

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION OF
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)**

**APPROVED BY THE 217TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY (2006) AND
RECOMMENDED TO THE PRESBYTERIES FOR THEIR
AFFIRMATIVE OR NEGATIVE VOTES**



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

OFFICE OF THE STATED CLERK

LOUISVILLE, KY

NOTE

The 217th General Assembly (2006) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) approved and recommended to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes proposed changes in the language of the *Book of Order* that, if approved, will amend the *Constitution*. Please be sure that a separate vote is taken on each PROPOSED AMENDMENT. A presbytery may vote on the amendments, upon the recommendation of a presbytery committee, by putting some, or even all, in a consent agenda or omnibus motion, that identifies each amendment separately.

Proposed Amendments 06-A-1 and A-2 are to be dealt with as a single amendment – 06-A. If A-1 is approved, A-2 will also be approved. Proposed Amendments 06-B.1. through 06-B.3, are grouped together for clarity and convenience of the presbyteries. They may be voted upon as proposed amendment “06-B.” but each subsection also stands as a separate proposed amendment. When a subsection format is used, the stated clerk is required to report the results of each subsection, even though the presbytery may have voted upon them as an omnibus motion. If a presbytery utilizes some form of consent agenda, the moderator must be sure to ask if anyone wishes to remove an item from the consent agenda for further discussion. It is advisable for the presbytery committee and the stated clerk to agree on organizing the report and recommendations so that the presbytery is able to vote “yes” in favor of the amendment or “no” in opposition.

You will note that reference is made to item numbers that indicate the assembly committee reports related to each proposed amendment. These item numbers also indicate where to find background information from various entities that was available electronically to the assembly commissioners prior to the assembly. That information may now be accessed at <http://www.pcusa.org/ga217/>, then click on “Sign in to Les”. The “Item Number” references are the same as will be found in the *Minutes of the 217th General Assembly (2006)*, Part I [*Minutes*], which are expected to be available to the presbyteries by the time they consider the amendments. The advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC) can be found immediately following the item in the *Minutes* for which the advice is given. Proposed Amendments 06-C and 06-F also contain materials from other General Assembly entities.

Unless otherwise indicated, new language to be added to the *Book of Order* is in italics and any language to be stricken will have a line through it. In providing background material, we have attempted wherever possible to use quotations from the various groups that presented or commented on these materials as they went to the General Assembly. Within those quotations, bracketed material [] has been inserted editorially. If there are no numbers recorded for votes made by the General Assembly, those motions were approved either by voice or a show of hands, which would not have been counted.

Thank you for your time and careful attention as you prepare to vote on these proposed amendments.

Clifton Kirkpatrick
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

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AMENDMENTS A

INTRODUCTION

Amendments A.1. and A.2. were presented to the 217th General Assembly (2006) in response to a referral from the 216th General Assembly (2004) (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, Item 04-12, p. 86). The referral directed the Office of the General Assembly to conduct consultations across the denomination regarding interest in a revised Form of Government and to bring recommendations to the 217th General Assembly (2006). Proposed amendments approved by the 217th General Assembly (2006) and included for consideration by the presbyteries are as follows:

1. Amendments A, which contain:
 - a. Amendment A.1.—the changed wording of Chapter 14, (this revision includes a reordering and a simplifying of the current Chapter 14 that does not intend to introduce new or different provisions or practice), and
 - b. Amendments A.2.—the accompanying amendments to other chapters.
 - c. Rationale for this response.
 - d. Table of Contents and Cross-Reference document in new Chapter 14 order, to aid in finding the location of all Chapter 14 paragraphs.
 - e. Cross-Reference document in current Chapter 14 order, to aid in finding the location of all Chapter 14 paragraphs.
2. Amendments B, which are presented for individual consideration as Amendments B.1., B.2., and B.3. (see pp. 42-57).

