should this exit interview reveal an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding by, or raise concerns of moral failing among the church or session, the Presbytery shall address this revelation or concern through General Review and Control (BCO 40). Should the exit interview reveal potential offense(s) by the departing minister, the Presbytery shall deal with him according to the applicable Rules of Discipline (BCO 31-35), and may retain him on the rolls while any potential

offense is investigated and any process deemed necessary is completed (BCO 38-3.a).

**So that the amended section 23-1 will read as follows:**

**23-1.**

- a. When any minister shall tender the resignation of his pastoral charge to his Presbytery, the Presbytery shall cite the church to appear by its commissioners, to show cause why the Presbytery should or should not accept the resignation. If the church fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining its pastor be deemed insufficient, his resignation shall be accepted and the pastoral relation dissolved. If any church desires to be relieved of its pastor, a similar procedure shall be observed.
- b. Whether the minister or the church initiates proceedings for a dissolution of the relation, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation called and conducted in the same manner as the call of the pastor. In any case, the minister must not physically leave the field until the pastoral relationship has been dissolved.
- c. The associate or assistant pastors may continue to serve a congregation when the pastoral relation of the senior pastor is dissolved, but they may not normally succeed the senior pastor without an intervening term of service in a different field of labor. However, a congregation by a secret ballot with four-fifths (4/5) majority vote may petition Presbytery for an exception which by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote Presbytery may grant. Presbytery needs to determine if the dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the senior pastor was brought about in Christian love and good order on the part of the parties concerned.
- d. Before any pastoral call may be dissolved by the Presbytery, the teaching elder whose call is in question shall participate in an exit interview conducted by the Presbytery or a committee thereof. This interview shall address the circumstances of the departure, the spiritual

and emotional health of the teaching elder and his family, and any concerns for the health of the church from which the minister is departing. Furthermore, no church may hinder any teaching elder from speaking freely and openly with the appointed representatives of the Presbytery. No Presbytery shall omit this interview except in extraordinary cases, and then only with two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Presbytery, and it shall always make a record of the reasons for its omission.

Should this exit interview reveal an important delinquency or grossly unconstitutional proceeding by, or raise concerns of moral failing among the church or session, the Presbytery shall address this revelation or concern through General Review and Control (BCO 40). Should the exit interview reveal potential offense(s) by the departing minister, the Presbytery shall deal with him according to the applicable Rules of Discipline (BCO 31-35), and may retain him on the rolls while any potential offense is investigated and any process deemed necessary is completed (BCO 38-3.a).

*Adopted unanimously by Lowcountry Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 27, 2024, and unanimously amended and adopted at a called meeting, March 25, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ RE David Walters, stated clerk.*

---

<b>OVERTURE 31</b> from the New River Presbytery	(to CCB, OC, AC, CC,
“Amend <i>BCO</i> 14-1 Regarding Changes in	CDM, CTS, GEN, MNA,
Permanent Committee and Agency Policy”	MTW, PCAF, RH, RUF)

---

**Whereas**, *BCO* 14-1.7 states, “The Assembly’s committees are to serve and not to direct any Church judicatories. They are not to establish policy, but rather execute policy established by the General Assembly”; and

**Whereas**, the interpretation of the current wording of *BCO* 14-1.7 is disputed regarding the authority of permanent committees and agencies<sup>1</sup> to

---

<sup>1</sup> The *BCO* does not capitalize “committee” or “agency.” In contrast, the *RAO* capitalizes both. The *BCO* convention is used here.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

establish operational policies, as evidenced by lengthy floor debates at recent General Assembly meetings, such as the debate over Reformed University Fellowship's (RUF) new Affiliation Agreement at the 50th General Assembly in 2023, and the debate about the Mission to the World (MTW) Manual at the 48th General Assembly in 2021; and

**Whereas**, the General Assembly, due to its limited time, cannot feasibly review every minor change to a permanent committee's financial, operational, and personnel policies, such as per diem reimbursements for travel, which would be better addressed by the permanent committees themselves; and

**Whereas**, the use of the singular "policy" as opposed to "policies" suggests that it is not the intention of *BCO* 14-1.7 for the General Assembly to determine every operational policy, but rather to set the general mission of the committees and agencies; and

**Whereas**, the composition of permanent committees is already determined by the General Assembly through the Nominating Committee and the floor vote, ensuring that these committees are representative of the General Assembly; and

**Whereas**, the General Assembly effectively exercises review and control of the committees and agencies through the committees of commissioners, which have the responsibility to review the minutes, reports, and recommendations of the permanent committees and agencies; and

**Whereas**, in the case that a permanent committee or agency attempts to implement a policy that is grossly unconstitutional or out of accord with the teachings of the Presbyterian Church in America, the General Assembly can be notified of such actions through the committee of commissioners' reports and recommendations and can act on such a report (see *RAO* 14-1, 14-3, and especially 14-11); and

**Whereas**, the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly added section 4 to *RAO* 4-21.d, which reads: "A recording of information sufficient to demonstrate the Committee's or Board's implementation of instructions received from

General Assembly and of material policies and material policy changes adopted by the Committee or Board in that year”; and

**Whereas**, this addition suggests that the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly interpreted *BCO* 14 such that Committees and Boards *may* create and make changes to their policy, including “material” (i.e., “important; essential; relevant”) policies and policy changes, and that only changes that are “material” are necessary to record in their minutes; and

**Whereas**, the General Assembly wishes to maintain its ability to direct the mission of the permanent committees and agencies; and

**Whereas**, it is necessary to clarify the authority of permanent committees and agencies to create and execute operational, financial, and personnel policies while preserving the General Assembly's oversight of these committees and agencies; and

**Whereas**, it is desirable to establish a clear framework for the General Assembly's review and control of permanent committees and agencies without hindering their ability to carry out day-to-day operations and decisions; and

**Whereas**, the proposed changes aim to provide clarity, efficiency, and accountability in the functioning of permanent committees and agencies while preserving the constitutional authority and oversight of the General Assembly;

**Therefore, be it resolved** to amend the Book of Church Order by amending *BCO* 14-1.7 as follows: [Proposed additions underlined, and deletions noted by strike out.]

*BCO* 14-1

7. The Assembly's committees are to serve and not to direct any Church judicatories. They are not to establish ~~policy~~, ~~but rather execute policy established by the General Assembly~~ or modify their ministry priorities or mission, which may only be determined by the General Assembly. However, they may create and execute operational policies



necessary for the administration of their responsibilities. Policies and material changes thereunto must be recorded in the committee or agency's minutes for review and control by the General Assembly (cf. RAO 14-1, 14-3, 14-11).

**Furthermore,**

**Whereas,** the existence of substantial organizational apparatuses used to fulfill permanent committees' and agencies' missions (e.g., RUF, the permanent committee, versus RUF the organization that fulfills the mission of RUF, the permanent committee), is not reflected in our *BCO* or *RAO*; and

**Whereas,** these organizations are sometimes mistakenly confused for permanent committee "subcommittees" referred to in *RAO* 4-10; and

**Whereas,** proper oversight of the operation of these organizations is hindered by the lack of reference to them in our *BCO* and *RAO*; and

**Whereas,** oversight of these organizations resides with their respective permanent committee or agency, but review and control resides with their respective committee of commissioners;

**Therefore, be it resolved** to amend the Book of Church Order by adding a new *BCO* 14-1.8, and renumbering *BCO* 14-1.8-15as follows: [Proposed additions underlined and deletions noted by strike out.]

8. Committees and agencies may, in the course of fulfilling their mission, create organizations that remain entirely under the oversight of the committee or agency. These organizations shall only establish or change standing operational policies with approval from the committee or agency. The approval of these policies shall be recorded in the committee or agency's minutes for review and control by the General Assembly (cf. RAO 14-1, 14-3, 14-11).

8-9. The committees serve the Church through the duties assigned by the General Assembly.

[renumber *BCO* 14-1.9-15 to *BCO* 14-1.10-16]

The full text of *BCO* 14-1 shall read as follows:

14-1. The General Assembly is the highest court of this Church, and represents in one body all the churches thereof. It bears the title of The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America, and constitutes the bond of union, peace and correspondence among all its congregations and courts.

Principles for the Organization of the Assembly:

1. The Church is responsible for carrying out the Great Commission.
2. The initiative for carrying out the Great Commission belongs to the Church at every court level, and the Assembly is responsible to encourage and promote the fulfillment of this ministry by the various courts.
3. The work of the Church as set forth in the Great Commission is one work, being implemented at the General Assembly level through equally essential committees.
4. It is the responsibility of every member and every member congregation to support the whole work of the denomination as they be led in their conscience held captive to the Word of God.
5. It is the responsibility of the General Assembly to evaluate needs and resources, and to act on priorities for the most effective fulfillment of the Great Commission.
6. The Church recognizes the right of individuals and congregations to labor through other agencies in fulfilling the Great Commission.
7. The Assembly's committees are to serve and not to direct any Church judicatories. They are not to establish or modify their ministry priorities or mission, which may only be determined by the General Assembly. However, they may create and execute operational policies necessary for the administration of their responsibilities. Policies and material changes thereunto must be recorded in the committee or agency's minutes for review and

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

control by the General Assembly (cf. *RAO* 14-1, 14-3, 14-11).

8. Committees and Agencies may, in the course of fulfilling their mission, create organizations which remain entirely under the oversight of the Committee or Agency. These organizations shall not have the authority to establish or change operational policies without approval from the Committee or Agency. The approval of these policies, along with the policies themselves, shall be recorded in the Committee or Agency's minutes for review and control by the General Assembly (cf. *RAO* 14-1, 14-3, 14-11).
9. The committees serve the Church through the duties assigned by the General Assembly.

[renumber *BCO* 14-1.9-15 to *BCO* 14-1.10-16]

*Adopted by New River Presbytery at its 150<sup>th</sup> stated meeting, March 2, 2024*

*Attested by /s/ TE Kurt Gray, stated clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 32** from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania (to CCB, OC, “Amend *BCO* 23 to Address Dissolution of Call AC, CC, CDM, CTS, for those employed by a Committee or Agency” GEN, MNA, MTW, PCAF, RH, RUF)

---

**Whereas** RUF ministers are members of their local Presbytery and laboring within her bounds; and

**Whereas** all Teaching Elders serving on any permanent committee or agency are members of their local Presbytery; and

**Whereas** the Presbytery alone can “receive, dismiss, ordain, install, remove and judge ministers” (*BCO* 13-9a); and

**Whereas** the Presbytery alone has the authority to establish and dissolve pastoral relations (*BCO* 13-9c); and

**Whereas** the Presbytery is in the best position to appraise the validity, effectiveness and necessity of RUF ministers within her bounds; and

**Whereas** RUF is a program committee of our denomination which exists to serve the church and labors under her authority (cf. *BCO* 14-1.12); and

**Whereas** RUF, being a program committee, possesses no authority to ordain or dismiss members of a Presbytery; and

**Whereas** RUF's "Affiliation Agreement" has no Constitutional authority (though it is being advanced as being necessary or required for Presbyteries to have RUF ministers labor within her bounds); and

**Whereas** the *BCO* does not offer sufficient guidance as to the relationship between the local Presbytery and RUF

**Therefore, be it resolved**, that Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery hereby requests the 51st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to add to our *Book of Church Order* a new 23-2 (the two underlined paragraphs) and renumber the original items.

23-2. When any minister (teaching elder) shall tender his resignation of a call extended by a PCA permanent committee or agency, the Presbytery shall cite the committee or agency to appear by its appointed representative(s), to show cause why the Presbytery should or should not accept the resignation. If the committee or agency fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining the minister be deemed insufficient, his resignation shall be accepted and the relation be dissolved.

If a committee or agency desires to dissolve the call of one of its ministers, they must notify the minister and his Presbytery, and if the request is not uncontested, Presbytery shall set a time and place to hear both parties. The Presbytery's decision whether or not to dissolve such a call shall be binding on the committee or agency. The committee or agency shall honor the decision of the Presbytery.

**23-23.** The Presbytery may designate a minister as honorably retired when the minister by reason of age wishes to be retired, or as

medically disabled when by reason of infirmity is no longer able to serve the church in the active ministry of the Gospel. A minister medically disabled or honorably retired shall continue to hold membership in his Presbytery. He may serve on committees or commissions if so elected or appointed.

**23-34.** A minister, being medically disabled or honorably retired, may be elected pastor emeritus by a congregation which seeks to honor his past earnest labors among them.

*Adopted by Eastern Pennsylvania Presbytery at its stated meeting, April 9, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Thomas G. Keane, Jr., Stated Clerk*

---

**OVERTURE 33**, from TE Benjamin Inman (to OC, AC)  
 “Erect *Ad Interim* Committee on the Book *Jesus Calling*”

---

The book *Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*, authored by now-deceased PCA church member Sarah Young, is one of the most influential published Christian works of the present century. Regardless of the author's intentions, as documented below, the book contains and promotes ostensibly grave errors and has been firmly rejected by influential public figures within, and theologically akin to, the PCA. The following proposed overture would establish an *ad interim* committee to document the PCA's historical relationship to the book, demonstrate whether the book constitutes a violation of the Second Commandment, and bring recommendations for any warranted actions of repentance by the PCA.

**Whereas**, communion with the living and true God is mediated by the Lord Jesus Christ alone, and “No one has ever seen God; the only God, who is at the Father's side, he has made him known.” (John 1:18); and

**Whereas**, while the apostle John's instruction about true saving faith dwells on three preeminent marks—confession of the incarnate Christ, sincere love of fellow Christians and the earnest repudiation of sin—his final, summary exhortation is the pithy, “Little children, keep yourselves from idols.” (1 John 5:21); and

**Whereas**, the church of Jesus Christ does not have jurisdiction to judge outsiders (1 Corinthians 5:12), yet the most publicly disruptive event of Paul’s ministry in Acts erupted from the Gospel’s efficacious debunking of idolatry: “And you see and hear that not only in Ephesus but in almost all of Asia this Paul has persuaded and turned away a great many people, saying that gods made with hands are not gods.” (Acts 19:26); and

**Whereas**, opposition to idolatry is entailed by the sixth vow of every PCA teaching elder, Do you promise to be zealous and faithful in maintaining the truths of the Gospel and the purity and peace and unity of the Church, whatever persecution or opposition may arise unto you on that account? (*BCO* 21-5); and

**Whereas**, PCA courts have a responsibility regarding not only our system of doctrine but also any matter which “strikes at the vitals of religion” (*BCO* 19-2.f, 21-4.g, 34-5); and

**Whereas**, PCA presbyteries specifically hold authority “to condemn erroneous opinions which injure the purity or peace of the church” (*BCO* 13-9.f); and

**Whereas**, it is the task of the General Assembly, “to recommend measures for the promotion of charity, truth and holiness through all the churches under its care” (*BCO* 14-6.k); and

**Whereas**, the PCA has a responsibility within its jurisdiction to discipline and so restrain the promulgation of opinions or practices harmful to the peace and purity of the church, per “... for their publishing of such opinions, or maintaining of such practices, as are contrary to the light of nature, or to the known principles of Christianity, whether concerning faith, worship, or conversation; or to the power of godliness ... they may lawfully be called to account, and proceeded against by the censures of the Church.” (WCF XX.iv); and

**Whereas**, the PCA’s subordinate standards stipulate among the sins forbidden by the Second Commandment: “... all devising, counselling, commanding, using, and anywise approving, any religious worship not instituted by God himself; ... ; the making any representation of God, of all or of any of the three persons, ... inwardly in our mind, ... in any kind of image or likeness of any

creature whatsoever; all worshipping of it, or God in it or by it; ... though under the title of ... devotion, good intent, or any other pretence whatsoever . . .” (Larger Catechism 109); and

**Whereas**, the book “*Jesus Calling: Enjoying Peace in His Presence*” has provoked on-going criticism among evangelical believers for the last 15 years or more, and wider attention<sup>1</sup>; and

**Whereas**, leaders respected across the spectrum of the PCA have publicly criticized and warned against the book: Kathy Keller of Redeemer NYC in “The Redeemer Report,”<sup>2</sup> Justin Taylor on The Gospel Coalition website,<sup>3</sup> Tim Challies in his regular writing ministry,<sup>4</sup> and Michael Horton on The White Horse Inn website;<sup>5</sup> and

**Whereas**, according to the author’s own account in the original Introduction of the first editions, the text consists of messages from Jesus produced in a fashion similar to the occult practice of automatic writing;<sup>6</sup> and

**Whereas**, the advertising for the book describes it accurately as, “Written as if Jesus Himself is speaking directly to you, *Jesus Calling* invites you to experience peace in the presence of the Savior who is always with you;”<sup>7</sup> and

**Whereas**, the book consists of 365 daily readings cast as the words of Jesus Christ directly addressing the reader, and is published specifically to provide benefits obtained by the worship of Christ: “In many parts of the world, Christians seem to be searching for a deeper experience of Jesus’ Presence and Peace. The messages that follow address that felt need;”<sup>8</sup> and

**Whereas**, by design, *Jesus Calling* is an idol, 1) because the text is a tool for experiencing a mental image—not a picture but an articulate and counterfeit

---

<sup>1</sup> *New York Times*, 2013

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.redeemer.com/redeemer-report/article/jesus\\_calling\\_by\\_sarah\\_young\\_a\\_review](https://www.redeemer.com/redeemer-report/article/jesus_calling_by_sarah_young_a_review)

<sup>3</sup> [Citing Michael Horton](#), [Citing Kathy Keller](#).

<sup>4</sup> “[Ten Serious Problems with Jesus Calling](#).”

<sup>5</sup> Horton’s piece is available in full [here](#).

