

Stated Clerk Report for the Presbytery Meeting March 3-4, 2022

Presbyters, this Stated Clerk is quite long due to the length of the omnibus motion. Please take time to read it all. The Omnibus Motion includes the proposed change to the standing rules first presented at our November meeting by the Leadership Council. It also includes an attachment of the 15 recommendations for concurrence or non-concurrence with 15 General Assembly overtures. All are included in hopes that we can work through the business meeting quickly leaving more time for the conference and personal interaction. If there is anything that you would like to discuss on the floor of Presbytery, please ask to pull that item before we vote on the omnibus motion. This process is not in any way meant to stifle conversation on issues important to you.

Protocol Review

The Clerk anticipates some people will attend this meeting via Zoom and some will attend in person at Bozeman 1st Presbyterian Church. While on the Zoom meeting, please adhere to the following protocol:

1. *Please keep your microphone muted and stay in the muted position until called upon or recognized to speak. This helps eliminate feedback, minimize background noise, and helps us to move through our time together more easily.*
2. *Please rename your Zoom participant identification to include “RE” or “MWS” if applicable, your first and last name, the entity you represent, your position (i.e., member, commissioner, guest) and town. For example: RE Caroline Fleming, YP Stated Clerk, Miles City. (In ZOOM, click on the 3 dots on your picture screen and you can rename yourself and include the information above.)*
3. *When you have the floor, please say your name and the entity you represent each time you speak.*
4. *When voting, if not using a voice vote of “Yes” or “No,” please use the “raise hand” feature found toward the bottom of the screen if participating via Zoom and raise your hand if attending in person. We will count these votes then ask phone-only participants to unmute their phones and vote verbally.*

Omnibus motion.

The Stated Clerk moves the following:

1. That the agenda for this meeting posted on yellowstonepcusa.org be approved.
2. That the roll for this meeting be established in two ways:
 - a. By email to caroline@yellowstonepcusa.org if you are attending via Zoom or
 - b. By registration form provided at the meeting if you are attending in person.
3. That all requests for excused absences received by the Stated Clerk be approved.
4. That any Corresponding members present at the meeting be seated.

5. That the Presbytery grant the Moderator authority to give privilege of the floor to persons, other than Members or Commissioners, for the purpose of reporting to this meeting.
6. That the Moderator and the Stated Clerk be empowered to suggest and adjust the agenda during the meeting, as may be necessary, to provide for efficiency in reporting.
7. That the draft minutes of the Presbytery meeting of November 4-5, 2022 be approved as published on the presbytery website.
8. That the draft minutes of the Special Presbytery meeting of December 8, 2022 be approved as published on the presbytery website.
9. That the minutes of this meeting shall report that there has been no call for a meeting of the Presbytery's PJC this year to date and that the following former members are still eligible to serve if needed: MWS Dan Krebill, RE Lloyd Mandeville, RE Sharla Helland, RE Gary Slagel, MWS Jody McDevitt and MWS Lanny Rounds.

10. That the Presbytery's Standing Rule S5.02, which currently requires the Leadership Cabinet Moderator to serve a three-year term be changed to read:

Standing Rule S5.02: The leadership cabinet moderator shall be elected annually by the presbytery for a one (1) year term renewable for as long as the person serves on the leadership cabinet, but no longer than six (6) years consecutively.

This is the second reading of this proposed amendment. A yes vote will result in this amendment being adopted.

11. That the recommendations on overtures reviewed and approved by the Pastoral Ministry Team and by the Leadership Cabinet be approved as recommended to Presbytery and listed here:

		Recommendation
a. 22-C	(G-1.0501) Meetings of the Congregation	Concur
b. 22-D	(G-1.0503) Meetings of the Congregation	Concur
c. 22-E	(G-2.0503) Categories of Membership	Concur
d. 22-G:	(G-2.0603) Related to boundary training	Concur
e. 22-F	(G-0505a(1) Transfer from other Denominations	Concur
f. 22-H	(G-2.0605) Related to Oversight	Concur
g. 22-I	(G-2.0004) 12 Weeks Family Leave	Non-Concurrence
h. 22-J	(G-2-1001) Commissioning Res	Concur
i. 22-K	(G-2.1002) Related to boundary training	Concur
j. 22-L	(G-3.0303) Related to boundary training	Concur
k. 22-N	(G-3.0105) Meetings	Concur
l. 22-Q	(G-3.0303c Relations with Session	Non-Concurrence
m. 22-S	(G-4.0301) Trust & Confidentiality	Concur
n. 22-V	(W-3.0414) Communion prayer	Concur

Complete texts of reviews of these overtures are attached to this report as "Attachment A."