**06-A. Revision of Form of Government, Chapter XIV with Additional Amendments to Book of Order Preface and G-6.0500, G-6.0600, G-6.0700, G-9.0405, G-11.0405, G-11.0408 and G-11.0504
(Item 05-11 A.1. & A.2.)**

Amendment A.1.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendments (revision of Chapter XIV, and amendments to the Preface and in Chapters VI, IX, and XI to facilitate some of the revisions) to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall Chapter XIV be amended by striking the existing text and inserting the following in its place: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“CHAPTER XIV. ORDINATION, CERTIFICATION, AND COMMISSIONING

“G-14.0100 Leadership in the Church

“G-14.0110 Servant Style

“The purpose and pattern of leadership in the church in all its forms of ministry shall be understood not in terms of power but of service, after the manner of the servant ministry of Jesus Christ.

“G-14.0120 Ordained Ministry

“Ordination is the act by which the church sets apart persons to be presbyters (ministers of the Word and Sacrament or elders) or deacons, and is accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands. Ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the presbytery. Ordination to the offices of elder and deacon is an act of the session, except that when a new church is organized, the presbytery may examine, ordain, and install the officers. (G-7.0202)

“G-14.0130 Certified Ministry

“Persons called to particular service in the church may be certified by recognized agencies affiliated with the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as having achieved proficiency in their field of expertise. The congregation and presbytery, in appropriate services, may recognize such certification. (See G-14.0700.)

“G-14.0140 Commissioned Ministry

“In the life of the Christian community God calls people to particular acts of discipleship to use their personal gifts for service in the Church and in the world. These specific acts may be strengthened and confirmed by formal recognition and commissioning in worship. (W-4.3000)

“G-14.0200 Preparation for the Office of Elder and Deacon

“G-14.0210 The Office of Elder or Deacon

“The office of elder or deacon is perpetual and no one can lay it aside at pleasure or be divested of it except as provided in this Form of Government or the Rules of Discipline. Elders or deacons are not divested of office when rotating out of active service on the session or board of deacons, or by ceasing to be a member of that church. Elders shall be entitled to be commissioners to presbytery from the particular church of which they are members if appointed by its session and to serve as a commissioner to the synod or the General Assembly when duly elected, whether or not they are in active service on the session.

“G-14.0220 Election Provisions

“G-14.0221 Fair Representation

“Every congregation shall elect men and women from among its active members, giving fair representation to persons of all ages and of all racial ethnic backgrounds and to persons with disabilities who are members of that congregation, to the office of elder and to the office of deacon (if used in the congregation).

“G-14.0222 Terms

“An elder serving on session, or a deacon on a board of deacons, shall be elected for a term of no more than three years, and service in consecutive terms, either full or partial, shall be limited to six years. An elder or deacon having served a total of six years shall be ineligible for reelection to the same board for a period of at least one year. A particular church may provide for a period of ineligibility after one full term. Elders or deacons shall be elected in two or three classes as nearly equal in number as possible, of which only one shall expire each year. Terms of elders or deacons shall expire when their successors have been ordained and installed.

“G-14.0223 Nominating Committee

“Nominations shall be made by a representative nominating committee of active members of the church. The committee shall itself include both women and men, giving fair representation to persons of all age groups, of all racial ethnic members, and of persons with disabilities who are members of that congregation. At least two members of this committee shall be elders designated by the session, one of whom shall be currently on the session and

serve as moderator of the committee. At least one member of this committee shall be designated by and from the board of deacons, if the church has deacons. Other members of the committee, in sufficient number to constitute a majority thereof (exclusive of the pastor), shall be chosen by the congregation or by such organizations within the church as the congregation may designate, none of whom may be in active service on the session or in active service on the board of deacons. The pastor shall be a member of this committee, serving ex officio and without vote.

“G-14.0224 Elected Annually

“The nominating committee shall be elected by the congregation annually and no member of the committee shall serve more than three years consecutively.

“G-14.0225 Nominating Procedures

“All nominating procedures shall be subject to the principles of participation and representation as stated in G-4.0403 and G-9.0104.