<sup>6</sup> For an attentive overview of the original Introduction and comparison with the revised version in subsequent editions, see the [post](#) from Ruth Graham at *The Daily Beast*.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.jesuscalling.com/books/jesus-calling/>

<sup>8</sup> For readers without a copy of *Jesus Calling*, this quote and further analysis by Tim Challies can be found [here](#).

personality—of the risen Lord Jesus Christ, and 2) because the image is used for the purposes of purported communion with the true risen Lord Jesus; and **Whereas**, *Jesus Calling* is enormously influential: having sold 45 million units<sup>9</sup> (which makes the author the bestselling Christian writer of all time), having been translated into 35 languages,<sup>10</sup> and having launched a brand with social media presence, merchandising,<sup>11</sup> a television series<sup>12</sup> and a version marketed for use with children;<sup>13</sup> and

**Whereas**, it is public knowledge that the author before, during and after both the production and publication of *Jesus Calling* was a member of the PCA and a career missionary with Mission To The World;<sup>14</sup> and

**Whereas** the publisher Thomas Nelson (owned by HarperCollins) is not under the jurisdiction of the PCA, and the author’s passing in August 2023 has carried her above the jurisdiction of the PCA; and

**Whereas**, because *Jesus Calling* was published in 2004, it is unreasonable to bring a complaint to or against any court of the PCA on this matter, as “The passage of time since the alleged offense makes fair adjudication unachievable,” especially given the likelihood that “degradation of evidence and memory may have occurred in the intervening period” (BCO 32-20); and

**Whereas**, based on the facts here cited, it is plausibly arguable that the PCA failed to uphold its standards in pastoral care and discipline and stands as the one ecclesiastical authority at fault in the promulgation of the single most influential, particular and concrete tool of idol worship among American evangelicals.

**Whereas**, in the recent past the PCA, by action of the General Assembly, has confessed and corporately repented in solidarity with our distant fathers for the sins endemic to American Chattel Slavery and our much nearer fathers for sins of racism during the period of the American Civil Rights Movement; and

---

<sup>9</sup> *Publishers Weekly* July 7, 2023

<sup>10</sup> Obituary in *ByFaith*

<sup>11</sup> *Publisher’s Weekly*

<sup>12</sup> Thomasnelson.com blog

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.jesuscalling.com/books/jesus-calling-365-devotions-for-kids/>

<sup>14</sup> See *Christianity Today* and *ByFaith*.



**Whereas**, these previous actions of corporate repentance require an abiding concern for how similar corruptions may well continue among us despite opinions and anecdotes to the contrary; and

**Whereas**, Larger Catechism 110, to which there is no common exception in the PCA, gives us specific and grave reasons to give serious consideration to the possibility of corporate sin in this matter: “... besides God’s sovereignty over us, and propriety in us, his fervent zeal for his own worship, and his revengeful indignation against all false worship, as being a spiritual whoredom; accounting the breakers of this commandment such as hate him, and threatening to punish them unto divers generations . . .”; and

**Whereas**, pastoral fidelity within the jurisdiction of the PCA, and filial loyalty to professing Christians beyond the PCA, as well as evangelistic compassion for those outside Christ must reckon with the practical dangers of idolatry: “Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them” (Psalm 115:8); and

**Whereas**, the PCA’s sister churches in the membership of NAPARC have a particular interest in this matter, per the commitment to, “Exercise mutual concern in the perpetuation, retention, and propagation of the Reformed faith.”;<sup>15</sup> and

**Whereas**, the guilt which may be plausibly argued would likely suggest shame for particular agencies of the General Assembly and persons significant and honored in their endeavors; and

**Whereas**, the guilt which may be plausibly argued ought to be demonstrated or dismissed in a fashion free from any appearance of institutional modesty; and

**Whereas** vindication from anything shameful most rightly satisfies the conscience when received from a party not directly involved in the matter under scrutiny; and

**Whereas** the General Assembly’s Theological Examining Committee (*BCO* 14-1,14) is both the smallest and arguably most independent of the standing committees; and

---

<sup>15</sup> CONSTITUTION of the NORTH AMERICAN PRESBYTERIAN AND REFORMED COUNCIL, IV.4.

**Whereas**, the pithiness of the apostle John's, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols," presumes a simplicity that may challenge us; and

**Whereas**, questions required by the PCA's relationship to *Jesus Calling*, may ultimately serve "in order that [our] earnestness for [Christ] might be revealed to [us] in the sight of God" (2 Corinthians 7:12); and

**Whereas**, the seriousness of this matter is matched by the unflinching grace of the living and true God who instructs forthrightly: "But when we are judged by the Lord, we are disciplined so that we may not be condemned along with the world" (1 Corinthians 11:32); and

**Whereas**, the passing of an overture by the General assembly does not entail endorsement of the "whereas" statements, and unanimity on all the preceding points is not necessary;

**Therefore be it resolved that** the General Assembly erect an *Ad Interim* Committee tasked to return a report to the next convened General Assembly:

1. Documenting the PCA's historical relationship to the book, *Jesus Calling*.
2. Demonstrating whether the book constitutes a violation of the Second Commandment according to our Subordinate Standards as proved from Scripture.
3. Bringing recommendations for any warranted actions of repentance by the PCA.

**Therefore be it further resolved that** the General Assembly's Theological Examining Committee be empowered as a commission to populate the *ad interim* committee with four (4) Teaching Elders and five (5) Ruling Elders (including from their own number if they so decide).

**Therefore be it further resolved that** the committee be encouraged to make judicious use of video-conferencing and to seek assistance from TE Wayne Sparkman of the PCA Historical Center, and the budget not exceed \$10,000 to be funded by gifts to the AC designated for this purpose.

Submitted to Eastern Carolina Presbytery by TE Benjamin T. Inman.

Rejected by Eastern Carolina Presbytery at its stated meeting on April 20, 2023  
Attested by /s/ RE Daniel J. Prins, Stated Clerk, Eastern Carolina

---

**OVERTURE 34**, from Columbus Metro Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Merge Columbus Metro and Ohio Valley Presbyteries”

---

**Whereas**, growth in the number of member churches and church plants in Ohio Valley Presbytery (OVP) in both Ohio and Kentucky have given rise to a strategic plan for Presbytery multiplication into Ohio-focused and Kentucky/Indiana-focused Presbyteries; and,

**Whereas**, church closures or denominational realignments have decreased the number of member churches from seven to five churches in Columbus Metro Presbytery (CMP), limiting CMP’s capacity to healthily function as a church, court, and mission; and,

**Whereas**, campus ministry partnerships overseen by Columbus Metro Presbytery extend into the current boundary of Ohio Valley Presbytery, specifically through Campus Outreach Columbus’s leadership of Campus Outreach at University of Cincinnati; and,

**Whereas**, member churches in both OVP and CMP envision multiplying into distinct to-be-named Kentucky and distinct to-be-named Ohio Presbyteries in the near future, in order to focus on regional ministry;

**Whereas**, laboring together in a common presbytery to prepare for healthy future multiplication supports our calling to govern the church well and to share in strategic ministry planning for our region, and supports OVP’s efforts to host the 53<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the PCA;

**Now therefore be it resolved**, that the Ohio Valley Presbytery and the Columbus Metro Presbytery overture the 51st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to merge the aforementioned Presbyteries into one Presbytery, continuing under the name “Ohio Valley Presbytery,” to include all mission works and churches located in the counties of Ohio south and west of but not including Mercer, Auglaize, Shelby, Logan, Hardin, Marion, Morrow, Knox,

Coshocton, Muskingum, Perry, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs; all of Kentucky north and east of and including the counties of Breckinridge, Hardin, Larue, Taylor, Casey, Pulaski, and McCreary; and the Indiana counties of Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, Jefferson, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Washington, and Harrison.

*Adopted by Columbus Metro Presbytery at its called meeting, April 30, 2024.  
Attested by /s/ RE Michael D. Mattes, Stated Clerk, Columbus Metro Presbytery*

---

**OVERTURE 35**, from Ohio Valley Presbytery (to MNA)  
“Merge Ohio Valley and Columbus Metro Presbyteries”

---

**Whereas**, growth in the number of member churches and church plants in Ohio Valley Presbytery (OVP) in both Ohio and Kentucky have given rise to a strategic plan for Presbytery multiplication into Ohio-focused and Kentucky/Indiana-focused Presbyteries; and,

**Whereas**, church closures or denominational realignments have decreased the number of member churches from seven to five churches in Columbus Metro Presbytery (CMP), limiting CMP’s capacity to healthily function as a church, court, and mission; and,

**Whereas**, campus ministry partnerships overseen by Columbus Metro Presbytery extend into the current boundary of Ohio Valley Presbytery, specifically through Campus Outreach Columbus’s leadership of Campus Outreach at University of Cincinnati; and,

**Whereas**, member churches in both OVP and CMP envision multiplying into distinct to-be-named Kentucky and distinct to-be-named Ohio Presbyteries in the near future, in order to focus on regional ministry;

**Whereas**, laboring together in a common presbytery to prepare for healthy future multiplication supports our calling to govern the church well and to share in strategic ministry planning for our region, and supports OVP’s efforts to host the 53<sup>rd</sup> General Assembly of the PCA;

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Now therefore be it resolved,** that The Ohio Valley Presbytery and the Columbus Metro Presbytery overture the 51st General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America to merge the aforementioned Presbyteries into one Presbytery, continuing under the name “Ohio Valley Presbytery,” to include all mission works and churches located in the counties of Ohio south and west of but not including Mercer, Auglaize, Shelby, Logan, Hardin, Marion, Morrow, Knox, Coshocton, Muskingum, Perry, Hocking, Vinton, and Meigs; all of Kentucky north and east of and including the counties of Breckinridge, Hardin, Larue, Taylor, Casey, Pulaski, and McCreary; and the Indiana counties of Dearborn, Ohio, Switzerland, Jefferson, Scott, Clark, Floyd, Washington, and Harrison.

*Adopted by the Ohio Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, May 7, 2024.*

*Attested by /s/ TE Larry C. Hoop, Stated Clerk, Ohio Valley Presbytery*

## **APPENDIX V**

### **TUESDAY NIGHT WORSHIP**

Tuesday, June 11, 2024

#### **Faithful to the Scriptures**

**6:00 pm Prelude Choir**

**6:30 pm Welcome**

**Call to Worship\***

**Crown Him with Many Crowns**

Crown Him with many crowns, the Lamb upon His throne;  
Hark! How the heav'nly anthem drowns all music but its own:  
Awake, my soul, and sing of Him who died for thee,  
And hail Him as thy matchless King through all eternity.

Crown Him the Lord of love; behold His hands and side,  
Rich wounds, yet visible above, in beauty glorified:  
No angel in the sky can fully bear that sight,  
But downward bends His burning eye at mysteries so bright.

Crown Him the Lord of peace; whose pow'r a scepter sways  
From pole to pole, that wars may cease, absorbed in prayer and praise;  
His reign shall know no end; and round His pierced feet  
Fair flow'rs of Paradise extend their fragrance ever sweet.

Crown Him the Son of God, before the worlds began,  
And ye who tread where He hath trod, Crown Him the Son of Man;  
Who every grief hath known that wrings the human breast,  
And takes and bears them for His own, that all in Him may rest.

Crown Him the Lord of years, the Potentate of time;  
Creator of the rolling spheres, ineffably sublime:  
All hail, Redeemer, hail! For Thou hast died for me:  
Thy praise and glory shall not fail throughout eternity.

**Prayer of Adoration and Invocation\***

## **Reading of the Law — Romans 12:3-21 (ESV)**

For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned. For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; the one who teaches, in his teaching; the one who exhorts, in his exhortation; the one who contributes, in generosity; the one who leads, with zeal; the one who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.

Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor. Do not be slothful in zeal, be fervent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints and seek to show hospitality.

Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. Live in harmony with one another. Do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly. Never be wise in your own sight. Repay no one evil for evil, but give thought to do what is honorable in the sight of all. If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

## **Unison Confession of Sin — from Psalm 51**

Have mercy on us, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquity and cleanse us from our sin! For we know our transgressions, and our sin is ever before us. Against you, you only, have we sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Restore to us the joy of your salvation and uphold us with a willing spirit. Then we will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you.

## **Assurance of Pardon**

## **Psalm 98\***

Sing a new song to Jehovah for the wonders He has wrought;  
His right hand and arm most holy triumph to His cause have brought.  
In His love and tender mercy He has made salvation known,  
In the sight of ev'ry nation He His righteousness has shown.

Truth and mercy towards His people He has ever kept in mind,  
And His full and free salvation He has shown to all mankind.  
Sing O earth, sing to Jehovah, praises to Jehovah sing;  
With the swelling notes of music shout before the Lord, the King.

Seas with all your fullness thunder, all earth's peoples now rejoice;  
Floods and hills in praise uniting, to the Lord lift up your voice.  
For, behold, the Lord is coming, robed in justice and in might;  
He alone will judge the nations, and His judgment shall be right.

## **Scripture Reading — Psalm 19**

### **Pastoral Prayer**

### **Collection**

Congregational Singing while collection is taken:

### **O the Deep, Deep Love of Jesus**

O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Vast, unmeasured, boundless, free;  
Rolling as a mighty ocean in its fullness over me.  
Underneath me, all around me, is the current of Thy love;  
Leading onward, leading homeward, to Thy glorious rest above.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Spread His praise from shore to shore;  
How He loveth, ever loveth, changeth never, nevermore;  
How He watches o'er His loved ones, died to call them all His own;  
How for them He intercedeth, watcheth o'er them from the throne.

O the deep, deep love of Jesus! Love of ev'ry love the best:  
'Tis an ocean vast of blessing, 'Tis a haven sweet of rest.  
O the deep, deep love of Jesus! 'Tis a heav'n of heav'ns to me;  
And it lifts me up to glory, for it lifts me up to Thee.

## **Scripture Reading — 2 Timothy 3:14-4:5**

### **Sermon — “The Blessing of the Bible”**

Rev. Fred Greco, Senior Pastor, Christ Church | Katy TX



## **How Firm a Foundation\***

How firm a foundation, you saints of the Lord,  
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!  
What more can He say than to you he has said,  
To you who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

"Fear not, I am with you, O be not dismayed;  
For I am your God, and will still give you aid;  
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand,  
Upheld by My righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call you to go,  
The rivers of sorrow shall not overflow;  
For I will be with you, your troubles to bless,  
And sanctify to you your deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,  
My grace, all-sufficient, shall be your supply;  
The flame shall not hurt you; I only design  
Your dross to consume and your gold to refine.

"E'en down to old age all My people shall prove  
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;  
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,  
Like lambs they shall still in My bosom be borne.

"The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,  
I will not, I will not desert to his foes;  
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,  
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

## **Nicene Creed**

We believe in one God, the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth, of all things visible and invisible.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God,  
begotten of his Father before all worlds,  
God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God,  
begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father;  
by whom all things were made;  
who for us and for our salvation  
came down from heaven,

and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary,  
and was made man;  
and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered and was buried;  
and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures,  
and ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father;  
and he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the living and the dead;  
whose kingdom shall have no end.

And we believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son;  
who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified;  
who spoke by the prophets;  
and we believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church;  
we acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;  
and we look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

## **The Lord's Supper**

(The bread is gluten, dairy, egg, and nut free)

### **Doxology\***

### **Benediction\***

## **WORSHIP LEADERS**

Rev. Steve Moulson, Pastor, Church Hill Presbyterian Church | Richmond, VA

Mr. Rick Hutton, Ruling Elder, All Saints Reformed Pres. Church | Richmond, VA

Rev. Dan Lipford, Pastor, Centralia Presbyterian Church | Centralia, VA

Rev. Harry Long, Pastor Emeritus, Chairman of the Host Committee |  
Midlothian, VA

## **SONG LEADERS**

Mr. Jack Templeton, Conductor, All Saints Reformed Pres. Church | Richmond, VA

Mr. Brian Evans, Instrumental Lead, Church Hill Pres. Church | Richmond, VA

## **MUSICIANS**

Ashley Poppe, Alyssa Evans, Peter Greydanus, Amy Pintea, Brian Strawley,  
Mark Oates, Carl Lundgren, Justin Holroyd, Amy Roberts, Kathy Pritchard

## **WEDNESDAY EVENING WORSHIP**

Wednesday, June 12, 2024

### **True to the Reformed Faith**

#### **4:45 p.m. Prelude**

What Wondrous Love Is This

#### **Call to Worship — Psalm 63:1-5\***

**Minister:** O God, You are my God; earnestly I seek You; my soul thirsts for You;

**People:** My flesh faints for You, as in a dry and weary land where there is no water.

**Minister:** So I have looked upon You in the sanctuary, beholding Your power and glory.

**People:** Because Your steadfast love is better than life, my lips will praise You.

**Minister:** So I will bless You as long as I live; in Your name I will lift up my hands.

**All:** My soul will be satisfied as with fat and rich food, and my mouth will praise You with joyful lips.

#### **Hymn of Adoration\***

#### **A Mighty Fortress is Our God**

A mighty fortress is our God, a bulwark never failing;  
our helper he amid the flood of mortal ills prevailing.  
For still our ancient foe doth seek to work us woe;  
his craft and pow'r are great; and armed with cruel hate,  
on earth is not his equal.

Did we in our own strength confide, our striving would be losing;  
were not the right man on our side, the man of God's own choosing.  
Dost ask who that may be? Christ Jesus, it is he,  
Lord Sabaoth his name, from age to age the same,  
and he must win the battle.

And though this world, with devils filled, should threaten to undo us,  
we will not fear, for God hath willed his truth to triumph through us.  
The prince of darkness grim, we tremble not for him;  
his rage we can endure, for lo! his doom is sure;  
one little word shall fell him.

That Word above all earthly pow'rs, no thanks to them, abideth;  
the Spirit and the gifts are ours through him who with us sideth.  
Let goods and kindred go, this mortal life also;  
the body they may kill: God's truth abideth still;  
his kingdom is forever.

## **Invocation\***

### **Affirmation of Faith\***

#### **Heidelberg Catechism #1**

**Minister:** What is your only comfort in life and death?

**All:** That I am not my own, but belong with body and soul, both in life and in death, to my faithful Saviour Jesus Christ. He has fully paid for all my sins with His precious blood, and has set me free from all the power of the devil. He also preserves me in such a way that without the will of my heavenly Father, not a hair can fall from my head; indeed, all things must work together for my salvation. Therefore, by His Holy Spirit, He also assures me of eternal life and makes me heartily willing and ready from now on to live for him.