The complete book of Overtures are on the presbytery's website at www.yellowstonepcusa.org and at

www.pcusa.org/site_media/media/uploads/oga/pdf/bk_of_amends_2022_final_1122023.pdf

Presbytery will hold a special meeting, probably in late April or early May to deal with the remaining 19 overtures.

12. The number of Teaching Elders (MWS) to Ruling Elders (RE) as of January 1, 2023 stands at 31 to 31, therefore the voting members are in balance.

NOTE: As of January 1, 2023 there were 35 Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (MWS) on the rolls of Yellowstone Presbytery. Twenty-nine of these live within the bounds of the presbytery, and two who live just outside the presbytery's geographic bounds participate regularly in Presbytery for a total of 31 active Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. On the same date, January 1, 2023, 22 churches were authorized to send one commissioner to presbytery meetings, plus one church (First Presbyterian Church of Billings) was authorized to send two commissioners to presbytery based on the size of their congregation. Additionally, there are 4 Commissioned Ruling Elders serving particular congregations in the presbytery with vote and 7 Ruling Elders authorized to vote based on their leadership roles within the Presbytery. The net result is that there are 31 MWSs and 34 REs and CREs authorized to vote on business before the Presbytery. Therefore, no MWS/RE imbalance exists in Yellowstone Presbytery for 2023.

End of Motion.

The above motion will be made at the opening of the March 3-4, 2023 meeting and will be posted on the presbytery website for review before the meeting begins.

Stated Clerk Activity

1. I worked with Clerks of Session to assure their annual reports have been submitted. All churches submitted their online reports before the deadline. The Presbytery's statistical report is attached as Attachment C.
2. I have kept up with and answered emails almost daily.
3. I sent letters to all Ministers-At-large who had not yet sent their annual reports to the PMT. I am still waiting on three reports from at-large pastors. All retired Ministers submitted their reports. These reports are intended to be a valuable way to maintain contact with those we might not be see with as often as we would like.
4. I received information from Treasurer Ric Tieman that the property and liability insurance the presbytery holds with Brotherhood Mutual has been reviewed and is adequate, but we are unable to obtain property insurance on the Westminster Spires camp, and St Timothy's Chapel is underinsured due to the limited carriers that will provide coverage in Wildfire Classified districts.
5. I updated the Presbytery Directory for 2023 with all new information I have received. I will send it to the presbytery's email list following the election at the March 3-4, 2023 presbytery meeting.
6. I have attended all meetings of the Leadership Cabinet and Pastoral Ministry Team and have recorded minutes as required.
7. I have maintained contact with Mark Parker, the attorney who has been incredibly generous with his time concerning the sale of the McAllister church property. The sale is not concluded yet and has been a far longer process than we originally expected due to court requirements.

8. Worked with PMT and Leadership Council to review G.A. Overtures. We have reviewed and have recommendations for 15 out of 33 thus far. I will ask others to review those we still need to vote on and will hold a special meeting to conduct that vote.
9. I attended the following webinar:
 - Evangelism webinar ‘Breaking the Myth of Presbyterian Fear of the ‘E’ Word’
10. I worked with the team planning the March presbytery meeting.

Caroline Fleming
 Stated Clerk, Yellowstone Presbytery

ATTACHMENT A

*****PLEASE NOTE: throughout these amendments:
 All deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~. All added text is in *italics*.**

22-C — G-1.0501 MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION G-1.0501 MEETINGS

“G-1.0501 Meetings

“Meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. Unless the congregation shall designate another parliamentary authority in its bylaws, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, except when it is in contradiction to this constitution.

“In accordance with the requirement of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, congregations and their committees may meet electronically at the discretion of their sessions, provided that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in person meeting. Congregations should adopt special rules of order and standing rules to govern such meetings.

“G-1.0502 Annual and Special Meetings

The congregation shall hold an annual meeting ...”

Recommend concurrence with 22-C

Our form of government leads us to make decisions in councils following opportunity for discussion. The past few years have proven that electronic means of meeting for discussion and vote are necessary and give opportunity for full discussion by all members. Absence of language allowing for electronic meetings has proven problematic in some places. It is not the intent of these additions to require electronic meetings or to mandate any specific processes or procedures. Congregations and councils may make those determinations themselves.