“G-14.0226 Exemptions for Certain Congregations

“The presbytery may approve requests by congregations for exemption from certain of these rules, subject to review periodically by the presbytery, which may grant or revoke its approval:

“a. When a particular church is unable to conform to the provisions of G-14.0221, it shall request of presbytery a waiver, stating the reasons for noncompliance and shall outline a plan for steps to compliance. Presbytery may grant the waiver of G-14.0221 by three-fourths vote and for not more than three years, subject to renewal by a three-fourths vote and to revocation by a majority vote.

“b. Any congregation of fewer than seventy members, at a regular congregational meeting, may request approval from the presbytery to elect a small church nominating committee, which shall consist of one member of the session, appointed by the session to be the moderator, and at least two members of the congregation not in active service on the session. The pastor shall be a member ex officio and without vote. Other provisions of fair representation and length of service continue to apply.

“c. If in any church it is impossible because of limited membership to provide for the rotation of terms, the congregation may request a waiver of the limitations on reelection after six years. The presbytery may grant the exemption by majority vote for three years at a time, subject to renewal or revocation at any time by majority vote.

“G-14.0230 Congregational Meeting

“The election of elders and deacons shall take place at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose by the session (G-7.0302).

“G-14.0231 Purpose of the Meeting

“The moderator shall explain the purpose of the meeting.

“G-14.0232 Nominations from the Floor

“Full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nominations by any active member of the church present at the meeting. Persons to be nominated from the floor shall have given prior permission to be nominated and declared assent to serve if elected, or, if present, shall be asked to declare willingness to serve.

“G-14.0233 Ballots

“When the number of nominees equals the number of elders and deacons to be elected, the congregation may vote by voice vote or show of hands. When the number of nominees is greater than the number of elders and deacons to be elected, the congregation shall vote by secret ballot. A majority of all the voters present and voting shall be required to elect.

“G-14.0240 Preparation and Examination for Office

“When persons have been elected to the office of elder or deacon, the session shall confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the office. The session shall provide for a period of study and preparation, after which the session shall examine the officers-elect as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the office. If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation (see G-14.0300). If the examination is not approved for one or more elected officers, the session shall report its action to the congregation’s nominating committee, which shall bring nomination(s) to a meeting of the congregation for any office(s) not filled.

“G-14.0300 Ordination as Officers of the Church

“G-14.0310 Service of Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning

“The service of ordination and installation for elders, deacons, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and for the commissioning of certified Christian educators, certified persons and commissioned lay pastors, shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The minister presiding shall state briefly the nature of the office.

“G-14.0320 Setting of the Service

“The service of ordination and installation, or commissioning, may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. (W-3.3503) Ordination and installation, or commissioning, may also take place in a special service that focuses upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church and which includes the

proclamation of the Word. The service of installation of a pastor or associate pastor shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery.

“G-14.0330 Constitutional Questions to Officers and Commissioned Persons

“The moderator of the governing body of those to be ordained, installed, or commissioned shall ask them to stand before the-body of membership and to answer the following questions:

“a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

“b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God’s Word to you?

“c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?

“d. Will you fulfill your office in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?

“e. 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?

“f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?

“g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?

“h. Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

“i. (1) (For elder) Will you be a faithful elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in governing bodies of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(2) (For deacon) Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people’s help to the friendless and those in need, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(3) (For minister of the Word and Sacrament) Will you be a faithful minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people?

Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(4) (For commissioned lay pastor) Will you be a faithful commissioned lay pastor, serving the people by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith and caring for the people, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?”

“(5) (For certified Christian educator) Will you be a faithful certified Christian educator, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?”

“G-14.0340 Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons

“At the service of ordination or installation of elders and deacons

“G-14.0341 Questions to Congregation

“The elders- and deacons-elect having answered in the affirmative, an elder shall stand with them before the congregation and shall ask the congregation to answer the following questions:

“a. Do we, the members of the church, accept (names) _____ as elders or deacons, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?”

“b. Do we agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?”

“G-14.0342 Prayer and Laying on of Hands

“The members of the church having answered these questions in the affirmative, those to be ordained shall kneel, if able, for prayer and the laying on of hands by the session. Those previously ordained ordinarily shall stand, along with the congregation, if able, for the prayer of installation. The session may invite other elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament to participate in the laying on of hands.