## **Song of Praise\***

### **And Can It Be That I Should Gain**

And can it be that I should gain an int'rest in the Savior's blood?  
Died he for me, who caused his pain? For me, who Him to death pursued?  
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?  
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

He left His Father's throne above (so free, so infinite his grace!),  
humbled Himself, so great his love! And bled for all His chosen race!  
'Tis mercy all, immense and free, for, O my God, it found out me!  
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray; I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;  
my chains fell off, my heart was free; I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.  
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

No condemnation now I dread; Jesus, and all in Him, is mine!  
Alive in Him, my living Head, and clothed in righteousness divine,  
bold I approach th'eternal throne, and claim the crown, through Christ,  
my own.  
Amazing love! How can it be that Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?

## **Public Confession**

Our God in heave, if you should mark iniquities, who could stand? We know that if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. Not one of us does good, no, not one. We have stiffened our necks against your will, hardened our hearts to your Word, refused to hear your voice, pulled away from your loving embrace, despised correction, and forgotten you in our thoughts. Yes, we have sinned against you. Father, we repent. We come to Christ, who has promised rest for our souls. We take his yoke upon us. We desire to learn from him. Grant that we may bring forth the fruits of repentance from sincere hearts, which are precious in your sight. In Jesus' Name, we pray. Amen.

## **Silent Confession**

### **Assurance of Pardon**

1 John 2:1-2 My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. But if anyone does sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. He is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world.

## **Song of Renewal\***

### **O Love That Will Not Let Me Go**

O Love that wilt not let me go, I rest my weary soul in Thee;  
I give Thee back the life I owe,  
That in Thine ocean depths its flow may richer, fuller be.

O Light that follow'st all my way, I yield my flick'ring torch to Thee;  
My heart restores its borrowed ray,  
That in thy sunshine's blaze its day may brighter, fairer be.

O Joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to Thee;  
I trace the rainbow through the rain,  
and feel the promise is not vain that morn shall tearless be.

O Cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from Thee;  
I lay in dust life's glory dead,  
and from the ground there blossoms red life that shall endless be.

## **Scripture Reading — John 1:43-51**

### **Sermon — “Exceeds Expectations”**

Rev. Ben Robertson | RUF Campus Minister, College of William & Mary

### **Song of Response\***

#### **The Sands of Time Are Sinking**

The sands of time are sinking, the dawn of heaven breaks;  
The summer morn I've sighed for - the fair, sweet morn awakes:  
Dark, dark had been the midnight, but dayspring is at hand,  
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

The king there in His beauty, without a veil is seen:  
It were a well-spent journey, though seven deaths lay between:  
The Lamb with His fair army, doth on Mount Zion stand,  
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

O Christ, He is the fountain, the deep, sweet well of love!  
The streams on earth I've tasted more deep I'll drink above:  
There to an ocean fullness, His mercy doth expand,  
And glory, glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

The bride eyes not her garment, but her dear Bridegroom's face;  
I will not gaze at glory, but on my King of grace.  
Not at the crown He giveth, but on His pierced hand;  
The Lamb is all the glory of Emmanuel's land.

O I am my Beloved's and my Beloved is mine!  
He brings a poor vile sinner into His house of wine  
I stand upon His merit – I know no other stand,  
Not e'en where glory dwelleth in Emmanuel's land.

## **Benediction — Jude 24-25\***

Now to him who is able to keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with great joy, to the only God, our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and authority, before all time and now and forevermore. Amen

## **Postlude\***

### **WORSHIP LEADERS**

Ms. Jena Chenkin, Violist, Westminster Reformed Presbyterian Church |  
Suffolk, VA

Rev. Justin Clement, Pastor, Liturgist, Grace Presbyterian Church | Lexington,  
VA

Rev. Essen Daly, Pastor, Liturgist, Tabernacle Presbyterian Church |  
Waynesboro, VA

Rev. Jason Kriaski, Assistant Pastor, Percussionist, Grace Presbyterian Church  
| Lexington, VA

Mr. Josh Mullins, Director of Worship Arts, Piano and Vocals, Westminster  
Reformed Presbyterian Church | Suffolk, VA

Rev. Ben Robertson, RUF Campus Minister, Preacher, College of William &  
Mary | Williamsburg, VA

Ms. Abbie Rowland, Vocalist, Westminster Reformed Presbyterian Church |  
Suffolk, VA

Rev. Kellett Thomas, Guitar and Vocalist, Grace Presbyterian Church |  
Lexington, VA

Rev. Ross Turner, Pastor, Violinist, Westminster Reformed Presbyterian  
Church | Suffolk, VA

## THURSDAY NIGHT WORSHIP

Thursday, June 13, 2024

### Obedient to the Great Commission of Jesus Christ

**7:30 pm Call to Worship** 예배로의 부름 **Psalm** 시편 **96:7-13**

Rev. David Moon 문다윗 목사 (Korean Central Presbyterian Church)

**Minister:** 만국의 족속들이 영광과 권능을 여호와께 돌릴지어다  
여호와께 돌릴지어다

**People:** 여호와께 이름에 합당한 영광을 그에게 돌릴지어다  
예물을 들고 그의 궁정에 들어갈지어다

**Minister:** 아름답고 거룩한 것으로 여호와께 예배할지어다 온  
땅이여 그 앞에서 떨지어다

**People:** 모든 나라 가운데서 이르기를 여호와께서 다스리시니  
세계가 굳게 서고 흔들리지 않으리라 그가 만민을 공평하게  
심판하시리라 할지로다

**Minister:** 하늘은 기뻐하고 땅은 즐거워하며 바다와 거기에  
충만한 것이 외치고

**People:** 밭과 그 가운데에 있는 모든 것은 즐거워할지로다 그  
때 숲의 모든 나무들이 여호와 앞에서 즐거이 노래하리니

**All:** 그가 임하시되 땅을 심판하러 임하실 것임이라 그가 의로  
세계를 심판하시며 그의 진실하심으로 백성을 심판하시리로다

Minister: Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the  
Lord glory and strength!

**People: Ascribe to the Lord the glory due His name; bring an offering,  
and come into His courts!**

Minister: Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before Him,  
all the earth!



**People:** Say among the nations, “The Lord reigns! Yes, the world is established; it shall never be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity.”

Minister: Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all that fills it;

**People:** Let the field exult, and everything in it! Then shall all the trees of the forest sing for joy

**All:** before the Lord, for He comes, for He comes to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness, and the peoples in His faithfulness.

### **Songs of Praise 찬양**

Praise Team (Korean Capital Presbytery)

### **Prayer of Thanksgiving 감사기도**

Rev. Mark Oh 오지영 목사 (Korean Capital Presbytery)

### **Confession of Sin 회개기도 - Romans 로마서 2:4**

Rev. Huey Lee 이해진 목사 (Christ Central Presbyterian Church)

### **Assurance of Pardon 사죄의 확신 - Colossians 골로새서 1:13-14**

Rev. Paul Bang 방지훈 목사 (Korean Presbyterian Church of Washington)

### **Confession of Faith 신앙고백 - The Apostles Creed 사도신경**

Rev. Dong Woo Kim 김동우 목사

(Covenant Presbyterian Church of Maryland)

전능하사 천지를 만드신 하나님 아버지를 내가 믿사오며,  
그 외아들 우리 주 예수 그리스도를 믿사오니,  
이는 성령으로 잉태하사 동정녀 마리아에게 나시고  
본디오 빌라도에게 고난을 받으사  
십자가에 못박혀 죽으시고  
장사한 지 사흘 만에 죽은 자 가운데서 다시 살아 나시며,  
하늘에 오르사, 전능하신 하나님 우편에 앉아 계시다가,

저리로서 산 자와 죽은 자를 심판하러 오시리라.  
성령을 믿사오며,  
거룩한 공회와, 성도가 서로 교통하는 것과,  
죄를 사하여 주시는 것과,  
몸이 다시 사는 것과 영원히 사는 것을 믿사옵나이다. 아멘

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth:  
And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;  
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried;  
He descended into hell;  
the third day He rose again from the dead;  
He ascended into heaven,  
and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;  
from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.  
I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic church;  
the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins;  
the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen**

**Love Offering for Mission to the World** 세계선교위원회를  
위한 선교헌금

Rev. Eung Yul Ryoo 류응렬 목사 (Korean Central Presbyterian Church)

**Choir Presentation** 성가대 찬양  
Korean Central Presbyterian Church

**One Voice Prayer for Mission to the World**  
세계선교위원회를 위한 통성기도

Rev. Eung Yul Ryoo 류응렬 목사 (Korean Central Presbyterian Church)

**Sermon** 설교 - “**Blessed to Bless** 복 주기 위해 복 받은 사람”  
(Psalm 시편 67)

Rev. Joel Kim 김은일 목사 (Westminster Seminary, California)

**Songs of Response** 화답 찬양

Praise Team (Korean Capital Presbytery)

**Benediction** 축도

Rev. Peace Ahn 안성식 목사 (Mok Yang Presbyterian Church)

**WORSHIP LEADERS**

Rev. Hyung Min (David) Bae, Leader and Vocals | Centreville, VA

Ms. Uree Chang, Vocals, Korean Central Presbyterian Church DC |  
Arlington, VA

Ms. Alice Hong, Vocals, Korean Central Presbyterian Church DC |  
Arlington, VA

Mr. Hwihu Kang, Pastoral Intern, Electric Guitar 2, Korean Presbyterian  
Church of Washington | Fairfax, VA

Mr. Darien Mun, Drums, Christ Central Presbyterian Church | Centreville,  
VA

Mr. Sam Na, Korean Presbyterian Church of Washington, Bass | Fairfax,  
VA

Mr. Daniel Hosung Yi, Electric Guitar 1, Korean Central Presbyterian  
Church DC | Arlington, VA

Rev. John Yun, College and Worship Pastor, Korean Central Presbyterian  
Church | Centreville, VA

## PART IV

### CORRECTIONS TO PREVIOUS MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Corrections to the *Minutes of the 49<sup>th</sup> General Assembly*

Correction      **Overture 15 — Negative Votes**      p.80ff.  
Adding one person whose name was inadvertently left off:  
TE Danny Morgan      South Coast

Corrections to the *Minutes of the 50<sup>th</sup> General Assembly*

Correction      **Appendix A: Stated Clerk's Report**  
**Attachment 1: BCO Amendments Sent Down** p.133ff.  
The vote tallies published did not include the onsite revision reflecting  
the most up-to-date votes. The vote totals as reported to the General  
Assembly are included on the following pages.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

2022-2023

**BCO AMENDMENTS SENT DOWN TO PRESBYTERIES  
BY THE 49th GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
FOR VOTING, and for ADVICE AND CONSENT**

**NOTE:** The Stated Clerk's Office sends the proposed amendments only in their final form, as approved by the General Assembly.

**ITEM 1: Amend BCO 7** to disqualify from office men describing themselves as homosexual. [Overture 15 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**BCO 7.**

**4.** Men who describe themselves as homosexual, even those who describe themselves as homosexual and claim to practice celibacy by refraining from homosexual conduct, are disqualified from holding office in the Presbyterian Church in America.

**For: 48**

**Against: 32**

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 1: Amend BCO 7

Item 1 - BCO 7						Item 1 - BCO 7					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	77	4	2	1	
2 Ascension	28	7	0	1		46 Missouri	28	39	0		1
3 Blue Ridge	38	36	0	1		47 Nashville	16	52	1		1
4 Calvary	61	31	4	1		48 New Jersey	14	5	0	1	
5 Canada West	22	7	1	1		49 New River	10	2	3	1	
6 Catawba Valley	31	6	1	1		50 New York State	11	16	2		1
7 Central Carolina	41	11	1	1		51 North Florida	21	18	1	1	
8 Central Florida	39	47	0		1	52 North Texas	48	45	4	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	8	0	1		53 Northern California	12	20	2		1
10 Central Indiana	6	11	1		1	54 Northern Illinois	11	15	1		1
11 Chesapeake	31	36	1		1	55 Northern New England	4	14	1		1
12 Chicago Metro	18	25	0		1	56 Northwest Georgia	34	8	0	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	11	7	0	1	
14 Covenant	52	37	0	1		58 Ohio Valley	17	28	4		1
15 Eastern Canada	4	25	0		1	59 Pacific	12	21	2		1
16 Eastern Carolina	22	27	3		1	60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	12	15	2		1	61 Palmetto	41	37	0	1	
18 Evangel	57	40	0	1		62 PeeDee	35	0	3	1	
19 Fellowship	33	4	1	1		63 Philadelphia	8	9	0		1
20 Georgia Foothills	15	27	2		1	64 Philadelphia Metro We	13	5	1	1	
21 Grace	43	7	0	1		65 Piedmont Triad	18	22	0		1
22 Great Lakes	45	9	1	1		66 Pittsburgh	39	15	2	1	
23 Gulf Coast	35	2	0	1		67 Platte Valley	5	17	1		1
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	19	53	3		1
25 Heartland	21	4	0	1		69 Providence	37	13	4	1	
26 Heritage	19	20	4		1	70 Rio Grande	9	20	0		1
27 Highlands	41	18	0	1		71 Rocky Mountain	32	47	4		1
28 Hills and Plains	24	21	3	1		72 Savannah River	39	1	0	1	
29 Houston Metro	34	16	0	1		73 Siouxlands	16	13	0	1	
30 Ililiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	9	3	0	1		75 South Florida	21	5	4	1	
32 James River	55	22	2	1		76 South Texas	23	29	0		1
33 Korean Capital	22	15	1	1		77 Southeast Alabama	42	2	1	1	
34 Korean Central	24	3	7	1		78 Southern Louisiana	10	13	1		1
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	29	39	0		1
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	51	14	0	1	
37 Korean Northwest	20	2	0	1		81 Suncoast Florida	34	14	1	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	45	12	3	1	
39 Korean Southern	14	0	2	1		83 Tennessee Valley	39	54	0		1
40 Korean Southwest	22	4	0	1		84 Tidewater	17	23	2		1
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	32	5	1	1		85 Warrior	16	14	0	1	
42 Lowcountry	20	14	0	1		86 West Hudson	13	13	1		1
43 Metro Atlanta	29	81	0		1	87 Westminster	26	2	0	1	
44 Metropolitan New York	1	31	1		1	88 Wisconsin	24	26	1		1

Official Totals: For - 48 Against – 32  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 2: Amend BCO 8** by the addition of a new paragraph, 8-8, adding chaplain endorsement requirements and recommendations; and **renumber** the following paragraphs accordingly. [Overture 28 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**8-8.** A Presbytery may, at its discretion, approve the call of a teaching elder to work as a Chaplain whether military or civilian, with an organization outside the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church in America, provided that he be engaged in preaching and teaching the Word, that the Presbytery be assured he will have full freedom to maintain and teach the doctrine of our Church, and that he reports at least annually on his work. The Chaplain may be appointed to the work of an evangelist when serving as a Chaplain. Teaching elders ministering as paid or volunteer chaplains are strongly encouraged to seek and obtain their Ecclesiastical Endorsement from the endorsing agency authorized by the General Assembly for such purpose.

**8-89.** As there were in the Church under the law, elders of the people for the government thereof, so in the Gospel Church, Christ has furnished others besides ministers of the Word with gifts and commission to govern when called thereunto, who are called *ruling elders*.

**8-910.** Elders being of one class of office, ruling elders possess the same authority and eligibility to office in the courts of the Church as teaching elders. They should, moreover, cultivate zealously their own aptness to teach the Bible and should improve every opportunity of doing so.

<b>For: 78</b>	<b>Against: 2</b>
----------------	-------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 2: Amend BCO 8

		Item 2 - BCO 8							Item 2 - BCO 8						
Presbytery		For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery		For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.		
1	Arizona						45	Mississippi Valley	83	0	0	1			
2	Ascension	33	0	2	1		46	Missouri	60	0	2	1			
3	Blue Ridge	61	0	1	1		47	Nashville	72	0	0	1			
4	Calvary	88	0	1	1		48	New Jersey	21	0	0	1			
5	Canada West	26	0	0	1		49	New River	14	0	0	1			
6	Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50	New York State	5	21	1			1	
7	Central Carolina	51	0	0	1		51	North Florida	29	0	0	1			
8	Central Florida	60	0	0	1		52	North Texas	81	0	3	1			
9	Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53	Northern California	34	0	0	1			
10	Central Indiana	16	0	0	1		54	Northern Illinois	30	0	0	1			
11	Chesapeake	71	0	1	1		55	Northern New England	17	0	1	1			
12	Chicago Metro	37	0	0	1		56	Northwest Georgia	44	0	1	1			
13	Columbus Metro						57	Ohio	12	2	3	1			
14	Covenant	76	1	0	1		58	Ohio Valley	42	0	0	1			
15	Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59	Pacific	19	0	1	1			
16	Eastern Carolina	50	0	0	1		60	Pacific Northwest							
17	Eastern Pennsylvania	27	0	1	1		61	Palmetto	75	0	0	1			
18	Evangel	87	0	0	1		62	PeeDee	40	0	0	1			
19	Fellowship	36	0	1	1		63	Philadelphia	16	0	0	1			
20	Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64	Philadelphia Metro West	17	0	0	1			
21	Grace	47	0	1	1		65	Piedmont Triad	38	0	0	1			
22	Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66	Pittsburgh	48	0	1	1			
23	Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67	Platte Valley	7	10	4			1	
24	Gulfstream						68	Potomac	46	1	1	1			
25	Heartland	25	0	0	1		69	Providence	51	0	0	1			
26	Heritage	35	0	3	1		70	Rio Grande	25	1	0	1			
27	Highlands	58	0	0	1		71	Rocky Mountain	77	0	0	1			
28	Hills and Plains	41	0	2	1		72	Savannah River	39	0	1	1			
29	Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73	Siouxlands	32	0	0	1			
30	Illiana	16	0	0	1		74	South Coast							
31	Iowa	13	0	0	1		75	South Florida	22	0	8	1			
32	James River	79	0	0	1		76	South Texas	50	1	2	1			
33	Korean Capital	35	0	1	1		77	Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1			
34	Korean Central	30	0	3	1		78	Southern Louisiana	19	0	1	1			
35	Korean Eastern						79	Southern New England	68	0	0	1			
36	Korean Northeastern						80	Southwest Florida	52	9	2	1			
37	Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81	Suncoast Florida	44	0	0	1			
38	Korean Southeastern						82	Susquehanna Valley	30	3	1	1			
39	Korean Southern	11	2	3	1		83	Tennessee Valley	42	0	1	1			
40	Korean Southwest	26	0	0	1		84	Tidewater	43	0	0	1			
41	Korean Southwest O.C.	33	1	4	1		85	Warrior	29	0	0	1			
42	Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86	West Hudson	20	1	2	1			
43	Metro Atlanta	106	2	3	1		87	Westminster	28	0	1	1			
44	Metropolitan New York	32	1	0	1		88	Wisconsin	17	7	5	1			

Official Totals: For - 78 Against – 2  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59



**ITEM 3: Amend BCO 15-1 and 15-3** to clarify the role of a Presbytery commission.

[Overture 25 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**15-1.** A commission differs from an ordinary committee in that while a committee is appointed to examine, consider, and report, a commission is authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business referred to it, ~~except in the case of judicial commissions of a Presbytery appointed under BCO 15-3.~~ A commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings, which shall be submitted to the court appointing it. Upon such submission this record shall be entered on the minutes of the court appointing, the date of the submission being the date of “the meeting of the court” for filing requirements under the rules of discipline, with exception of the “notification” dates of BCO 42-4 and 43-3, except in the case of a presbytery commission serving as a session or a judicial commission as set forth in BCO 15-3. The effective date of dismissal of a commission of Session or Presbytery shall be not before the time allowed for the filing of a complaint or appeal against that commission’s decision has expired. Any complaint or appeal so timely filed, shall be adjudicated by that commission until the matter is settled by the that commission or a higher court. When a commission is appointed to serve as an interim Session, its actions are the actions of a Session, not a Presbytery. Every commission of a Presbytery or Session must submit complete minutes and a report of its activities at least once annually to the court which commissioned it.