22-D — G-1.0503 **MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION**

G-1.0503 BUSINESS PROPER TO CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS (ROD-06 1)

“G-1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings

Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall be limited to matters related to the following: ...

... f. approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness, or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness (G-5.05).;

g. receiving a disciplinary decision against a member of the congregation as required by D-9.0102.”

Recommend concurrence.

The proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline, which will likely become Church Discipline, includes a requirement for decisions with a finding of guilt in disciplinary processes against church members to be reported to the congregation of membership. This is to ensure that such findings are known to the body of membership as part of the overall goal of the restoration of trust in the community. It parallels the requirement that disciplinary decisions against ministers of the Word and Sacrament be read to the entire presbytery of membership. The amendment is necessary because business at congregational meetings is limited only to matters currently listed in G-1.0503.

22-E (G-2.0503) Categories of Membership

G-2.0503 Categories of Membership

A minister of the Word and Sacrament is a member of a presbytery and shall be engaged in a ministry validated by that presbytery, a member-at-large as determined by the presbytery, or ~~honorably~~ retired.

... ..

c. ~~Honorably~~ Retired

Upon request of a member of presbytery, the presbytery may designate the member ~~honorably~~ retired ~~because of age or physical or mental disability.~~

PMT Recommends Concurrence

Rationale

As the Book of Order is currently written, the only option available for a Presbytery to grant a retired minister is the status of Honorably Retired. Such a title sounds prestigious, but that title has lost its meaning over the years since it is only the available title. Meaning, it isn't an earned title based on one's service, is a merely a title granted to a retiree. To put that another way, the Book of Order provides no option for an individual to be merely "retired." Rather, the status of "Honorably Retired" is currently applied to every pastor, upon his or her retirement, whether he or she is deserving of such a title. In some ways, the status of Honorably Retired is not unlike a participation trophy granted to a t-ball player based solely upon his or her showing up a couple of times.

While there are many pastors who deserve the specific, honorific status of "Honorably Retired" there are also pastors who do not. Whether we want to admit it or not, there are pastors, who will retire from service to the church having done significant harm not only to the churches entrusted to their care, but to other individuals within the church, including their colleagues in ministry. Sadly, too often these pastors who are causing and have caused harm, are not held accountable for their actions during their ministry, then are granted the status of "Honorably Retired" by vote of their presbytery.

Such harm is multiplied when a teaching elder or ruling elder, who has been harmed, is then asked to vote in favor of granting the status of “Honorably Retired” since no other status is available to a retiree.

It is important to note, that the status of “Honorably Retired” does not come with additional benefits from the Board of Pensions or from presbyteries of service. Its removal from the Book of Order would not change the benefits available to the retiree. In other words, the status of “Honorably Retired” serves no actual function.

It is time that the Book of Order change to reflect the straightforward retirement of its retirees.

Removing the word “Honorable” from the Book of Order would not prevent a Presbytery from creating its own process for a retiree to be granted the status of Honorably Retired, and such titles should be granted with significant prayer and discernment, and an opportunity for individuals to privately share their concerns prior to a vote to grant such a status.

Given all the changes occurring in our church and our communities, it seems that we could spend our time and energy on far more significant issues that are central to the church’s purpose of proclaiming the good news of Jesus’ life, death, and resurrection to every corner of the world.

22-F G-2.0505a(1) TRANSFER OF MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS

“G-2.0505a(1) Transfer of Ministers of Other Denominations

- a. “(1) In the case of ministers for immigrant fellowships and congregations, a presbytery may, if it determines that its strategy for mission with that group requires it, *and in consultation and partnership with that community*, recognize the ordination and receive as a member of presbytery a new immigrant minister who furnishes evidence of good standing in a denomination, ~~even though~~. *If* at the time of enrollment that minister lacks the educational history required of candidates, and the *presbytery should* provide such educational opportunities as seem necessary and prudent for that minister’s successful ministry in the presbytery.”

PMT Recommends Concurrence

Reasoning: The Overture...

- a. ... recognizes the unique ministry, culture and needs of immigrant churches.
- b. ... seeks to strengthen the pastors coming from other cultures and nations and better enable them to fit into their new surroundings and equip them appropriately as the presbytery determines best.
- c. ... tries to strengthen and enable the presbytery’s role in equipping, while responsibly consulting with the immigrant community.
- d. ... enables ministry. It does not prevent it.