“G-14.0343 Statement

“The moderator shall say to those who have thus been ordained and installed:

“You are now elders and deacons in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“G-14.0344 Session Welcomes

“Then the members of the session, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the newly ordained and installed, or newly installed, elders and deacons into their fellowship in ministry.

“G-14.0345 Congregation Greets

“After the service, it is appropriate for the members of the congregation to greet their new elders and deacons, showing affection and support.

“G-14.0400 Preparation for the Office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament

“G-14.0401 Presbytery Responsibility for Inquiry and Candidacy

“It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the committee on preparation for ministry. (G-9.0902) For this purpose, presbyteries shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy.

“G-14.0402 Advisory Handbook

The process and requirements for the inquiry and the candidacy phases shall be provided in an advisory handbook developed and updated as needed by the appropriate General Assembly agencies in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly, which the presbytery may adopt or modify to establish its own mandatory procedures. (G-9.0405)

“G-14.0403 Time Requirements

“An inquirer shall have been a member of the sponsoring congregation for at least six months prior to the inquirer phase. The inquirer and candidacy phases shall continue for a period of no less than two years, including at least one year as a candidate.

“G-14.0404 Inquiry Phase

“The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ministry of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together in such a way that the decision regarding the inquirer’s suitability for ministry of the Word and Sacrament will be based on knowledge and experience of one another.

“G-14.0405 Candidacy Phase

“The purpose of the candidacy phase is to provide for the full preparation of persons to serve the church as ministers of the Word and Sacrament. This shall be accomplished through the guidance and evaluation of candidates, using learning contacts within the context of supportive relationships.

“G-14.0410 Duties of Presbytery and Session

“The presbytery, through a committee on preparation for ministry, shall seek to instruct sessions on their role in the inquiry and candidacy process. Particular direction shall be given a session that has endorsed an inquirer or candidate.

“G-14.0411 Oversight

“During the phases of inquiry and candidacy, the individual continues to be an active member of his or her particular church and subject to the concern and discipline of the session. In matters relating to preparation for ministry, the individual is under the oversight of the presbytery through the committee on preparation for ministry.

“G-14.0412 Presbytery Responsibility

“The presbytery shall exercise responsibility for the spiritual growth of inquirers and candidates, to support them with an understanding and sympathetic interest, and to give guidance in regard to courses of study, familiarity with the Bible and with the confessions, practical training and plans for education including the choice of institutions, field education, and the inquirer’s or candidate’s financial need. The presbytery shall also seek to give guidance and instruction to the inquirer or candidate in the faith and polity of the church (G-6.0108).

“G-14.0413 Session Responsibility

“The session shall function in a supportive role during the phases of inquiry and candidacy to ensure that care is provided on a continuous basis. The session shall appoint an elder from the church to be a liaison with the inquirer or candidate and the appropriate presbytery committee. The session should consider the provision of financial support for the inquirer or candidate.

“G-14.0420 Service in Covenant Relationship

“The committee on preparation for ministry shall monitor the covenant among presbytery and inquirers and candidates and the session. Inquirers and candidates shall be encouraged to engage in some form of supervised service to the church. The advisory handbook for committees on preparation for ministry shall provide guidance for supervision, evaluation, and reports on the service and preparation for ministry of inquirers and candidates. No inquirer or candidate who has not been previously ordained as an elder may serve as moderator of a session, administer the Sacraments, or perform a marriage service. An inquirer or candidate previously ordained as an elder may be authorized to administer the Lord’s Supper. (See G-6.0304, G-7.0306, G-10.0103, G-11.0103z, and G-14.0562.)

“G-14.0421 Annual Reports

“The presbytery shall require the inquirer or candidate to submit an annual written report on progress in studies and service to the church. The seminary or institution of theological education shall make an annual report on the progress of the inquirer or candidate toward preparation for ministry. The presbytery shall conduct an annual consultation for the evaluation and nurture of the inquirer or candidate. In no case shall an inquirer or candidate be excused from these annual consultations.