**15-3.** Presbytery as a whole may ~~try a judicial case within its jurisdiction (including the right to refer any strictly constitutional issue to a study committee with options listed below),~~ hear a case, with or without process (BCO 31-38), a reference (BCO 41), an appeal (BCO 42), a complaint (BCO 43), a BCO 40-5 proceeding, or a request to assume original jurisdiction (BCO 33-1) properly before it, or it may of its own motion commit ~~any judicial~~ such a case to a commission. Such a commission shall be appointed by the Presbytery from its members other than members of the Session of the church from which the case comes up. The commission shall try the

## CORRECTIONS

case in the manner presented by the Rules of Discipline and shall submit to the Presbytery a full statement of the case and the judgment rendered. ~~The Presbytery without debate shall approve or disapprove of the judgment, or may refer, (a debatable motion), any strictly constitutional issue(s) to a study committee. In case of referral, the Presbytery shall either dismiss some or all of the specific charges raised in the case or decide the case only after the report of the study committee has been heard and discussed. If Presbytery approves, the~~ The judgment of the commission shall be final ~~and shall be entered on the minutes of Presbytery as the action~~ the decision of the Presbytery, and the statement of the case and judgment printed in its minutes. ~~If Presbytery disapproves, it shall hear the case as a whole, or appoint a new commission to hear the case again.~~

So that *BCO* 15-1 and 15-3 as amended would read:

**15-1.** A commission differs from an ordinary committee in that while a committee is appointed to examine, consider, and report, a commission is authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business referred to it. A commission shall keep a full record of its proceedings, which shall be submitted to the court appointing it. Upon such submission this record shall be entered on the minutes of the court appointing, the date of the submission being the date of “the meeting of the court” for filing requirements under the rules of discipline, with exception of the “notification” dates of *BCO* 42-4 and 43-3. The effective date of dismissal of a commission of Session or Presbytery shall be not before the time allowed for the filing of a complaint or appeal against that commission’s decision has expired. Any complaint or appeal so timely filed, shall be adjudicated by that commission until the matter is settled by that commission or a higher court. When a commission is appointed to serve as an interim Session, its actions are the actions of a Session, not a Presbytery. Every commission of a Presbytery or Session must submit complete minutes and a report of its activities at least once annually to the court which commissioned it.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**15-3.** Presbytery as a whole may hear a case, with or without process (*BCO* 31-38), a reference (*BCO* 41), an appeal (*BCO* 42), a complaint (*BCO* 43), a *BCO* 40-5 proceeding, or a request to assume original jurisdiction (*BCO* 33-1) properly before it, or it may of its own motion commit such a case to a commission. Such a commission shall be appointed by the Presbytery from its members other than members of the Session of the church from which the case comes up. The commission shall try the case in the manner presented by the Rules of Discipline and shall submit to the Presbytery a full statement of the case and the judgment rendered. The judgment of the commission shall be the decision of the Presbytery, and the statement of the case and judgment printed in its minutes.

<b>For: 68      Against: 12</b>
---------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 3: Amend *BCO 15-1* and 15-3

		Item 2 - <i>BCO 8</i>							Item 2 - <i>BCO 8</i>						
	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.		Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.		Presbytery
1	Arizona						45	Mississippi Valley	83	0	0	1			
2	Ascension	33	0	2	1		46	Missouri	60	0	2	1			
3	Blue Ridge	61	0	1	1		47	Nashville	72	0	0	1			
4	Calvary	88	0	1	1		48	New Jersey	21	0	0	1			
5	Canada West	26	0	0	1		49	New River	14	0	0	1			
6	Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50	New York State	5	21	1			1	
7	Central Carolina	51	0	0	1		51	North Florida	29	0	0	1			
8	Central Florida	60	0	0	1		52	North Texas	81	0	3	1			
9	Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53	Northern California	34	0	0	1			
10	Central Indiana	16	0	0	1		54	Northern Illinois	30	0	0	1			
11	Chesapeake	71	0	1	1		55	Northern New England	17	0	1	1			
12	Chicago Metro	37	0	0	1		56	Northwest Georgia	44	0	1	1			
13	Columbus Metro						57	Ohio	12	2	3	1			
14	Covenant	76	1	0	1		58	Ohio Valley	42	0	0	1			
15	Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59	Pacific	19	0	1	1			
16	Eastern Carolina	50	0	0	1		60	Pacific Northwest							
17	Eastern Pennsylvania	27	0	1	1		61	Palmetto	75	0	0	1			
18	Evangel	87	0	0	1		62	PeeDee	40	0	0	1			
19	Fellowship	36	0	1	1		63	Philadelphia	16	0	0	1			
20	Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64	Philadelphia Metro West	17	0	0	1			
21	Grace	47	0	1	1		65	Piedmont Triad	38	0	0	1			
22	Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66	Pittsburgh	48	0	1	1			
23	Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67	Platte Valley	7	10	4			1	
24	Gulfstream						68	Potomac	46	1	1	1			
25	Heartland	25	0	0	1		69	Providence	51	0	0	1			
26	Heritage	35	0	3	1		70	Rio Grande	25	1	0	1			
27	Highlands	58	0	0	1		71	Rocky Mountain	77	0	0	1			
28	Hills and Plains	41	0	2	1		72	Savannah River	39	0	1	1			
29	Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73	Siouxlands	32	0	0	1			
30	Illiana	16	0	0	1		74	South Coast							
31	Iowa	13	0	0	1		75	South Florida	22	0	8	1			
32	James River	79	0	0	1		76	South Texas	50	1	2	1			
33	Korean Capital	35	0	1	1		77	Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1			
34	Korean Central	30	0	3	1		78	Southern Louisiana	19	0	1	1			
35	Korean Eastern						79	Southern New England	68	0	0	1			
36	Korean Northeastern						80	Southwest Florida	52	9	2	1			
37	Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81	Suncoast Florida	44	0	0	1			
38	Korean Southeastern						82	Susquehanna Valley	30	3	1	1			
39	Korean Southern	11	2	3	1		83	Tennessee Valley	42	0	1	1			
40	Korean Southwest	26	0	0	1		84	Tidewater	43	0	0	1			
41	Korean Southwest O.C.	33	1	4	1		85	Warrior	29	0	0	1			
42	Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86	West Hudson	20	1	2	1			
43	Metro Atlanta	106	2	3	1		87	Westminster	28	0	1	1			
44	Metropolitan New York	32	1	0	1		88	Wisconsin	17	7	5	1			

Official Totals: For - 68      Against – 12  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 4: Amend BCO 16 by adding 16-4** regarding qualifications for church office.

[Overture 29 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

***BCO 16.***

**4. Officers in the Presbyterian Church in America must be above reproach in their walk and Christlike in their character. While office bearers will see spiritual perfection only in glory, they will continue in this life to confess and to mortify remaining sins in light of God's work of progressive sanctification. Therefore, to be qualified for office, they must affirm the sinfulness of fallen desires, the reality and hope of progressive sanctification, and be committed to the pursuit of Spirit-empowered victory over their sinful temptations, inclinations, and actions.**

<b>For: 79      Against: 1</b>
--------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 4: Amend *BCO* 16

Item 4 - <i>BCO</i> 16						Item 4 - <i>BCO</i> 16					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	85	0	0	1	
2 Ascension	32	1	3	1		46 Missouri	64	0	0	1	
3 Blue Ridge	64	0	0	1		47 Nashville	71	1	1	1	
4 Calvary	85	0	7	1		48 New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	28	0	0	1		49 New River	15	0	0	1	
6 Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50 New York State	24	3	0	1	
7 Central Carolina	50	0	0	1		51 North Florida	44	0	1	1	
8 Central Florida	102	4	3	1		52 North Texas	83	5	0	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53 Northern California	21	6	6	1	
10 Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54 Northern Illinois	29	0	0	1	
11 Chesapeake	69	0	2	1		55 Northern New England	16	1	2	1	
12 Chicago Metro	41	1	0	1		56 Northwest Georgia	42	0	1	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	18	0	0	1	
14 Covenant	85	1	0	1		58 Ohio Valley	42	1	1	1	
15 Eastern Canada	34	0	1	1		59 Pacific	15	4	1	1	
16 Eastern Carolina	51	0	1	1		60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	27	0	2	1		61 Palmetto	69	1	0	1	
18 Evangel	90	0	0	1		62 PeeDee	39	0	1	1	
19 Fellowship	38	0	0	1		63 Philadelphia	16	0	2	1	
20 Georgia Foothills	38	2	2	1		64 Philadelphia Metro We	17	0	0	1	
21 Grace	41	0	2	1		65 Piedmont Triad	22	15	0	1	
22 Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66 Pittsburgh	53	0	0	1	
23 Gulf Coast	36	1	0	1		67 Platte Valley	22	0	0	1	
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	42	27	4	1	
25 Heartland	25	0	0	1		69 Providence	51	0	0	1	
26 Heritage	39	0	2	1		70 Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27 Highlands	54	4	0	1		71 Rocky Mountain	75	0	1	1	
28 Hills and Plains	39	1	4	1		72 Savannah River	37	1	0	1	
29 Houston Metro	38	12	1	1		73 Siouxslands	29	1	0	1	
30 Ililiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	14	0	0	1		75 South Florida	24	2	4	1	
32 James River	80	0	0	1		76 South Texas	51	0	0	1	
33 Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77 Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34 Korean Central	32	0	2	1		78 Southern Louisiana	21	0	1	1	
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	58	4	1	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	61	0	0	1	
37 Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81 Suncoast Florida	36	8	2	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	52	3	3	1	
39 Korean Southern	13	2	1	1		83 Tennessee Valley	67	22	7	1	
40 Korean Southwest	28	0	0	1		84 Tidewater	42	1	0	1	
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	34	2	2	1		85 Warrior	29	1	0	1	
42 Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86 West Hudson	24	1	2	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	93	11	7	1		87 Westminster	29	0	1	1	
44 Metropolitan New York	9	23	2		1	88 Wisconsin	18	8	7	1	

Official Totals:                      For - 79                      Against – 1  
 Number of Presbyteries:        88  
 Number Reporting:                80  
 2/3 Approval is:                    59

**ITEM 5: Amend BCO 21-4 and 24-1** by adding the following paragraphs regarding requirements for ordination:

- a new sub-paragraph 21-4.e and the re-lettering of subsequent sub-paragraphs 21-4.e-h to 21-4.f-i; and
- a new second paragraph to 24-1.

[Overture 31 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

***BCO 21.***

**4. Ordination Requirements and Procedures**

- e. In the examination of the candidate's personal character, the presbytery shall give specific attention to potential notorious concerns. Careful attention must be given to his practical struggle against sinful actions, as well as to persistent sinful desires. The candidate must give clear testimony of reliance upon his union with Christ and the benefits thereof by the Holy Spirit, depending on this work of grace to make progress over sin (Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 8:29) and to bear fruit (Psalm 1:3, Gal. 5:22-23). While imperfection will remain, when confessing sins and sinful temptations publicly, the candidate must exercise great care not to diminish the seriousness of those sins in the eyes of the congregation, as though they were matters of little consequence, but rather should testify to the work of the Holy Spirit in his progress in holiness (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

**Reletter** current paragraphs 21-4.e-h to 21-4.f-i

***BCO 24.***

**1.** Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and deacon in the following manner: At such times as determined by the Session, communicant members of the congregation may submit names to the Session, keeping in mind that each prospective officer should be an active male member who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. After the close of the nomination period nominees for the office of ruling elder and/or deacon shall receive instruction in the qualifications and work of the office. Each nominee shall then be examined in:

- a. his Christian experience, especially his personal character and family management (based on the

## CORRECTIONS

qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9),

- b. his knowledge of Bible content,
- c. his knowledge of the system of doctrine, government, discipline contained in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America (*BCO* Preface III, The Constitution Defined),
- d. the duties of the office to which he has been nominated, and
- e. his willingness to give assent to the questions required for ordination. (*BCO* 24-6)

In the examination of the nominee's personal character, the Session shall give specific attention to potential notorious concerns. Careful attention must be given to his practical struggle against sinful actions, as well as to persistent sinful desires. The nominee must give clear testimony of reliance upon his union with Christ and the benefits thereof by the Holy Spirit, depending on this work of grace to make progress over sin (Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 8:29) and to bear fruit (Psalm 1:3, Gal. 5:22-23). While imperfection will remain, when confessing sins and sinful temptations publicly, the nominee must exercise great care not to diminish the seriousness of those sins in the eyes of the congregation, as though they were matters of little consequence, but rather should testify to the work of the Holy in his progress in holiness (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

So that *BCO* 21-4.e and 24-1 as amended would read:

### **21-4. Ordination Requirements and Procedures**

- e. In the examination of the candidate's personal character, the presbytery shall give specific attention to potential notorious concerns. Careful attention must be given to his practical struggle against sinful actions, as well as to persistent sinful desires. The candidate must give clear testimony of reliance upon his union with Christ and the benefits thereof by the Holy Spirit, depending on this work of grace to make progress over sin (Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 8:29) and to bear fruit (Psalm 1:3, Gal. 5:22-23). While imperfection will remain, when confessing sins and sinful temptations publicly, the candidate must exercise great care not to diminish the seriousness of



## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

those sins in the eyes of the congregation, as though they were matters of little consequence, but rather should testify to the work of the Holy Spirit in his progress in holiness (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

### **24-1. (following 24-1.a-e)**

In the examination of the nominee's personal character, the Session shall give specific attention to potential notorious concerns. Careful attention must be given to his practical struggle against sinful actions, as well as to persistent sinful desires. The nominee must give clear testimony of reliance upon his union with Christ and the benefits thereof by the Holy Spirit, depending on this work of grace to make progress over sin (Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 8:29) and to bear fruit (Psalm 1:3, Gal. 5:22-23). While imperfection will remain, when confessing sins and sinful temptations publicly, the nominee must exercise great care not to diminish the seriousness of those sins in the eyes of the congregation, as though they were matters of little consequence, but rather should testify to the work of the Holy Spirit in his progress in holiness (1 Cor. 6:9-11).

<b>For: 76      Against: 4</b>
--------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 5: Amend BCO 21-4 and 24-1

Item 5 - BCO 21-4 and 24-1						Item 5 - BCO 21-4 and 24-1					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	85	0	0	1	
2 Ascension	33	1	2	1		46 Missouri	64	0	0	1	
3 Blue Ridge	64	1	3	1		47 Nashville	70	3	0	1	
4 Calvary	93	0	3	1		48 New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	24	0	1	1		49 New River	15	0	0	1	
6 Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50 New York State	24	3	0	1	
7 Central Carolina	52	0	0	1		51 North Florida	41	3	1	1	
8 Central Florida	54	5	4	1		52 North Texas	53	31	5	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53 Northern California	20	5	8	1	
10 Central Indiana	13	5	0	1		54 Northern Illinois	21	6	2	1	
11 Chesapeake	71	0	1	1		55 Northern New England	11	3	6	1	
12 Chicago Metro	21	20	3	1		56 Northwest Georgia	42	0	0	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	18	0	0	1	
14 Covenant	76	3	5	1		58 Ohio Valley	37	0	2	1	
15 Eastern Canada	26	5	1	1		59 Pacific	9	10	1		1
16 Eastern Carolina	43	4	5	1		60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	26	0	3	1		61 Palmetto	67	4	0	1	
18 Evangel	88	0	0	1		62 PeeDee	38	0	2	1	
19 Fellowship	38	0	0	1		63 Philadelphia	15	0	2	1	
20 Georgia Foothills	21	20	2	1		64 Philadelphia Metro We	17	0	0	1	
21 Grace	43	0	0	1		65 Piedmont Triad	30	7	0	1	
22 Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66 Pittsburgh	49	1	0	1	
23 Gulf Coast	37	1	0	1		67 Platte Valley	9	12	0		1
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	39	30	4	1	
25 Heartland	25	0	0	1		69 Providence	52	3	0	1	
26 Heritage	35	4	5	1		70 Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27 Highlands	51	6	0	1		71 Rocky Mountain	75	0	1	1	
28 Hills and Plains	34	3	7	1		72 Savannah River	27	10	1	1	
29 Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73 Siouxlands	32	0	0	1	
30 Illiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	15	0	0	1		75 South Florida	25	0	5	1	
32 James River	80	0	0	1		76 South Texas	52	0	0	1	
33 Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77 Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34 Korean Central	29	0	5	1		78 Southern Louisiana	14	5	4	1	
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	35	28	3	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	59	2	1	1	
37 Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81 Suncoast Florida	36	5	2	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	46	11	2	1	
39 Korean Southern	14	1	1	1		83 Tennessee Valley	52	0	1	1	
40 Korean Southwest	28	0	0	1		84 Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	32	3	3	1		85 Warrior	28	1	1	1	
42 Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86 West Hudson	23	1	3	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	48	60	3		1	87 Westminster	27	1	2	1	
44 Metropolitan New York	2	26	2		1	88 Wisconsin	18	8	8	1	

Official Totals: For - 76 Against - 4  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**ITEM 6: Amend BCO 31-10 and 33-4** on pre-trial non-disciplinary suspensions.