22-G (G-2.0603) Purpose of Inquiry

“G-2.0603 Purpose of Inquiry

The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call

together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer's suitability for ordered ministry. *They shall provide a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.*

PMT Recommends Concurrence

Rationale

At the time of ordination and/or installation all teaching elders, ruling elders (including Commissioned Ruling Elders), and certified Christian Educators answer the same questions. Questions four through seven read: "Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions? Will you be governed by our church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit? Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world? Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?"

Similarly, at the time of being received as a Candidate under care of the Presbytery, having completed the Inquiry phase of the ordination process, candidates are asked the following questions: "Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for this ministry? And do you accept the proper supervision of the presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?"

The shared sentiment of these questions and vows offer a high bar for how leaders in the church, including Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian educators, and Inquirers in the ordination process live as pastors, leaders, and people in the community called the church. In all instances, the Book of Order describes the character of these individuals in the following way, "Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world" (Book of Order, G-2.01014a).

While this applies to many areas, it is especially appropriate when considering our leadership and ethical conduct. For those who minister in the name of Jesus Christ, whatever their title, attention must be given to such issues because it is through us, as leaders, that others come to understand God and the good news of the gospels.

There are many ways that we, as Presbyterians, could address issues of leadership, power, and ethical conduct. One such way is creating a shared understanding of appropriate professional boundaries, communicated through a required boundaries training, which must include topics of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training.

This is already a requirement for Teaching Elders in our denomination, and so it only makes sense that same standard of boundaries training is required of Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian Educators, and Inquirers in the ordination process.

22-H (G-2.0605) Oversight

"G-2.0605 Oversight

During the phases of inquiry and candidacy the individual continues to be an active member of his or her congregation and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. *However, during the time the individual is enrolled as an inquirer or candidate, the session shall report to the presbytery any matters of sexual misconduct.* In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is subject to the oversight of the presbytery within the context of their covenant relationship.”

PMT Recommends Concurrence

Sexual misconduct is, “at the core, an abuse of power.” (Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns) Session should not be alone in its decisions on the issue of sexual misconduct, as this type of misconduct can be detrimental to the congregation and to the church as a whole. Therefore, it is appropriate that both session and presbytery are involved in addressing it.

Further, “A real conflict of interest through family and friends [and long-term parishioners] who serve on or influence their home church session.” (Background and Rationale) Presbytery should be involved because Inquirers and Candidates occupy an “in-between stage” for ordination. They are accountable to both councils during this time. Presbytery should be involved because the final decision regarding ordination is at the Presbytery level.

22-1 G2.0804 Terms of Call (to include 12 weeks of family leave)

“G-2.0804 Terms of Call

The terms of call shall always meet or exceed any minimum requirement of the presbytery in effect when the call is made. The session shall review annually the minister’s terms of call and shall propose for congregational action (G-1.0501) such changes as the session deems appropriate, provided that they meet the presbytery’s minimum requirements. The call shall include *provision for a minimum of twelve weeks paid family medical leave and* participation in the benefits plan of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) including both pension and medical coverage, or any successor plan approved by the General Assembly.”

PMT, recommends non-concurrence with G2.0804.

Reasons for disapproval:

- We believe that our current Yellowstone Presbytery family leave policy is more than sufficient and need not be replaced. It is generous and fair and strikes a healthy balance between supporting pastors and their families while also supporting the churches they serve.
- As we understand it, one of the signature differences between our presbytery policy and the proposed terms of call amendment is an increase of 4 to 12 months for spousal leave. We believe our current policy better accounts for the biological differences between men and women and that it would not be culturally appropriate here in Montana for men/fathers to have 12 weeks of paid spousal leave.
- Finally, we fear that 12 weeks of spousal leave and family leave could potentially have a negative impact on a pastor’s ministry as it may stir up feelings of jealousy, resentment, and bitterness among congregants who are not offered the same in their own jobs. *Daniel here: My sense is that if were to take 12 weeks off for spousal or family leave (in addition to vacation/study leave) I would be burning so much relational capital that it would in turn greatly hinder my ministry.*
- Some may object and say, *“We should approve the amendment, pave the way for these*

new minimums and then individual pastors are free to decline their full allotment of paid leave should they choose." While that may be one option, we also recognize that the vast majority of churches in our denomination are similar to ours - small, solo pastor churches that too would struggle to absorb a pastor's absence for such a duration of time.

