

AUGUST 2009

EXAMINATION IN WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS

OPEN AND CLOSED BOOK

MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination shall assess the candidate's understanding of the meaning and purpose of corporate worship and the Sacraments, familiarity with the Directory for Worship and *The Book of Confessions*, and their application to the life of worshipping communities.

Questions on this examination deal with both **WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS**. You will be expected to demonstrate the following:

- An ability to illustrate the connection between the contemporary understandings and practices of worship set forth in the Directory for Worship and the theological heritage of the Reformed tradition as it is expressed in *The Book of Confessions*.
- An ability to articulate a Reformed theological framework for addressing issues and practices related to worship and sacraments that arise from contemporary contexts for ministry.
- An ability to discern theological components in liturgical situations that may arise in ministry.
- An ability to discuss provisions of the Directory for Worship and to apply them in concrete contexts for ministry.
- An ability to reflect theologically and pastorally on the many different relationships between the ways the church understands and carries out its ministry and mission in the world and its worship and celebration of the sacraments.
- An ability to respond to individuals or groups in given situations with sensitivity to their needs, while also expressing the spirit of the constitutional standards.

In writing your answers, bear in mind that presbyteries elect elders as well as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to serve as readers. Examinations should be written in jargon-free language. Technical language should be used only where the task requires it or where it is appropriate.

The examination is divided into three sections:

Section I is a required one-hour question about Reformed Liturgical Heritage. When you complete Section I, give your copy of *The Book of Confessions* to the proctor, who then will give you Sections II and III of the examination.

Section II is a required one-hour question calling for a Constructive Theological Reflection on Reformed Worship. No books or resources shall be used.

Section III is a required one-hour question dealing with Application for Ministry. There are two options. Select only one option. No books or resources shall be used.

Identify every answer by the letter and number assigned to it (e.g., 1.1 or III.A.I.).

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A CLEAN, UNMARKED, PRINTED COPY OF *THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS* MAY BE USED AS A RESOURCE ONLY DURING SECTION I OF THE EXAMINATION. NO OTHER BOOKS ARE ALLOWED.

You are strongly urged to use a computer. You may bring your own equipment, or, at some exam sites, you may use equipment provided by the proctor. If you use one of these means:

- You may not consult or copy from personal notes or any other source on the computer or a network during the exam.
- Since a printed copy of the exam must be turned in before you leave the exam site and failure to do so will result in failure of the exam, you are strongly urged to make sure that all the necessary equipment (computer, printer, font and printer software, etc.) is properly working and coordinated.
- Number the pages.
- Include your candidate number on each page of the exam.
- Print responses using double spacing and 12-point font size.
- When finished, staple the printed copy to the first few pages of the exam book.

Be advised that illegible papers will be returned ungraded. Papers that cannot be understood by readers because of poor syntax and/or grammar will be graded accordingly. Papers written in pencil will be returned ungraded.

The final grade for this examination will be the average of grades received on all three questions with rounding up or down determined by the readers on the basis of the examination's overall merit. You must complete all three sections of the examination. Even if two sections merit a superior score and one section is omitted, the examination will be considered unsatisfactory. The examination must receive a grade of three or higher on at least TWO questions to be considered satisfactory.

SECTION I. REFORMED LITURGICAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

(THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS ONLY)

The Directory for Worship says:

Both believers and their children are included in God's covenant love. Children of believers are to be baptized without undue delay, but without undue haste. Baptism, whether administered to those who profess their faith or to those presented for Baptism as children, is one and the same Sacrament. (W-2.3008a)

When a child is being presented for Baptism, ordinarily the parent(s) or one(s) rightly exercising parental responsibility shall be an active member of the congregation. Those presenting children for Baptism shall promise to provide nurture and guidance within the community of faith until the child is ready to make a personal profession of faith and assume the responsibility of active church membership. The session may also consider a request for the baptism of a child from a Christian parent who is an active member of another congregation. If the session approves such a request, it shall consult with the governing body of the other congregation and shall notify them when the Sacrament has been administered. (W-2.3014)

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Write an essay on a Reformed understanding of baptism, paying particular attention to the baptism of infants and children, citing by number (e.g., 0.000) at least one (1) passage from at least three (3) different documents in *The Book of Confessions*. Your answer should be based on your knowledge of the Directory for Worship as well as *The Book of Confessions*.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, write a statement for the session that reflects your understanding of the relationship between the faith and practice of parents, and their request to have their children baptized.

You must use a clean, unmarked, printed copy of *The Book of Confessions*, copyright 2002 or later, for Section I. For the purpose of this examination, the Westminster Shorter and Larger Catechisms will be considered one document. Turn in your copy of *The Book of Confessions* to the proctor by the end of the first hour of the examination. The proctor will then give you Sections II and III (pp. 5–7) of the examination.

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INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK.**

**UPON COMPLETING SECTION I,
TURN IN YOUR COPY OF
*THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS.***

THE PROCTOR WILL GIVE YOU SECTION II AND III.

**SECTION II. CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION
ON REFORMED WORSHIP**

ONE HOUR

CLOSED BOOK

REQUIRED

You are the pastor of a local church. After worship one Sunday a visitor comments, “I’m confused. It seems as though a lot of different people helped lead worship this morning, but in my culture only ministers can do that.” Before you can respond, several members chime in:

Reese: Presbyterians believe in “the priesthood of all believers.” That means a layperson can preach or give a blessing or do anything else a pastor can do.

Yvonne: I know that’s true, but no one’s prayers get to God’s ears like the pastor’s prayers. When I am sick or in trouble, I want the pastor, not some elder, to pray with me.

Ernesto: I understand, because I want a minister presiding at the table. It bothers me that elders can officiate at the Lord’s Supper.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Articulate a Reformed understanding of the complementary roles that members, ordained officers, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament play in leading worship. Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the Directory for Worship.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, identify and briefly discuss at least one (1) issue related to shared leadership in worship raised by each of the three (3) members.

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SECTION III. APPLICATION TO MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

CLOSED BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE A OR B)

A.

The session is reviewing the church's order of worship and asks for guidance in identifying and understanding the basic elements of Christian worship. You tell them the Directory for Worship lists six (6) "Elements of Christian Worship":

- Prayer
- Scripture Read and Proclaimed
- Baptism
- Lord's Supper
- Self-Offering
- Relating to Each Other and the World

Allen, a member of the session, says, "I understand the first four elements, but what does the Directory for Worship mean by 'Self-Offering' and 'Relating to Each Other and the World' when it applies to our Sunday morning worship?"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Briefly discuss each of the six (6) "Elements of Christian Worship." Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the Directory for Worship.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Allen, addressing at least three (3) ways "Self-Offering" can be demonstrated in worship, AND at least three (3) ways "Relating to Each Other and the World" can be demonstrated in worship.

OR

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SECTION III. APPLICATION TO MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

CLOSED BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE A OR B)

B.

Burgess, a member of the church you serve as pastor, is a police officer. Because of his shift schedule, he is seldom able to attend Sunday worship. He comes to your office one afternoon with the following request:

Pastor, as you know, my work schedule prevents me from attending Sunday morning worship. I do read the Bible and listen to a CD of the services. I pray for the church and its mission as well as for my family and friends. I set aside money for the offering, which I send to the church. What I really miss is participating in the Lord's Supper. Could you set aside some of the bread and juice on those Sundays when the congregation celebrates the sacrament? Then I could pick up the elements on Monday and take communion at home."

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Articulate a Reformed understanding of the meaning and purpose of participation in the Lord's Supper. Your answer should demonstrate your knowledge of the Directory for Worship.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Burgess, demonstrating appropriate pastoral sensitivity.