[Overture 2021-20 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**BCO 31-10.** When a member of a church court is under process, all his official functions may be suspended at the court's discretion; but this shall never be done in the way of censure, and this requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

**BCO 33-4.** When it is impracticable immediately to commence process against an accused church member, the Session may, if it thinks the edification of the Church requires it, prevent the accused from approaching the Lord's Table until the charges against him can be examined, but this requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

<b>For: 78      Against: 2</b>
--------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 6: BCO 31-10 and 33-4

Item 6 - BCO 31-10 and 33-4						Item 6 - BCO 31-10 and 33-4					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	85	0	0	1	
2 Ascension	35	0	0	1		46 Missouri	60	0	2	1	
3 Blue Ridge	64	0	2	1		47 Nashville	58	0	0	1	
4 Calvary	93	0	0	1		48 New Jersey	20	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	26	0	0	1		49 New River	15	0	0	1	
6 Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50 New York State	28	0	0	1	
7 Central Carolina	48	3	0	1		51 North Florida	23	0	2	1	
8 Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52 North Texas	95	0	3	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53 Northern California	34	0	0	1	
10 Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54 Northern Illinois	30	0	0	1	
11 Chesapeake	15	42	9		1	55 Northern New England	17	0	2	1	
12 Chicago Metro	43	0	0	1		56 Northwest Georgia	33	6	3	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	16	0	0	1	
14 Covenant	5	74	4		1	58 Ohio Valley	39	0	0	1	
15 Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59 Pacific	19	0	1	1	
16 Eastern Carolina	52	0	0	1		60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	26	0	2	1		61 Palmetto	70	0	1	1	
18 Evangel	84	1	5	1		62 PeeDee	37	0	1	1	
19 Fellowship	38	0	0	1		63 Philadelphia	16	0	0	1	
20 Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64 Philadelphia Metro We	16	0	0	1	
21 Grace	37	0	2	1		65 Piedmont Triad	39	0	0	1	
22 Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66 Pittsburgh	40	3	6	1	
23 Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67 Platte Valley	22	0	0	1	
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	62	1	2	1	
25 Heartland	22	2	1	1		69 Providence	51	0	0	1	
26 Heritage	35	0	3	1		70 Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27 Highlands	35	17	2	1		71 Rocky Mountain	65	0	2	1	
28 Hills and Plains	39	0	3	1		72 Savannah River	37	0	1	1	
29 Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73 Siouxlands	19	8	0	1	
30 Illiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	15	0	0	1		75 South Florida	25	0	5	1	
32 James River	77	0	0	1		76 South Texas	50	1	2	1	
33 Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77 Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34 Korean Central	33	0	1	1		78 Southern Louisiana	25	0	0	1	
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	65	0	0	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	64	0	0	1	
37 Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81 Suncoast Florida	45	0	1	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	24	19	8	1	
39 Korean Southern	14	1	1	1		83 Tennessee Valley	48	0	0	1	
40 Korean Southwest	25	0	0	1		84 Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	31	5	2	1		85 Warrior	28	0	0	1	
42 Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86 West Hudson	19	0	3	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	93	3	15	1		87 Westminster	30	0	0	1	
44 Metropolitan New York	32	0	0	1		88 Wisconsin	30	1	1	1	

Official Totals: For - 78 Against – 2  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 7: Amend BCO 33-1 and 34-1**, establishing a percentage threshold for Original Jurisdiction requests. [Overture 8 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**33-1.** Process against ~~all a church members, other than ministers of the Gospel,~~ shall be entered before the Session of the church to which such members belongs, ~~except in cases of appeal.~~ However, if the Session does not indict in either doctrinal cases or instances of public scandal and the Session refuses to act in doctrinal cases or instances of public scandal and two other Sessions of at least ten percent (10%) of churches in the same Presbytery request the Presbytery of which the church is a member to initiate proper or appropriate action in a case of process and thus assume original jurisdiction for a case of process (to first receive and initially hear and determine) and authority, the Presbytery shall do so. The Presbytery may assess the costs thereof equitably among the parties, including the petitioning Sessions and the Session of the church member.

**34-1.** Process against a minister shall be entered before the Presbytery of which he is a member. However, if the Presbytery does not indict in either doctrinal cases or instances of public scandal and the Presbytery refuses to act in doctrinal cases or cases of public scandal and two other at least ten percent (10%) of Presbyteries request the General Assembly to assume original jurisdiction for a case of process (to first receive and initially hear and determine), the General Assembly shall do so. The General Assembly may assess the costs thereof equitably among the parties, including the petitioning Presbyteries and the Presbytery of the minister.

So that BCO 33-1 and 34-1 as amended would read:

**33-1.** Process against a church member shall be entered before the Session of the church to which such member belongs. However, if the Session does not indict in either doctrinal cases or instances of public scandal and the Sessions of at least ten percent (10%) of churches in the same Presbytery request the Presbytery of which the church is a member to assume original jurisdiction for a case of process, the Presbytery shall do so. The Presbytery may assess the costs

## CORRECTIONS

thereof equitably among the parties, including the petitioning Sessions and the Session of the church member.

**34-1.** Process against a minister shall be entered before the Presbytery of which he is a member. However, if the Presbytery does not indict in either doctrinal cases or instances of public scandal and at least ten percent (10%) of Presbyteries request the General Assembly to assume original jurisdiction for a case of process, the General Assembly shall do so. The General Assembly may assess the costs thereof equitably among the parties, including the petitioning Presbyteries and the Presbytery of the minister.

<b>For: 40      Against: 40</b>
---------------------------------

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## ITEM 7: BCO 33-1 and 34-1

Item 7 - BCO 33-1 and 34-1						Item 7 - BCO 33-1 and 34-1					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	80	5	0	1	
2 Ascension	22	5	9	1		46 Missouri	12	49	0		1
3 Blue Ridge	11	53	3		1	47 Nashville	10	55	0		1
4 Calvary	79	10	5	1		New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	25	0	0	1		49 New River	4	6	5		1
6 Catawba Valley	35	3	0	1		50 New York State	4	25	0		1
7 Central Carolina	40	2	0	1		51 North Florida	25	1	1	1	
8 Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52 North Texas	55	36	3	1	
9 Central Georgia	2	36	1		1	53 Northern California	0	34	3		1
10 Central Indiana	0	17	1		1	54 Northern Illinois	2	26	2		1
11 Chesapeake	0	70	1		1	55 Northern New England	0	19	0		1
12 Chicago Metro	43	1	0	1		56 Northwest Georgia	23	12	8	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	14	3	1	1	
14 Covenant	15	62	2		1	58 Ohio Valley	28	9	2	1	
15 Eastern Canada	0	22	8		1	59 Pacific	10	0	1	1	
16 Eastern Carolina	5	36	11		1	60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	17	6	6	1		61 Palmetto	28	36	7		1
18 Evangel	9	79	1		1	62 PeeDee	7	31	2		1
19 Fellowship	16	17	5		1	63 Philadelphia	3	12	2		1
20 Georgia Foothills	34	2	6	1		64 Philadelphia Metro We	14	2	0	1	
21 Grace	13	27	0		1	65 Piedmont Triad	16	20	0		1
22 Great Lakes	52	2	0	1		66 Pittsburgh	10	34	6		1
23 Gulf Coast	27	10	1	1		67 Platte Valley	5	10	6		1
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	7	37	1		1
25 Heartland	23	0	2	1		69 Providence	43	8	3	1	
26 Heritage	23	17	4	1		70 Rio Grande	8	17	0		1
27 Highlands	16	35	5		1	71 Rocky Mountain	55	17	3	1	
28 Hills and Plains	9	24	10		1	72 Savannah River	22	17	1	1	
29 Houston Metro	37	12	2	1		73 Siouxlands	27	1	1	1	
30 Ililiana	15	0	1	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	2	13	0		1	75 South Florida	14	15	1		1
32 James River	40	39	2	1		76 South Texas	6	43	3		1
33 Korean Capital	21	15	4	1		77 Southeast Alabama	43	1	0	1	
34 Korean Central	21	4	9	1		78 Southern Louisiana	1	17	4		1
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	35	19	8	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	4	54	3		1
37 Korean Northwest	20	0	2	1		81 Suncoast Florida	6	39	1		1
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	29	14	10	1	
39 Korean Southern	14	2	0	1		83 Tennessee Valley	34	25	7	1	
40 Korean Southwest	2	19	0		1	84 Tidewater	5	34	4		1
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	33	3	2	1		85 Warrior	4	22	2		1
42 Lowcountry	13	15	2		1	86 West Hudson	20	0	2	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	28	73	10		1	87 Westminster	6	22	2		1
44 Metropolitan New York	2	21	3		1	88 Wisconsin	25	1	6	1	

Official Totals:                      For - 40                      Against – 40  
 Number of Presbyteries:        88  
 Number Reporting:                80  
 2/3 Approval is:                    59

**ITEM 8: Amend BCO 35, paragraphs 1-5** to allow victim protection provisions, and renumber paragraphs 6-14 accordingly. [Overture 2021-40 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**35-1.** All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses, except such as do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and punishments. ~~The accused party may be allowed, but shall not be compelled to testify; but the accuser shall be required to testify, on the demand of the accused.~~ Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency. ~~It belongs to the court to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence.~~

**35-2.** The accused party is allowed, but shall not be compelled, to testify; but the accuser shall be required to testify, on the demand of the accused. A husband or wife shall not be compelled to bear testimony against one another in any court.

**35-3.** A court may, at the request of either party, or at its own initiative, make reasonable accommodation to prevent in-person contact with the accused:

a. The court may have testimony taken by videoconference.

The videoconference shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can see and hear each other at the same time, and which allows for live cross-examination by both parties.

b. The court may restrict the accused from appearing on the videoconference screen, and when the accused is represented by counsel (BCO 32-19), cross-examination shall be conducted by that counsel.

c. In all cases where such accommodation has been made, videoconference testimony by witnesses under the age of 18 shall be taken by written interrogatory to be read to the witness by a person appointed by the court in accordance with the applicable provisions of BCO 35-11.



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

- d. The court shall include in the record of the proceedings its reasons for this accommodation and any objection from either party.

**35-34.** The testimony of more than one witness shall be necessary in order to establish any charge; yet if, in addition to the testimony of one witness, corroborative evidence be produced, the offense may be considered to be proved.

**35-5.** ~~Witnesses shall be examined first by the party introducing them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; after which any member of the court, or either party, may put additional interrogatories. No question shall be put or answered except by permission of the moderator, subject to an appeal to the court. The court shall not permit questions frivolous or irrelevant to the charge at issue. It belongs to the court to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence.~~ **[Editorial note: In the current BCO, this sentence is the last sentence in 35-1.]**

**35-46.** No witness afterwards to be examined, unless a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party object.

**35-57.** Witnesses shall be examined first by the party introducing them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; after which any member of the court, or either party, may put additional interrogatories. No question shall be put or answered except by permission of the moderator, subject to an appeal to the court. The court shall not permit questions frivolous or irrelevant to the charge at issue. **[Editorial note: In the current BCO, this paragraph is 35-5 – no change in wording.]**

**Renumber current BCO 35-6 through BCO 35-14 to read 35-8 through 35-15.**

**So that BCO 35-1 through 35-6 would read:**

**35-1.** All persons of proper age and intelligence are competent witnesses, except such as do not believe in the existence of God, or a future state of rewards and

punishments. Either party has the right to challenge a witness whom he believes to be incompetent, and the court shall examine and decide upon his competency.

**35-2.** The accused party is allowed, but shall not be compelled, to testify; but the accuser shall be required to testify, on the demand of the accused. A husband or wife shall not be compelled to bear testimony against one another in any court.

**35-3.** A court may, at the request of either party, or at its own initiative, make reasonable accommodation to prevent in-person contact with the accused:

- a. The court may have testimony taken by videoconference. The videoconference shall employ technical means that ensure that all persons participating in the meeting can see and hear each other at the same time, and which allows for live cross-examination by both parties.
- b. The court may restrict the accused from appearing on the videoconference screen, and when the accused is represented by counsel (*BCO* 32-19), cross-examination shall be conducted by that counsel.
- c. In all cases where such accommodation has been made, videoconference testimony by witnesses under the age of 18 shall be taken by written interrogatory to be read to the witness by a person appointed by the court in accordance with the applicable provisions of *BCO* 35-11.
- d. The court shall include in the record of the proceedings its reasons for this accommodation and any objection from either party.

**35-4.** The testimony of more than one witness shall be necessary in order to establish any charge; yet if, in addition to the testimony of one witness, corroborative evidence be produced, the offense may be considered to be proved.

**35-5.** It belongs to the court to judge the degree of credibility to be attached to all evidence.

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**35-6.** No witness afterwards to be examined, unless a member of the court, shall be present during the examination of another witness on the same case, if either party object.

**35-7.** Witnesses shall be examined first by the party introducing them; then cross-examined by the opposite party; after which any member of the court, or either party, may put additional interrogatories. No question shall be put or answered except by permission of the moderator, subject to an appeal to the court. The court shall not permit questions frivolous or irrelevant to the charge at issue.

**Renumber current *BCO* 35-6 through *BCO* 35-14 to read 35-8 through 35-15.**

<b>For: 77      Against: 3</b>
--------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 8: BCO 35

Item 8 - BCO 35						Item 8 - BCO 35					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	86	0	0	1	
2 Ascension	35	0	0	1		46 Missouri	60	0	2	1	
3 Blue Ridge	59	1	3	1		47 Nashville	68	0	0	1	
4 Calvary	90	0	0	1		48 New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	25	0	0	1		49 New River	14	0	1	1	
6 Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50 New York State	29	0	0	1	
7 Central Carolina	51	0	0	1		51 North Florida	21	0	4	1	
8 Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52 North Texas	72	0	2	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53 Northern California	34	0	0	1	
10 Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54 Northern Illinois	28	0	1	1	
11 Chesapeake	12	46	7		1	55 Northern New England	18	0	1	1	
12 Chicago Metro	43	0	0	1		56 Northwest Georgia	33	0	3	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	16	0	1	1	
14 Covenant	73	1	5	1		58 Ohio Valley	37	1	1	1	
15 Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59 Pacific	23	0	13	1	
16 Eastern Carolina	52	0	0	1		60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	24	1	3	1		61 Palmetto	65	3	3	1	
18 Evangel	82	0	3	3		62 PeeDee	33	2	3	1	
19 Fellowship	37	0	0	1		63 Philadelphia	16	0	1	1	
20 Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64 Philadelphia Metro We	16	0	0	1	
21 Grace	41	0	0	1		65 Piedmont Triad	40	0	0	1	
22 Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66 Pittsburgh	46	2	3	1	
23 Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67 Platte Valley	22	0	0	1	
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	66	0	1	1	
25 Heartland	12	10	3	1		69 Providence	51	0	0	1	
26 Heritage	35	0	3	1		70 Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27 Highlands	55	0	1	1		71 Rocky Mountain	70	0	1	1	
28 Hills and Plains	41	0	2	1		72 Savannah River	38	0	1	1	
29 Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73 Siouxlands	30	0	0	1	
30 Illiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	11	2	2	1		75 South Florida	28	0	2	1	
32 James River	13	61	5		1	76 South Texas	47	4	2	1	
33 Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77 Southeast Alabama	23	15	6	1	
34 Korean Central	32	0	0	1		78 Southern Louisiana	21	0	0	1	
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	62	0	1	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	57	2	1	1	
37 Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81 Suncoast Florida	45	0	1	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	51	1	1	1	
39 Korean Southern	12	2	2	1		83 Tennessee Valley	57	4	5	1	
40 Korean Southwest	22	0	0	1		84 Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	35	0	3	1		85 Warrior	28	0	1	1	
42 Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86 West Hudson	19	0	3	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	101	5	5	1		87 Westminster	2	26	2		1
44 Metropolitan New York	32	0	0	1		88 Wisconsin	27	0	2	1	

Official Totals: For - 77 Against – 3  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 9: Amend *BCO 38-1***, regarding counsel for a case without process, by the addition of a final sentence. [Overture 2021-35 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

***BCO 38-1.*** When any person shall come forward and make his offense known to the court, a full statement of the facts shall be recorded and judgment rendered without process. In handling a confession of guilt, it is essential that the person intends to confess and permit the court to render judgment without process. Statements made by him in the presence of the court must not be taken as a basis of a judgment without process except by his consent. In the event a confession is intended, a full statement of the facts should be approved by the accused, and by the court, before the court proceeds to a judgment. The accused person has the right of complaint against the judgment. The person has the right to be assisted by counsel at any point, in accord with the stipulations of *BCO 32-19*.