Thank you for considering our recommendation.

22-J G-2.1001 Functions

COMMISSIONING RULING ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICE

"G-2.1001 Functions

When the presbytery, in consultation with ~~the session~~ *one or more sessions* or other responsible committees, determines that its strategy for mission requires it, the presbytery may authorize a ruling elder to be commissioned to limited pastoral service *as a commissioned pastor also known as commissioned ruling elder* as assigned by the presbytery. A ruling elder so designated may be commissioned to serve ~~in a validated ministry~~ *one or more validated ministries* of the presbytery. Presbytery, in its commission, may authorize the ruling elder to moderate the session of the congregation *or congregations* to which he or she is commissioned, to administer the Sacraments, and to officiate at marriages where permitted by state law. This commission shall also specify the term of service, which shall not exceed three years but shall be renewable. The presbytery shall review the commission at least annually."

PMT Recommends Concurrence

22-J. 22-J expands services that seem to be working already. Both sessions and CREs could agree that making it multiple locations would not be too much to expect of a CRE. If it is working with one church and the CRE seems able to care for another church, then let the Presbytery authorize that mission. It makes sense to expand something that is working. And of course, Yellowstone Presbytery has already commissioned a CRE to the Presbytery.

22-K (G-2.1002) Training, Examining, and Commissioning

G-2.1002 Training, Examining, and Commissioning

A ruling elder who seeks to serve under the terms of G-2.1001 shall receive such preparation and instruction as determined by the presbytery to be appropriate to the particular commission. *Such preparation shall include a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.* The ruling elder shall be examined by the presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction determined by the presbytery. A ruling elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in the specified ministry may continue to be listed as available to serve but is not authorized to perform the functions specified in G-2.1001 until commissioned again to a congregation or ministry by the presbytery.

PMT Recommends Concurrence

Rationale

At the time of ordination and/or installation all teaching elders, ruling elders (including Commissioned Ruling Elders), and certified Christian Educators answer the same questions. Questions four through

seven read: “Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions? Will you be governed by our church’s polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God’s Word and Spirit? Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world? Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?”

Similarly, at the time of being received as a Candidate under care of the Presbytery, having completed the Inquiry phase of the ordination process, candidates are asked the following questions: “Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for this ministry? And do you accept the proper supervision of the presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?”

The shared sentiment of these questions and vows offer a high bar for how leaders in the church, including Teaching Elders, Ruling Elders, Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian educators, and Inquirers in the ordination process live as pastors, leaders, and people in the community called the church. In all instances, the Book of Order describes the character of these individuals in the following way, “Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world” (Book of Order, G-2.01014a).

While this applies to many areas, it is especially appropriate when considering our leadership and ethical conduct. For those who minister in the name of Jesus Christ, whatever their title, attention must be given to such issues because it is through us, as leaders, that others come to understand God and the good news of the gospels.

There are many ways that we, as Presbyterians, could address issues of leadership, power, and ethical conduct. One such way is creating a shared understanding of appropriate professional boundaries, communicated through a required boundaries training, which must include topics of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training.

This is already a requirement for Teaching Elders in our denomination, and so it only makes sense that same standard of boundaries training is required of Commissioned Ruling Elders, Certified Christian Educators, and Inquirers in the ordination process.

22-L (G-3.0303c) Christian Educators

G-2.1103 Christian Educators

a. Skills and Training

Certified Christian educators are persons certified and called to service in the ministry of education in congregations and councils. They shall have skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed theology, worship and sacraments, human development, faith development, religious education theory and practice, and the polity, programs and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). *Certified Christian educators shall provide a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet these two requirements.*

b. Presbytery Responsibility

The presbytery shall establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits for Certified Christian educators and Certified Associate Christian educators and shall provide access to the area of the presbytery that oversees ministry (G-3.0307). During their term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, Certified Christian Educators are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice only at presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all meetings. *Certified Christian educators and Certified Associate Christian educators shall provide to the presbytery in which they serve a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet these two requirements. Presbytery shall report a certificate of completion to the national certifying body for these two trainings*

PMT Recommends Concurrence

Rationale

At the time of ordination and/or installation all teaching elders, ruling elders (including Commissioned Ruling Elders), and certified Christian Educators answer the same questions. Questions four through seven read: “Will you fulfill your ministry in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions? Will you be governed by our church’s polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God’s Word and Spirit? Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors and work for the reconciliation of the world? Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?”