<b>For: 80      Against: 0</b>
--------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 9: BCO 38-1

Item 9 - BCO 38-1						Item 9 - BCO 38-1					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.		For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	85	0	0	1	
2 Ascension	34	1	0	1		46 Missouri	60	0	2	1	
3 Blue Ridge	59	1	0	1		47 Nashville	69	0	1	1	
4 Calvary	92	0	0	1		48 New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	28	0	0	1		49 New River	14	0	0	1	
6 Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50 New York State	28	0	1	1	
7 Central Carolina	51	0	0	1		51 North Florida	27	0	1	1	
8 Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52 North Texas	96	0	2	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53 Northern California	34	0	0	1	
10 Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54 Northern Illinois	29	0	0	1	
11 Chesapeake	61	0	0	1		55 Northern New England	19	0	0	1	
12 Chicago Metro	43	0	0	1		56 Northwest Georgia	40	0	0	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	17	0	0	1	
14 Covenant	74	5	0	1		58 Ohio Valley	26	0	1	1	
15 Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59 Pacific	20	0	15	1	
16 Eastern Carolina	53	0	0	1		60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	26	0	3	1		61 Palmetto	68	0	0	1	
18 Evangel	84	0	0	1		62 PeeDee	40	0	0	1	
19 Fellowship	38	0	0	1		63 Philadelphia	16	0	0	1	
20 Georgia Foothills	42	9	2	1		64 Philadelphia Metro We	16	0	0	1	
21 Grace	43	0	0	1		65 Piedmont Triad	39	0	0	1	
22 Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66 Pittsburgh	49	1	1	1	
23 Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67 Platte Valley	22	0	0	1	
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	65	0	0	1	
25 Heartland	25	0	0	1		69 Providence	51	0	0	1	
26 Heritage	35	0	3	1		70 Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27 Highlands	55	0	0	1		71 Rocky Mountain	70	0	2	1	
28 Hills and Plains	40	0	2	1		72 Savannah River	39	0	1	1	
29 Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73 Siouxlands	31	0	0	1	
30 Illiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	15	0	0	1		75 South Florida	26	0	4	1	
32 James River	77	0	0	1		76 South Texas	50	1	2	1	
33 Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77 Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34 Korean Central	33	0	2	1		78 Southern Louisiana	21	0	0	1	
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	63	0	0	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	59	0	1	1	
37 Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81 Suncoast Florida	43	1	2	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	52	1	1	1	
39 Korean Southern	14	2	0	1		83 Tennessee Valley	68	0	1	1	
40 Korean Southwest	25	0	0	1		84 Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	32	1	5	1		85 Warrior	28	0	0	1	
42 Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86 West Hudson	19	0	3	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	99	1	11	1		87 Westminster	30	0	0	1	
44 Metropolitan New York	32	0	0	1		88 Wisconsin	30	1	1	1	

Official Totals: For - 80 Against - 0  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 10: Amend *BCO 38-1* and *42-2* to allow appealing a censure in a Case Without Process. [Overture 2021-19 was answered in the affirmative.]**

***BCO 38-1.*** When any person shall come forward and make his offense known to the court, a full statement of the facts shall be recorded and judgment rendered without process. In handling a confession of guilt, it is essential that the person intends to confess and permit the court to render judgment without process. Statements made by him in the presence of the court must not be taken as a basis of a judgment without process except by his consent. In the event a confession is intended, a full statement of the facts should be approved by the accused, and by the court, before the court proceeds to a judgment. ~~The accused has the right of complaint against the judgment.~~ A censured person has the right to appeal (*BCO 42*).

***BCO 42-2.*** ~~Only~~ The only parties entitled to an appeal are those who have submitted to a regular trial, those appealing a censure in a *BCO 38-1* case without process, and those appealing a *BCO 34-10* divestiture without censure.

<b>For: 79      Against: 1</b>
--------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 10: BCO 38-1 and 42-2

		Item 10 - BCO 38-1 and 42-2							Item 10 - BCO 38-1 and 42-2				
Presbytery		For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.			For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1	Arizona						45	Mississippi Valley	84	0	0	1	
2	Ascension	32	1	0	1		46	Missouri	60	0	2	1	
3	Blue Ridge	60	1	0	1		47	Nashville	72	0	0	1	
4	Calvary	93	0	0	1		48	New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5	Canada West	28	0	0	1		49	New River	15	0	0	1	
6	Catawba Valley	37	0	1	1		50	New York State	29	0	0	1	
7	Central Carolina	50	0	1	1		51	North Florida	25	1	1	1	
8	Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52	North Texas	95	0	2	1	
9	Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53	Northern California	34	0	0	1	
10	Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54	Northern Illinois	29	0	0	1	
11	Chesapeake	15	26	22		1	55	Northern New England	16	0	3	1	
12	Chicago Metro	40	0	3	1		56	Northwest Georgia	38	0	2	1	
13	Columbus Metro						57	Ohio	17	0	0	1	
14	Covenant	83	1	0	1		58	Ohio Valley	35	1	0	1	
15	Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59	Pacific	23	0	12	1	
16	Eastern Carolina	49	0	4	1		60	Pacific Northwest					
17	Eastern Pennsylvania	26	0	4	1		61	Palmetto	67	0	0	1	
18	Evangel	74	0	1	1		62	PeeDee	38	1	1	1	
19	Fellowship	36	0	0	1		63	Philadelphia	16	0	0	1	
20	Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64	Philadelphia Metro Wes	16	0	0	1	
21	Grace	46	0	0	1		65	Piedmont Triad	37	0	0	1	
22	Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66	Pittsburgh	46	1	3	1	
23	Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67	Platte Valley	22	0	0	1	
24	Gulfstream						68	Potomac	61	0	1	1	
25	Heartland	25	0	0	1		69	Providence	51	0	0	1	
26	Heritage	35	0	3	1		70	Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27	Highlands	52	1	1	1		71	Rocky Mountain	71	0	0	1	
28	Hills and Plains	39	1	2	1		72	Savannah River	40	0	0	1	
29	Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73	Siouxlands	30	0	0	1	
30	Illiana	16	0	0	1		74	South Coast					
31	Iowa	15	0	0	1		75	South Florida	28	0	2	1	
32	James River	77	0	0	1		76	South Texas	50	1	2	1	
33	Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77	Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34	Korean Central	31	0	3	1		78	Southern Louisiana	19	0	0	1	
35	Korean Eastern						79	Southern New England	65	0	0	1	
36	Korean Northeastern						80	Southwest Florida	57	0	2	1	
37	Korean Northwest	22	0	0	1		81	Suncoast Florida	43	2	0	1	
38	Korean Southeastern						82	Susquehanna Valley	45	8	5	1	
39	Korean Southern	13	2	1	1		83	Tennessee Valley	67	0	1	1	
40	Korean Southwest	27	0	0	1		84	Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41	Korean Southwest O.C.	33	1	4	1		85	Warrior	29	0	0	1	
42	Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86	West Hudson	20	0	2	1	
43	Metro Atlanta	100	2	9	1		87	Westminster	29	0	1	1	
44	Metropolitan New York	32	0	0	1		88	Wisconsin	30	1	1	1	

Official Totals: For - 79 Against - 1  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59



**ITEM 11: Amend *BCO 42-6*** regarding vote required for maintaining censure during an appeal. [Overture 2021-21 was answered in the affirmative.]

***BCO 42-6.*** Notice of appeal shall have the effect of suspending the judgment of the lower court until the case has been finally decided in the higher court. However, the court of original jurisdiction may, for sufficient reasons duly recorded, prevent the appellant from approaching the Lord's Table, and if an officer, prevent him from exercising some or all his official functions, until the case is finally decided (cf. *BCO* 31-10; 33-4). This shall never be done in the way of censure, and shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority.

<b>For: 76    Against: 4</b>
------------------------------

# CORRECTIONS

## ITEM 11: BCO 42-6

		Item 11 - BCO 42-6							Item 11 - BCO 42-6				
Presbytery		For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.			For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1	Arizona						45	Mississippi Valley	85	0	0	1	
2	Ascension	35	0	0	1		46	Missouri	60	0	2	1	
3	Blue Ridge	60	0	1	1		47	Nashville	67	0	0	1	
4	Calvary	52	34	5	1		48	New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5	Canada West	30	0	0	1		49	New River	15	0	0	1	
6	Catawba Valley	38	0	0	1		50	New York State	28	0	1	1	
7	Central Carolina	6	45	0		1	51	North Florida	24	0	2	1	
8	Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52	North Texas	94	0	2	1	
9	Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53	Northern California	34	0	0	1	
10	Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54	Northern Illinois	29	0	0	1	
11	Chesapeake	5	44	13		1	55	Northern New England	19	0	1	1	
12	Chicago Metro	42	0	0	1		56	Northwest Georgia	33	2	5	1	
13	Columbus Metro						57	Ohio	14	0	3	1	
14	Covenant	64	11	2	1		58	Ohio Valley	33	0	2	1	
15	Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59	Pacific	19	0	1	1	
16	Eastern Carolina	48	0	2	1		60	Pacific Northwest					
17	Eastern Pennsylvania	27	0	1	1		61	Palmetto	71	0	1	1	
18	Evangel	79	0	0	1		62	PeeDee	35	2	1	1	
19	Fellowship	37	0	0	1		63	Philadelphia	16	0	0	1	
20	Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64	Philadelphia Metro Wes	16	0	0	1	
21	Grace	40	0	1	1		65	Piedmont Triad	40	0	0	1	
22	Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66	Pittsburgh	45	1	4	1	
23	Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67	Platte Valley	7	13	0		1
24	Gulfstream						68	Potomac	54	1	5	1	
25	Heartland	25	0	0	1		69	Providence	51	0	0	1	
26	Heritage	35	0	3	1		70	Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27	Highlands	48	2	4	1		71	Rocky Mountain	1	55	14		1
28	Hills and Plains	40	2	1	1		72	Savannah River	38	1	0	1	
29	Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73	Siouxlands	27	2	1	1	
30	Illiana	16	0	0	1		74	South Coast					
31	Iowa	14	0	0	1		75	South Florida	27	0	3	1	
32	James River	77	0	0	1		76	South Texas	50	1	2	1	
33	Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77	Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34	Korean Central	26	0	6	1		78	Southern Louisiana	19	0	0	1	
35	Korean Eastern						79	Southern New England	65	0	1	1	
36	Korean Northeastern						80	Southwest Florida	60	0	0	1	
37	Korean Northwest	21	0	1	1		81	Suncoast Florida	46	0	0	1	
38	Korean Southeastern						82	Susquehanna Valley	26	21	9	1	
39	Korean Southern	14	2	0	1		83	Tennessee Valley	69	0	0	1	
40	Korean Southwest	22	0	0	1		84	Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41	Korean Southwest O.C.	29	3	6	1		85	Warrior	29	0	1	1	
42	Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86	West Hudson	20	0	2	1	
43	Metro Atlanta	100	1	10	1		87	Westminster	29	1	0	1	
44	Metropolitan New York	32	0	0	1		88	Wisconsin	30	1	1	1	

Official Totals: For - 76      Against - 4  
 Number of Presbyteries: 88  
 Number Reporting: 80  
 2/3 Approval is: 59

**ITEM 12: Amend BCO 43-2 and 43-3** regarding timing for considering a complaint.

[Overture 21 was answered in the affirmative as amended.]

**43-2.** A complaint shall first be made to the court whose act or decision is alleged to be in error. Written notice of complaint, with supporting reasons, shall be filed with the clerk of the court within sixty (60) days following the meeting of the court. The court shall consider the complaint at its next stated meeting, or at a called meeting prior to its next stated meeting, provided that the complaint has been filed with the clerk at least ten (10) days in advance. **If the complaint is filed with less than ten (10) days-notice, the court may consider the complaint at a later meeting not more than 60 days later.** No attempt should be made to circularize the court to which complaint is being made by either party.

**43-3.** If, after considering a complaint, the court alleged to be delinquent or in error is of the opinion that it has not erred, and denies the complaint, the complainant may take that complaint to the next higher court. If the lower court fails to consider the complaint against it by or at its next stated meeting, provided that the complaint has been filed with the clerk at least ten (10) days in advance, the complainant may take that complaint to the next higher court. **If the complaint is filed with less than ten (10) days-notice, the court may consider the complaint at a later meeting not more than 60 days later.** Written notice thereof shall be filed with both the clerk of the lower court and the clerk of the higher court within thirty (30) days of notification of the last court's decision.

Notification of the last court's decision shall be deemed to have occurred on the day of mailing (if certified, registered or express mail of a national postal service or any private service where verifying receipt is utilized), the day of hand delivery, or the day of confirmed receipt in the case of email or facsimile. Furthermore, compliance with such requirements shall be deemed to have been fulfilled if a party cannot be located after diligent inquiry or if a party refuses to accept delivery.

CORRECTIONS

**For: 78    Against: 2**

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

## ITEM 12: Amend *BCO* 43-2 and 43-3

Item 12 - <i>BCO</i> 43-2 and 43-3						Item 12 - <i>BCO</i> 43-2 and 43-3					
Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.	Presbytery	For	Against	Abstain	Passed	Not P.
1 Arizona						45 Mississippi Valley	86	0	0	1	
2 Ascension	35	0	1	1		46 Missouri	60	0	2	1	
3 Blue Ridge	59	1	1	1		47 Nashville	70	0	0	1	
4 Calvary	85	0	0	1		48 New Jersey	21	0	0	1	
5 Canada West	28	0	0	1		49 New River	13	0	1	1	
6 Catawba Valley	36	0	3	1		50 New York State	25	1	3	1	
7 Central Carolina	46	0	5	1		51 North Florida	25	0	0	1	
8 Central Florida	61	0	1	1		52 North Texas	95	0	0	1	
9 Central Georgia	38	0	0	1		53 Northern California	34	0	0	1	
10 Central Indiana	18	0	0	1		54 Northern Illinois	29	0	0	1	
11 Chesapeake	51	0	13	1		55 Northern New England	18	1	0	1	
12 Chicago Metro	43	0	0	1		56 Northwest Georgia	38	1	1	1	
13 Columbus Metro						57 Ohio	2	16	0		1
14 Covenant	78	1	0	1		58 Ohio Valley	37	0	0	1	
15 Eastern Canada	28	0	2	1		59 Pacific	18	1	1	1	
16 Eastern Carolina	50	0	0	1		60 Pacific Northwest					
17 Eastern Pennsylvania	26	0	2	1		61 Palmetto	70	0	2	1	
18 Evangel	89	0	0	1		62 PeeDee	37	0	3	1	
19 Fellowship	38	0	0	1		63 Philadelphia	16	0	0	1	
20 Georgia Foothills	42	0	2	1		64 Philadelphia Metro West	15	0	1	1	
21 Grace	45	0	0	1		65 Piedmont Triad	40	0	0	1	
22 Great Lakes	46	1	2	1		66 Pittsburgh	48	1	1	1	
23 Gulf Coast	37	0	0	1		67 Platte Valley	14	3	3	1	
24 Gulfstream						68 Potomac	51	0	0	1	
25 Heartland	25	0	0	1		69 Providence	51	0	0	1	
26 Heritage	35	0	3	1		70 Rio Grande	25	1	0	1	
27 Highlands	40	10	4	1		71 Rocky Mountain	71	0	0	1	
28 Hills and Plains	39	0	3	1		72 Savannah River	36	2	0	1	
29 Houston Metro	50	0	0	1		73 Siouxlands	30	0	0	1	
30 Illiana	16	0	0	1		74 South Coast					
31 Iowa	15	0	0	1		75 South Florida	26	1	3	1	
32 James River	77	0	0	1		76 South Texas	48	5	1	1	
33 Korean Capital	38	0	0	1		77 Southeast Alabama	44	0	0	1	
34 Korean Central	28	0	3	1		78 Southern Louisiana	19	0	0	1	
35 Korean Eastern						79 Southern New England	66	0	1	1	
36 Korean Northeastern						80 Southwest Florida	21	27	7		1
37 Korean Northwest	21	0	1	1		81 Suncoast Florida	47	0	0	1	
38 Korean Southeastern						82 Susquehanna Valley	46	5	7	1	
39 Korean Southern	13	2	1	1		83 Tennessee Valley	68	0	0	1	
40 Korean Southwest	25	0	0	1		84 Tidewater	43	0	0	1	
41 Korean Southwest O.C.	36	0	2	1		85 Warrior	29	0	0	1	
42 Lowcountry	30	0	0	1		86 West Hudson	20	0	2	1	
43 Metro Atlanta	100	2	9	1		87 Westminster	30	0	0	1	
44 Metropolitan New York	32	0	0	1		88 Wisconsin	30	1	1	1	

Official Totals:                      For - 78                      Against – 2  
 Number of Presbyteries:        88  
 Number Reporting:                80  
 2/3 Approval is:                    59

## PART V

### REFERENCES AND INDEX

#### FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY PRE-ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY DOCKET

Presbyterian Church in America  
Greater Richmond Convention Center  
Richmond, VA • June 11-14, 2024

##### PRE-ASSEMBLY SCHEDULE

###### Monday, June 10, 2024

- 8:00 a.m.** Commissioner Registration Open
- 10:00 a.m.** Briefing for Overtures Committee (Overtures Committee begins immediately after briefing)
- 11:00 a.m.** Briefing for Committee of Commissioners
- 12:00 noon** Lunch on your own
- 1:00 p.m.** Meetings of the Committees of Commissioners begin:  
Administrative Committee  
Covenant Theological Seminary  
Geneva Benefits  
Reformed University Fellowship
- 5:00 p.m.** Commissioner Registration Closed

###### Tuesday, June 11, 2024

- 7:00 a.m.** Commissioner Registration Opens
- 8:00 a.m.** Briefing for Committees of Commissioners
- 9:00 a.m.** Meetings of the Committees of Commissioners begin:  
Committee on Discipleship Ministries  
Covenant College  
Mission to North America  
Mission to the World

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

PCA Foundation  
Ridge Haven

- 10:30 a.m.** Meeting of AC/Board of Directors as needed
- 10:30 a.m.** Meeting of Committee of Commissioners on Interchurch Relations
- Noon** Interchurch Relations and Fraternal Delegates Luncheon  
*Fraternal delegates, members of the Interchurch Relations Committee, members of the Administrative Committee, and members of the Committee of Commissioners on Interchurch Relations invited.*
- Briefing of Floor Clerks
- 1:30 – 2:30 p.m.** Commissioner Welcome Reception in the Exhibit Hall
- 2:00 p.m.** Committee on Constitutional Business (if necessary)
- 2:30 – 4:25 p.m.** Seminars  
2:30 - 3:20 p.m. First Session  
3:35 - 4:25 p.m. Second Session
- 4:30 – 5:15 p.m.** Pre-Assembly Prayer Meeting
- 6:30 p.m.** Commissioner Registration Closed  
*Commissioner Registration will reopen for 15 minutes at the close of worship.*

## DOCKET

Only the orders of the day and special orders are fixed times in the docket. Other items may be taken up earlier or later in the docket, depending upon the rate at which actions on reports are completed. *Therefore, those who present reports should be prepared to report earlier or later than the docketed times.*

- 6:00 p.m.** Musical Prelude
- 6:30 p.m.** Opening Session of the General Assembly  
Call to Order by the outgoing Moderator: TE Fred Greco (RAO 1-1)  
Worship Service and Observance of the Lord's Supper

## DOCKET

### 8:10 p.m. Assembly Reconvenes

Report on enrollment and determining of quorum  
(*RAO* 1-2, 14-5)

Election of Moderator (*RAO* 1-3, 1-4, 1-5)

Presentation to Retiring Moderator

Presentation and Adoption of Docket (*RAO* 3-2, m.)