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22-N — G-3.0105

MEETINGS

GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS G-3.0105 MEETINGS (ROD-06 3)

Shall G-3.0105 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

“G-3.0105 Meetings

“Meetings of councils shall be opened and closed with prayer. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution. Councils may also make use of processes of discernment in their deliberations prior to a vote as agreed upon by the body.

“In accordance with the requirement of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, councils and their commissions and committees may meet electronically, provided that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in-person meeting. Councils should adopt special rules of order and standing rules to govern such meetings.”

Recommend concurrence

Our form of government leads us to make decisions in councils following opportunity for discussion. The past few years have proven that electronic means of meeting for discussion and vote are necessary and give opportunity for full discussion by all members. Absence of language allowing for electronic meetings has proven problematic in some places. It is not the intent of these additions to require electronic meetings or to mandate any specific processes or procedures. Congregations and councils may make those determinations themselves.

22-Q G-3.0303c RELATIONS WITH SESSIONS (MC-03)

“G-3.0303 Relations with Sessions ...

“... c. establish minimum compensation standards, *including provisions for dissolution terms*, for pastoral calls *and for those serving in temporary pastoral service*, Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the presbytery;”

PMT Recommends Non-Concurrence

22-Q - We recommend a no vote on this. When we hear severance, we think that one party is very unhappy and wants to end the relationship. Installed pastors have a yearly review of terms of calls, but we don't think the Presbytery should enter into severance discussions if the session/congregation and Pastor can come to an agreement. If severance and midterm departure is the only way ahead, then let the session/congregation and Pastor work out a plan that is not based on a minimum coming from Presbytery. There have been instances when a session or the Pastor has asked for Presbytery or PMT involvement which can still be done with the current rules. If this amendment is approved, then the Presbytery will need to come up with a policy for minimums. Of course, zero can always be a minimum.

22-S (G-4.0301) Trust and Confidentiality

"G-4.0301 Trust and Confidentiality

*"In the exercise of pastoral care, ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders who have been commissioned by a presbytery to limited pastoral service (G-2.10) shall maintain a relationship of trust and confidentiality, and shall **work to create communities of trust, accountability, and confidentiality while protecting the vulnerable. Confidentiality creates safe and sacred space for individuals to share concerns, questions, and/or burdens and seek spiritual guidance. Confidentiality should not be an excuse to hold secret the knowledge or risk of harm especially when related to the physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and commissioned ruling elders shall hold in confidence all information revealed to them in the course of providing care and all information relating to the exercise of such care. except:***

*"When the person whose confidences are at issue gives express consent to reveal confidential information, then a minister of the Word and Sacrament or a ~~commissioned ruling elder~~ ~~commissioned pastor (also known as commissioned ruling elder)~~ may, but cannot be compelled to, reveal confidential information, *or when a minister of the Word and Sacrament or a commissioned ruling elder* ~~commissioned pastor (also known as commissioned ruling elder)~~ ~~may reveal confidential information when she or he~~ reasonably believes that there is risk of imminent bodily harm to any person."*

PMT Recommends Concurrence

These additions keep the original intent of G-5.0301 and correct the CRE language. The new language gives the conditions under which confidences [of both the vulnerable and the perpetrators] are told or kept in "communities of trust, accountability and confidentiality."

These additions define the vulnerable, and the boundaries of confidentiality to "protect the vulnerable (Background and Rationale)

Romans 14:12 says, "So then, each of us will be accountable to God", for our actions and the effects of our actions. Christians are called to love both the vulnerable and the perpetrator. We have an obligation to protect the vulnerable AND to avoid further offending by the perpetrator (who may confess their own guilt and need for treatment and healing). This provides for accountability and affliction their own affliction and require), in order to provide accountability and opportunity for healing.

22-V — W-3.0414

SACRAMENT

W-3.0414 COMMUNION (TWE-05 4)

Shall the second paragraph of W-3.0414 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?

"W-3.0414 Communion ...

~~"...When all have received the bread and cup, the remaining elements are placed on the table. The minister of Word and Sacrament then leads the people in prayer. A prayer follows, thanking God for the gift of the Sacrament and asking for grace to live and serve faithfully until the coming of Christ's realm in fullness."~~

Recommend Concurrence

This amendment eliminates the requirement that the prayer after communion be led only by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or ruling elder authorized by the presbytery to administer communion, thus allowing for more flexibility in the prayer after communion, including the use of a unison congregational prayer.