Election of Recording and Assistant Clerks

Appointment of Assistant Parliamentarians (*RAO* 3-2, i.)

Appointment by Moderator of a Committee of Thanks

Report of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly,  
including:

New Churches Added, Statistics, Overtures (*RAO*  
11-4 to 11-11)

Communications (*RAO* 11-1, 11-2, 11-3, 11-11)

Presbytery Votes on Proposed Amendments to *BCO*

Vote on *BCO* proposed Amendments approved by  
Presbyteries (*if needed, according to BCO* 26-2,  
*saying that amendments to the BCO passed by two-*  
*thirds of the presbyteries require a majority vote of*  
*those present and voting at GA*).

Partial Report of the Committee on Review of  
Presbytery Records on proposed *RAO*  
Amendments (*if needed, according to RAO* 20,  
*saying that amendments require a two-thirds vote*  
*of, at least, a majority of the total enrollment*).

Partial Report of the Overtures Committee on proposed  
*RAO* Amendments (*if needed, according to RAO*  
*20, saying that amendments require a two-thirds*  
*vote of, at least, a majority of the total enrollment*).

Partial Report of the Standing Judicial Commission (*if*  
*needed, according to RAO* 17-5, *saying that*  
*OMSJC amendments require a two-thirds vote of,*  
*at least, a majority of the total enrollment*).

Cooperative Ministries Committee Report

Committee on Constitutional Business Report



MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Theological Examining Committee Report

**10:00 pm** Business recess

**Wednesday, June 12, 2024**

**7:30 am** Commissioner Registration Open

**8:00 a.m.** Assembly-wide Prayer Convocation

**9:30 a.m.** Assembly Reconvenes

Review of Presbytery Records Committee Report

*The RPR report may be amended on the floor. Standard rules of debate apply. Minority reports are allowed (RAO 16-7 h.; 19).*

**11:00 am** Informational and Committee of Commissioners Reports

*Committee of Commissioners' Reports are not subject to floor amendments. No minority reports are allowed. But alternative proposals passed by a majority of the CoC may be presented. The Assembly votes on the recommendations to approve, disapprove or refer back without instructions (RAO 14-9).*

Interchurch Relations (Fraternal Delegates will be introduced to the General Assembly and greetings will be offered at this time.)

Covenant Theological Seminary

Geneva Benefits

Reformed University Fellowship

**12 noon** Lunch (on your own)

**1:30 p.m.** Assembly Reconvenes

Informational and Committee of Commissioners Reports

*Committee of Commissioners' Reports are not subject to floor amendments. No minority reports are allowed. But alternative proposals passed by a majority of the CoC may be presented. The Assembly votes on the recommendations*

## DOCKET

*to approve, disapprove or refer back without instructions (RAO 14-9).*

Mission to North America

Covenant College

Mission to the World

Ridge Haven Conference Center

**3:30 p.m.** Standing Judicial Commission Report

**4:30 p.m.** Deadline for Nominations from the floor to the Nominating Committee (RAO 8-4 i.).

Meeting of the Nominating Committee

Business Recess for Worship

### **Note on Presentation of New Business:**

All personal resolutions are new business (RAO 13-1, 13-2, 11-9) and are to be presented no later than the recess of the afternoon session. A two-thirds majority vote is required. If the Assembly receives the resolution, it will be referred by the Stated Clerk to the proper committee of commissioners.

**4:45 p.m.** Worship Service

Commissioner Registration Closed

**5:45 p.m.** Recess for Dinner and Fellowship Time

Meeting of Theological Examining Committee (if necessary)

### **Thursday, June 13, 2024**

**7:30 am** Commissioner Registration Open

**8:00 a.m.** Assembly Reconvenes

Informational and Committee of Commissioners Reports

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

*Committees of Commissioners' Reports are not subject to floor amendments. No minority reports are allowed. But alternative proposals passed by a majority of the CoC may be presented with responses from the permanent Committee or Agency. The Assembly votes on the recommendations to approve, disapprove or refer back without instructions (RAO 14-9).*

PCA Foundation

Committee on Discipleship Ministries

Administrative Committee

**9:30 a.m.      Special Order: Nominating Committee Report**

Administration of vows to SJC members (RAO 17-1)

Declaration of SJC as Assembly's Commission (BCO 15-4, saying that the GA shall declare the SJC "as a whole" to be its commission).

**10:00 a.m.      Overtures Committee Report**

*The Report of the Overtures Committee may not be amended on the floor. The Assembly either approves, disapproves or recommits without instructions the recommendations (RAO 15-8 c.). An OC member may not participate in floor debate unless he is the designee of the chairman on a specific recommendation (RAO 15-8 f.). A minority report is permitted (RAO 15-6 s.3; 15-8 g.) if signed by at least 10% of the total number of votes cast on the item by members of the OC of whom at least 4% must be teaching elders and at least 4% must be ruling elders.*

**12 noon          Lunch Recess**

**1:30 p.m.        Assembly Reconvenes**

Overtures Committee Report continued

**5:30 p.m.        Recess for Dinner**

**7:30 p.m.        Assembly Reconvenes for Worship Service**

**9:10 p.m.        Reconvene for business if necessary**

**9:15 p.m.        Overtures Committee Report continued**

DOCKET

**10:00 p.m.** Committee on Thanks Report

Appointment of Commission to review and approve final version of minutes

Adjournment (*BCO 14-8, requiring the Moderator to say, “By virtue of the authority delegated to me by the Church, I do now declare that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America is adjourned, to convene in Chattanooga, Tennessee on the 24th day of June 2025, A.D.”.*)

Sing Psalm 133

**10:15 p.m.** Apostolic Benediction (II Corinthians 13:14)

*“The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.”*

**Friday, June 14, 2024**

**8:00 a.m.** Assembly Reconvenes for Business (Optional)

Facilities are available until noon if agenda requires

**Psalm 133**

Behold how good a thing it is,  
And how becoming well  
Together such as brethren are  
In unity to dwell

Like precious ointment on the head,  
That down the beard did flow,  
Ev’n Aaron’s beard and to the skirts  
Did of his garments go.

As Hermon’s dew, the dew that doth  
On Zion’s hill descend;  
For there the blessing God commands,  
Life that shall never end.

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

This page intentionally left blank

**QUICK REFERENCE:  
GENERAL ASSEMBLY SESSIONS AND ITEM NUMBERS  
DAILY JOURNAL  
FIFTY-FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY**

**First Session – Tuesday Evening**

51-1	Assembly Called to Order and Opening Worship .....	15
51-2	Declaration of Quorum and Enrollment .....	15
51-3	Election of Moderator .....	15
51-4	Election of Clerks and Appointment of Assistant Parliamentarians and Committee on Thanks.....	16
51-5	Report of the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly .....	16
51-6	Docket .....	16
51-7	BCO Amendments Sent to the Presbyteries by 50 <sup>th</sup> Assembly .....	17
51-8	Partial Report of the Review of Presbytery Records (RPR).....	20
51-9	Partial Report of the Overtures Committee .....	20
51-10	Partial Report of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC).....	21
51-11	Cooperative Ministries Committee (CMC) Report .....	21
51-12	Committee on Constitutional Business (CCB) Report .....	21
51-13	Theological Examining Committee (TEC) Report.....	22
51-14	Assembly Recessed .....	22

**Second Session – Wednesday Morning**

51-15	Assembly Reconvened and Announcements.....	22
51-16	Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) Report, continued .....	22
51-17	Partial Report of the Interchurch Relations (IRC) CoC .....	24
51-18	Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) Report, continued .....	25
51-19	Assembly Recessed .....	25

**Third Session – Wednesday Afternoon**

51-20	Assembly Reconvened .....	25
51-21	Review of Presbytery Records (RPR) Report, continued .....	25
51-22	Interchurch Relations (IRC) CoC Report, continued .....	26
51-23	Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS) CoC Report .....	28
51-24	Geneva Benefits Group Report .....	33
51-25	Reformed University Fellowship (RUF) Report .....	37
51-26	Mission to North America (MNA) Report .....	41
51-27	Covenant College Report .....	47
51-28	Mission to the World (MTW) Report.....	51
51-29	Ridge Haven Conference Center (RH) Report.....	54
51-30	Report of the Standing Judicial Commission (SJC) .....	57

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

51-31	Assembly Recessed .....	57
51-32	Worship Service .....	57

### **Fourth Session – Thursday Morning**

51-33	Assembly Reconvened .....	57
51-34	PCA Foundation (PCAF) Report .....	57
51-35	Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM) Report .....	60
51-36	Administrative Committee (AC) Report .....	65
51-37	Overtures Committee Report .....	73
51-38	Special Order: Nominating Committee Report .....	73
51-39	Standing Judicial Commission Vows .....	74
51-40	Overtures Committee Report, continued .....	74
51-41	Protest Regarding Item 1 .....	75
51-42	Assembly Recessed .....	82

### **Fifth Session – Thursday Afternoon**

51-43	Assembly Reconvened .....	83
51-44	Overtures Committee Report, continued .....	83
51-45	Singing of a Hymn .....	109
51-46	Committee on Thanks Report .....	109
51-47	Appointment of Commission to Review .....	110
51-48	Adjournment and Benediction .....	111

# INDEX

## - A -

<b>Ad Interim Committees</b> .....	N/A
<b>Adjournment</b> .....	111
<b>Administrative Committee (AC)</b>	
Budget (AC and PCA Building) .....	135
Budgets, Committee and Agency.....	135
Approval of.....	67
CAO Compensation and Guidelines .....	121
Committee of Commissioners' Report .....	65
Funding	
Administrative Fee for Ministers.....	70
Committee/Agency Contributions.....	70
Presbytery Contributions for GA Host Committees.....	70
GA Registration Fee .....	70
Future Assemblies.....	Inside Front Cover
Historical Center .....	129
Informational Report.....	64
Overtures Referred to AC	
Overture 7 .....	66
Overture 31 .....	67
Overture 32.....	67
Overture 33.....	71
Partnership Shares.....	68, 124
Permanent Committee Members.....	7
Permanent Committee Report.....	Appendix A, 115
Study Committees .....	N/A
Unfunded Mandates .....	69
<b>Agencies of PCA</b> .....	10
<b>Appeals</b> .....	See Judicial Cases
<b>Appointments</b>	
Assistant Parliamentarians .....	16
.....	See also Elections
Commission to Approve GA Minutes .....	110
Committee on Thanks .....	16
<b>Archives</b> .....	See Historical Center
<b>Attendance</b> .....	Appendix U, 999



## Auditors & Audit Reports

Capin, Crouse, LLP	
(for CC) .....	48
(for CTS) .....	31
(for Geneva) .....	34
(for MNA) .....	42
(for MTW) .....	52
(for PCAF) .....	58
Carr, Riggs & Ingram LLP (for RUF) .....	38
Robins, Eskew, Smith & Jordan, PC	
(for AC) .....	68
(for CDM) .....	61
(for PCA Building) .....	68
(for RH) .....	55

## - B -

**BCO** ..... See *Book of Church Order*

**Board of Directors Minutes (PCA)** ..... Appendix B, 207

## **Book of Church Order (BCO)**

Amendments Adopted by 51<sup>st</sup> GA (1<sup>st</sup> vote) and Sent to Presbyteries

BCO 13-6 .....	73, 85
BCO 13-6 .....	73, 95
BCO 32-19 .....	74, 94
BCO 43-1 .....	73, 92

Amendments Finally Adopted by 51<sup>st</sup> GA (2<sup>nd</sup> vote)

BCO 7-3 .....	17
BCO 8-2 and 9-3 .....	17
BCO 38-1 .....	17

Translations of

Korean .....	978
Portuguese .....	977
Spanish .....	977

## **Budgets**

Administrative .....	135
Approvals .....	68
Building (PCA) .....	141
Committee on Discipleship Ministries .....	144
Covenant College .....	152
Covenant Theological Seminary .....	159
Geneva Benefits Group .....	166
Mission to North America .....	172

## INDEX

Budgets, continued	
Mission to the World .....	178
PCA Foundation.....	186
Reformed University Fellowship .....	199
Ridge Haven.....	193

## - C -

<b>Campus Ministries</b> .....	See Reformed University Fellowship
<b>CAO Compensation Guidelines</b> .....	121
<b>CCB</b> .....	See Constitutional Business, Committee on
<b>Chaplain Ministries</b>	
Presbyterian and Reformed Commission.....	42, 309
<b>Christmas Offering</b> .....	See Offerings
<b>Church Planting/Church Planters</b> .....	See Mission to North America
<b>Churches Added in 2023</b> .....	987
<b>Churches Lost in 2023</b> .....	987
<b>Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM)</b>	
Budget.....	144
Committee of Commissioners Report.....	60
Great Commission Publications (GCP) .....	62, 220
Informational Report.....	60
Overtures Referred to CDM	
Overture 7.....	62
Overture 31 .....	62
Overture 32.....	63
Permanent Committee members .....	8
Permanent Committee Report.....	Appendix C, 211
Women's Ministry Love Gift Legacy	
2023 (ESL); 2024 (Women's Ministry International).....	61
<b>Committees and Agencies (Ministries) of GA</b> .....	6
<b>Committees of Commissioners</b> ...	See Reports, Committees of Commissioners
<b>Communications to GA</b> .....	N/A
<b>Compassion [Relief and Mercy] Offering</b> .....	See Offerings
<b>Complaints</b> .....	See Judicial Cases
<b>Constitutional Business, Committee on (CCB)</b>	
Advice to Stated Clerk .....	230, 231
Committee Members.....	13
Election of Officers.....	230
Non-judicial References.....	230
Overtures, Advice on .....	223

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Constitutional Business, Committee on, continued	
Report .....	21
SJC Minutes Review .....	230
Supplemental Report .....	231
<b>Cooperative Ministries Committee (CMC) Report</b> .....	21
<b>Coordinators/Presidents (of PCA Committees and Agencies)</b> .....	6
<b>Corrections to Previous Minutes</b> .....	1217
<b>Corresponding Delegates</b> .....	24, 26
Rev. David Meredith, Free Church of Scotland	
Rev. Hanwoo Kim and Rev. Tae Young Lee, Presbyterian Church in Korea (Hapdong)	
..... See also Fraternal Delegates, Ecclesiastical Observers	
<b>Covenant College (CC)</b>	
Agency Board Members .....	10
Agency Report .....	Appendix F, 235
Budget .....	152
Committee of Commissioners Report .....	47
Informational Report .....	47
Overtures Referred to CC	
Overture 7 .....	49
Overture 14 .....	49
Overture 31 .....	49
Overture 32 .....	49
Prayer for Covenant College (Oct. 20, 2024) .....	49
<b>Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS)</b>	
Agency Board Members .....	11
Agency Report .....	Appendix G, 249
Budget .....	159
Committee of Commissioners' Report .....	29
Informational Report .....	28
Overtures Referred to CTS	
Overture 7 .....	31
Overture 14 .....	31
Overture 31 .....	31
Overture 32 .....	32
<b>- D -</b>	
<b>Days of Prayer</b> .....	See Prayer
<b>Docket</b> .....	1251
Adoption of .....	16
<b>Domestic Abuse &amp; Sexual Assault Handbook</b> .....	973

## INDEX

### - E -

<b>Ecclesiastical Observers</b> .....	N/A
.....	See also Fraternal Delegates, Corresponding Delegates
<b>Elections</b>	
Committees and Agencies.....	See Nominating Committee
Moderator.....	15
Recording Clerks, Timekeeper .....	16
<b>Electronic Voting (at GA)</b> .....	See General Assembly
<b>Enrollment of Commissioners</b> .....	See Attendance

### - F -

<b>Foundation</b> .....	See PCA Foundation
<b>Fraternal Delegates</b> .....	22, 26
Dr. Davi Gomez, Igreja Presbiteriana do Brasil (Presbyterian Church of Brazil) and the World Reformed Fellowship	
Rev. Robert Godfrey, United Reformed Churches of North America	
Dr. Chad Van Dixhoorn, Orthodox Presbyterian Church	
.....	See also Corresponding Delegates, Ecclesiastical Observers

### - G -

<b>General Assembly</b>	
AC General Assembly Responsibilities (Costs) .....	69
Committees and Agencies of .....	7
Costs (Unfunded Mandates) .....	69
Future GA Locations.....	Inside Front Cover
Ministries of.....	6
Minutes, Commission for Review of .....	110
Officers of .....	5
Registration Fee for 2025.....	70
Special Committees of .....	13
Standing Judicial Commission.....	14
<b>Geneva Benefits Group</b>	
Agency Board Members .....	11
Agency Report .....	Appendix H, 291
Budget .....	166

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Geneva Benefits Group, continued	
Committee of Commissioners Report.....	33
Informational Report.....	33
Offering, Ministerial Relief .....	35
Overtures Referred to Geneva	
Overture 7.....	35
Overture 31.....	35
Overture 32.....	35
<b>Great Commission Publications</b> .....	62, 220

### - H -

<b>Historical Center (PCA Archives)</b> .....	129
---	-----

### - I -

<b>Informational Reports</b> .....	See specific Committees and Agencies
<b>Interchurch Relations Committee (IRC)</b>	
Committee Members .....	13
Committee of Commissioners Report.....	26
Corresponding Greetings .....	24, 26
Fraternal Greetings .....	24, 26
Informational Report.....	26
International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC) .....	27, 302
Overtures Referred to Interchurch Relations Committee	
Overture 2.....	27, 302
Special [Permanent] Committee Report .....	Appendix I, 301

### - J -

<b>Journal (Daily Journal of GA)</b> .....	15; see also Quick Reference, 1259
<b>Judicial Cases</b> (listed in numerical order)	
2022-21 Senters v. Savannah River .....	Completed, 714
2022-22 Turner v. South Florida.....	Completed, 726
2022-23 Woodham v. South Florida .....	Completed, 742
2023-01 Hann v. Pee Dee .....	Completed, 766
2023-02 Reynolds v. Pee Dee .....	Completed, 767
2023-04 Biese et al. v. Tennessee Valley.....	Completed, 769
2023-05 Hyland v. Chicago Metro.....	In Process, 702
2023-07 Evans v. Arizona .....	Completed, 808
2023-08 Baird v. Grace .....	Completed, 789
Judicial Cases, continued	

## INDEX

2023-09	Myers v. Illiana .....	Completed, 824
2023-10	Martinez and Cook v. Pacific .....	Completed, 856
2023-11	Psiaki v. Pacific Northwest .....	Completed, 867
2023-12	Flatgard v. Metro Atlanta .....	In Process, 702
2023-13	BCO 40-5 Matter re Metropolitan New York .....	Completed, 909
2023-14	BCO 40-5 Matter re Northwest Georgia .....	Completed, 941
2023-15	Turner v. South Florida .....	Completed, 946
2023-16	Bulkeley et al. v. Highlands .....	In Process, 702
2023-17	Turner v. South Florida .....	Completed, 946
2023-18	Sears v. Nashville .....	In Process, 702
2023-19	Huffman v. Tennessee Valley .....	Completed, 952
2023-20	Martinez and Cook v. Pacific .....	In Process, 702
2023-21	Kang et al. v. Korean Central .....	In Process, 702
2023-22	Suh v. Korean Southeastern .....	In Process, 702
2023-23	Mueller v. South Florida .....	In Process, 702

### - K -

### - L -

#### **Love Gift Legacy** (CDM Women's Ministry, PCA)

2023 (ESL); 2024 (Women's Ministry International) .....	61
---	----

### - M -

#### **Military** .....

See Chaplain Ministries

#### **Ministers**

Added in 2023 .....	988
Deceased in 2023 .....	994
Dismissed in 2023 .....	992
Removed in 2023 .....	993

#### **Ministry Asks** .....

See Partnership Share

#### **Minority Reports** . See Overtures Committee; Review of Presbytery Records

#### **Minutes, GA**

Commission Appointed to Approve .....	16
Daily Journal .....	15

#### **Mission to North America (MNA)**

Budget .....	172
Chaplain Ministries .....	See Chaplain Ministries
Church Planting .....	304, 306
Church Planters Placed on Field .....	311
Committee of Commissioners Report .....	41

#### **Mission to North America, continued**

## MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Informational Report.....	41
Overtures Referred to MNA	
Overture 5.....	43
Overture 7.....	44
Overture 8.....	43
Overture 11.....	43
Overture 12.....	43
Overture 31.....	44
Overture 32.....	44
Overture 34.....	44
Overture 35.....	44
Permanent Committee Members .....	8
Permanent Committee Report .....	Appendix J, 303
Presbytery Boundaries .....	See Presbytery Formation and Boundaries
Stewardship and Finances.....	307
<b>Mission to the World (MTW)</b>	
Budget.....	178
Committee of Commissioners Report.....	51
Global Ministry Highlights.....	331
Informational Report.....	51
Missionaries, listed	
Long-Term .....	347
Two-Year .....	350
Retiring.....	351
Prayer, Day of, for the Persecuted Church (November 3, 2024).....	52
Prayer, Month of, for Global Missions (November 2024).....	51
Offering, Compassion.....	52
Overtures Referred to MTW	
Overture 7.....	52
Overture 31.....	52
Overture 32.....	52
Permanent Committee Members .....	9
Permanent Committee Report.....	Appendix K, 329
Statistics.....	340
<b>Moderators</b>	
Election, RE Steven Dowling .....	15
Retiring Moderator, TE Fred Greco .....	16

## INDEX

Moderators, continued	
Succession of .....	3

### - N -

#### **Nominating Committee**

Elections .....	73
Report .....	73, Appendix L, 353
Floor Nominations Supplemental Report .....	Appendix L, 389

### - O -

#### **Offerings**

Offering, Compassion .....	52
Offering, Ministerial Relief .....	35

***OMSJC***..... See *SJC*, Operating Manual – Changes Adopted

#### **Overtures Committee**

Committee Report .....	20, 73, 74, 83
Minority Report .....	83, 102

#### **Overtures**

##### **Overture 2023-2** from Covenant Presbytery (to IRC, AC)

“Request PCA Join International Conference of Reformed Churches (ICRC)” .....	26, 27, 1047
---	--------------

##### **Overture 1** from Piedmont Triad Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

“Amend <i>BCO</i> 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility” .....	83, 85, 223, 1048
Minority Report .....	83, 102

##### **Overture 2** from Northern California Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

“Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6 for Clarity in Transfers of Ordination” .....	73, 85, 224, 1060
--	-------------------

##### **Overture 3** from Pee Dee Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

“Grant Constitutional Status to <i>BCO</i> 53 re Preaching” ..	74, 87, 224, 1062
--	-------------------

##### **Overture 4** from Central Indiana Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

“Establish Study Committee for Judicial Rules Changes” .....	73, 88, 224, 1065
--	-------------------

##### **Overture 5** from Piedmont Triad Presbytery (to MNA)

“Adjust Piedmont Triad and Catawba Valley Presbytery Boundaries” .....	41, 43, 1073
--	--------------

##### **Overture 6** from the Presbytery of Susquehanna Valley (to CCB, OC)

“Amend <i>BCO</i> Sections to Require Background Checks for Church Office” .....	73, 89, 224, 1079
--	-------------------



# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

<b>Overture 7</b> from Ascension Presbytery (to CCB, OC, AC, CC, CDM, CTS, GEN, MNA, MTW, PCAF, RH, RUF) “Amend <i>RAO</i> 11-5 to Clarify Process for <i>RAO</i> Amendments .....	20, 21, 31, 35, 38, 44, 49, 52, 58, 62, 66, 89, 225, 1082
<b>Overture 8</b> from Covenant Presbytery (to MNA) “Change Boundaries of Covenant and Mississippi Valley Presbyteries” .....	41, 43, 1085
<b>Overture 9</b> from Metro Atlanta Presbytery (to CCB, OC) “Add Great Commission Requirement to <i>BCO</i> 12-5” ...	73, 89, 225, 1086
<b>Overture 10</b> from Metro Atlanta Presbytery (to CCB, OC) “Add Presbytery TE Care to <i>BCO</i> 13-9” .....	73, 89, 225, 1087
<b>Overture 11</b> from Mississippi Valley Presbytery (to MNA) “Change Boundaries of Mississippi Valley and Covenant Presbyteries” .....	41, 43, 1088
<b>Overture 12</b> from Catawba Valley Presbytery (to MNA) “Adjust Catawba Valley and Piedmont Triad Presbytery Boundaries” .....	41, 43, 1089
<b>Overture 13</b> from Calvary Presbytery (to OC) “Commend and Encourage Distribution of Commission Letter Regarding Gender Reassignment for Minors” .....	75, 89, 1090
<b>Overture 14</b> from Presbytery of Northwest Georgia (to CCB, OC, CC, CTS) “Amend <i>RAO</i> 4-21.d to Require Enrollment Data from Higher Ed Institutions” .....	20, 21, 31, 49, 90, 225, 1094
<b>Overture 15</b> from the Session of West End Presbyterian Church, (to CCB, OC) Hopewell, Virginia “Amend <i>BCO</i> 7-2 to Specify Ordination for Biological Males Only” .....	73, 90, 225, 1095
<b>Overture 16</b> from Warrior Presbytery (to CCB, OC) “Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6, 21-4, 24-1 to Require Background Checks” .....	73, 90, 225, 1096
<b>Overture 17</b> from Ohio Presbytery (to CCB, OC) “Amend <i>BCO</i> 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background Checks for Church Office” .....	73, 90, 226, 1101
<b>Overture 18</b> from Ohio Presbytery (to CCB, OC) “Amend <i>BCO</i> 35-1 and 35-8 Regarding Witness Eligibility” .....	73, 92, 226, 1107
<b>Overture 19</b> from the Session of Fountain Square (to CCB, OC) Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana “Amend <i>BCO</i> 41 to allow Venue Change in Judicial Cases” .....	73, 92, 226, 1112

# INDEX

- Overture 20** from the Session of Fountain Square (to CCB, OC)  
 Presbyterian Church, Indianapolis, Indiana  
 “Proposed Systematic Changes to *BCO* 31, 32, and 35”  
 ..... 73, 92, 227, 1115
- Overture 21** from Central Indiana Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Change the Prohibition Against ‘Interlocutory Appeal’  
 by Complaint in *BCO* 43-1” ..... 73, 92, 227, 1165
- Overture 22** from South Florida Presbytery (CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 13-2 to clarify Teaching Elder Presbytery  
 Membership” ..... 73, 93, 227, 1167
- Overture 23** from Missouri Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background  
 Checks for Church Office” ..... 73, 94, 228, 1168
- Overture 24** from the Presbytery of South Texas (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 13-6, 21-4, and 24-1 to Require Background  
 Checks for Church Office” ..... 73, 94, 228, 1172
- Overture 25** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 31-2 to Expand Who May Assist in an  
 Investigation” ..... 73, 94, 228, 1176
- Overture 26** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 32-19 To Expand Representation of Accused  
 Persons Before Church Courts” ..... 74, 94, 228, 1177
- Overture 27** from Potomac Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 13-6 to Add Personal Character and Family  
 Management to the Examination of Transferring Ministers”  
 ..... 73, 95, 229, 1179
- Overture 28** from New Jersey Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *RAO* 16-6.c.1. to Eliminate Conflict with *BCO* 40-5”  
 ..... 20, 21, 95, 229, 1180
- Overture 29** from the Session of Bryce Avenue (to CCB, OC)  
 Presbyterian Church, White Rock, New Mexico  
 “Amend *BCO* 53 by Addition to Ensure Only Men Preach”  
 ..... 73, 95, 229, 1182
- Overture 30** from Lowcountry Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
 “Amend *BCO* 23-1 To Require that the Presbytery of Jurisdiction  
 Conduct an Exit Interview Prior to Dissolution of Call”  
 ..... 73, 96, 229, 1183
- Overture 31** from New River Presbytery (to CCB, OC, AC, CC, CDM, CTS,  
 GEN, MNA, MTW, PCAF, RH, RUF)

# MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

“Amend <i>BCO</i> 14-1 Regarding Changes in Permanent Committee and Agency Policy”	31, 35, 44, 49, 52, 55, 58, 62, 67, 73, 96, 229, 1187
<b>Overture 32</b> from the Presbytery of Eastern Pennsylvania (to CCB, OC, AC, CC, CDM, CTS, GEN, MNA, MTW, PCAF, RH, RUF)	
“Amend <i>BCO</i> 23 to Address Dissolution of Call for those Employed by a Committee or Agency”	32, 35, 44, 49, 52, 55, 59, 63, 67, 73, 96, 229, 1192
<b>Overture 33</b> from TE Benjamin Inman (to OC, AC)	
“Erect <i>Ad Interim</i> Committee on the Book <i>Jesus Calling</i> ”	71, 75, 97, 1194
<b>Overture 34</b> from Columbus Metro Presbytery (to MNA)	
“Merge Columbus Metro and Ohio Valley Presbyteries”	41, 44, 1200
<b>Overture 35</b> from Ohio Valley Presbytery (to MNA)	
“Merge Ohio Valley and Columbus Metro Presbyteries”	41, 45, 1201

## - P -

<b>Parliamentarians, Assistant</b>	16
<b>Partnership Shares (including Ministry Asks)</b>	68, 124
<b>PCA Foundation (PCAF)</b>	
Agency Board Members	12
Agency Report	Appendix M, p. 397
Budget	186
Committee of Commissioners Report	57
Informational Report	57
Overtures Referred to PCAF	
Overture 7	58
Overture 31	58
Overture 32	59
<b>PCA Office Building</b>	
Budget	141
<b>Prayer, Days/Months of</b>	
Covenant College (October 20, 2024)	49
MTW Day of Prayer for Persecuted Church (November 3, 2024)	52
MTW Month of Prayer (November 2024)	51
<b>PRCC (Presbyterian and Reformed Commission)</b>	
<b>on Chaplains and Military Personnel</b>	see Chaplain Ministries
<b>Presbytery Formation and Boundaries</b>	
Catawba Valley Presbytery (boundaries restructured)	41, 43
Columbus Metro Presbytery (boundaries restructured)	41, 44
Covenant Presbytery (boundaries restructured)	41, 43

## INDEX

Presbytery Formation and Boundaries, continued	
Mississippi Valley Presbytery (boundaries restructured) .....	41, 43
Ohio Valley Presbytery (boundaries restructured).....	41, 44
Piedmont Triad Presbytery (boundaries restructured) .....	41, 43
<b>Protests</b>	
Item 1 (to amend <i>BCO</i> 7-3) .....	75

## - Q -

<b>Quick Reference of GA Sessions</b> .....	1259
<b>Quorum</b> .....	15

## - R -

<b>RAO</b> .....	<i>See Rules of Assembly Operations</i>
------------------	---

### **Reformed University Fellowship (RUF)**

Budget.....	199
Campus Interns Roster.....	452
Campus Ministries and Staff.....	443
Committee of Commissioners' Report .....	37
Informational Report.....	37
Overtures Referred to RUF	
Overture 7.....	38
Permanent Committee Members.....	9
Permanent Committee Report.....	Appendix N, p. 413
Presbytery Campus Committees .....	443

### **Registration Fee**

2025 General Assembly .....	<i>See General Assembly</i>
-----------------------------	-----------------------------

### **Reports**

#### **Committees of Commissioners**

Administrative.....	65
Committee on Discipleship Ministries.....	60
Covenant College.....	47
Covenant Theological Seminary .....	29
Geneva Benefits Group.....	33
Interchurch Relations .....	26
Mission to North America .....	41
Mission to the World .....	51
Overtures Committee .....	20, 73, 74, 83
PCA Foundation.....	57
Reformed University Fellowship.....	37
Ridge Haven.....	41

**Permanent Committees and Agencies, Special Committees, and SJC**

Administrative .....	Appendix A, p. 115
Committee on Discipleship Ministries .....	Appendix C, p. 211
Constitutional Business Committee.....	Appendix D, p. 223
Cooperative Ministries Committee .....	Appendix E, p. 233
Covenant College.....	Appendix F, p. 235
Covenant Theological Seminary.....	Appendix G, p. 249
Geneva Benefits Group.....	Appendix H, p. 291
Interchurch Relations.....	Appendix I, p. 301
Mission to North America .....	Appendix J, p. 303
Mission to the World .....	Appendix K, p. 329
Nominating Committee.....	Appendix L, p. 353
PCA Foundation .....	Appendix M, p. 397
Reformed University Fellowship.....	Appendix N, p. 413
Review of Presbytery Records.....	Appendix O, p. 457
Ridge Haven .....	Appendix P, p. 707
Standing Judicial Commission.....	Appendix Q, p. 711
Theological Examining Committee .....	Appendix S, p. 997

**Retirement & Benefits, Inc. (RBI)** ..... see Geneva Benefits Group

**Review of Presbytery Records (RPR)**

Citations

Columbus Metro Presbytery.....	25, 458, 493
Korean Southwest Presbytery .....	22, 458, 570
Metropolitan New York .....	25, 458, 582
South Coast Presbytery .....	22, 458, 655
Election of Officers.....	704
General Recommendations .....	18, 21, 459
Minutes of Presbyteries, reviewed.....	462
Partial Report.....	20
RAO Amendments	
RAO 16-3.e.5 .....	20, 461
RAO 16-6.c.1 .....	20, 462
Report .....	20, 22, 25, Appendix O, 457

**Ridge Haven (RH)**

Agency Board Members .....	12
Agency Report.....	Appendix P, p 707
Budget.....	193
Committee of Commissioners Report.....	54
Informational Report.....	54
Overtures Referred to RH	
Overture 31.....	55
Overture 32.....	55

## INDEX

### ***Rules of Assembly Operations (RAO)***

#### *RAO* Amendments adopted

<i>RAO</i> 4-21.d .....	20
<i>RAO</i> 11-5 .....	20
<i>RAO</i> 16-3.e.5 – from RPR .....	20
<i>RAO</i> 16-6.c.1 – from RPR .....	20

## - S -

**Special Days** ..... See Prayer, Days/Months of

**Special Offerings**..... See Offerings

### **Standing Judicial Commission (SJC)**

Commission Members .....	14, 711
Declared Judicial Commission of the Assembly .....	74
Election of Officers.....	967
Judicial Cases.....	712
Minutes (Review by CCB).....	230
<i>Operating Manual</i> – Changes Adopted .....	21, 954
SJC Report .....	21, 57, Appendix Q, 711
Vows .....	74

### **Stated Clerk (of General Assembly)**

Current Stated Clerk .....	5
Succession of Stated Clerks .....	4

### **Stated Clerk's Report**..... 16, Appendix R, 969

<i>BCO</i> Votes .....	972, 980
Churches Added to the Denomination in 2023 .....	987
Churches Lost from the Denomination in 2023 .....	987
Domestic Abuse & Sexual Assault Handbook .....	973
Finances .....	974
Lawsuits .....	974
Ministers	
Added in 2023 .....	988
Deceased in 2023.....	994
Dismissed in 2023 .....	992
Removed in 2023.....	993

#### Reports on Overtures

Overture 2023-12 .....	972
Overture 2023-28 .....	973
Overture 2023-12 .....	972

Resignations from GA Committees and Agencies..... 975

Statistics .....

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**Study Committees** .....See Ad Interim Committees

- T -

**Thanks (Committee On)**

Appointed ..... 16

Report ..... 109

**Theological Examining Committee**

Members ..... 13

Report ..... 22, 997

- U -

- V -

**Votes on BCO Amendments** ..... (see *Book of Church Order*)

- W -

**Women's Ministry (PCA - CDM)**

Women's Ministry Love Gift Legacy

2023 (ESL); 2024 (Women's Ministry International)..... 61

**Worship Services** .....15, 57, Appendix V, 1203

- X, Y, Z -