“G-14.0430 Examinations

“G-14.0431 Five Ordination Exams

“Inquirers or candidates are encouraged to take the Bible Content Examination in their first year of seminary. The other four examinations may be taken by inquirers or candidates after completion of two full years of theological education. These four examinations shall only be taken upon approval by the committee on preparation for ministry of the inquirer’s or candidate’s presbytery. The areas of examinations are:

“a. Bible Content.

“b. Open Book Bible Exegesis.

“c. Theological Competence.

“d. Worship and Sacraments.

“e. Church Polity.

“G-14.0432 Grading the Exams

“The examinations required in the five specified areas shall be graded by representatives of the presbyteries under the supervision of the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates as provided in G-11.0103m. Descriptions of the examinations, the subjects, the schedule, and the procedures for their administration shall be prepared by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee and approved by the General Assembly.

“G-14.0440 Negotiation for Service

“A candidate who has completed two full years of theological education or its equivalent, who has had an annual consultation within the previous year, and who has successfully completed all ordination examinations or has received presbytery’s certification of readiness according to G-14.0472 may, with approval of the committee on preparation for ministry (CPM) and the appropriate committee on ministry, enter into negotiation for his or her ministerial service. For candidates who have not yet completed the two years of theological education or successfully completed all ordination examinations, the presbytery of care may, by three-fourths vote, permit a candidate to proceed to negotiate for service prior to certification of readiness to receive a call.

“G-14.0450 Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ordained Ministry

“In the final year of theological education or when a candidate has satisfied all of the requirements of this section, and before the candidate has received a call, the committee on preparation for ministry of the candidate’s presbytery shall conduct a final assessment of the candidate’s readiness to begin ordained ministry. A summary of this assessment shall be reported to the presbytery and shall be transmitted to a calling presbytery when requested. The committee on preparation for ministry shall report to the presbytery when it has certified a candidate ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. This consultation shall focus

on the outcomes of inquiry and candidacy and shall include each of the following requirements of certification:

“a. demonstration of readiness to begin ministry of the Word and Sacrament as required to fulfill the candidacy phase of preparation;

“b. presentation of a transcript showing satisfactory grades at a regionally accredited college or university, together with a diploma;

“c. presentation of a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, the transcript showing satisfactory grades, and presentation of a plan to complete the theological degree including Hebrew and Greek and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek texts;

“d. presentation of satisfactory grades together with the examination papers in the five areas covered by the Presbyteries’ Cooperative Committee on Examinations for Candidates.

“G-14.0460 Transfer of or Removal from Covenant Relationship

“G-14.0461 Transfer of Relationship

“A presbytery may transfer the covenant relationship of an inquirer or candidate to another presbytery, but only with the approval of the receiving presbytery and the inquirer or candidate. An inquirer or candidate shall not transfer her or his membership to a particular church under the jurisdiction of another presbytery without the approval of the presbytery responsible for the person’s preparation for ministry. Whenever a presbytery approves such a transfer, it shall send to the other presbytery a certificate of its approval, its records concerning the individual, and the reasons for the request for transfer. Failure of an inquirer or candidate to follow this procedure shall result in the forfeiture of standing as an inquirer or candidate. No presbytery may restore the candidate’s status except by beginning again at the inquiry phase.

“G-14.0462 Another Reformed Body

“When a candidate is called to work under the jurisdiction of some other Reformed body, he or she may be dismissed as a candidate by certification. Likewise, candidates may be received for this purpose from other Reformed bodies by transfer of certificate.

“G-14.0463 Removal from Relationship

“An inquirer or candidate may, after consultation with the session and the committee on preparation for ministry, withdraw from covenant relationship. A presbytery may also, for sufficient reasons, remove an individual’s name from the roll of inquirers or candidates, reporting this action and the reasons to the session, to the individual, and, if appropriate, to the educational institution in which the individual is enrolled. In both instances, prior to final action, the committee on preparation for ministry shall make a reasonable attempt to give the inquirer or candidate and other parties of interest an opportunity to be heard by that committee.

“G-14.0470 Extraordinary Circumstances

“All of the requirements for final assessment shall be met except in the following extraordinary circumstances:

“G-14.0471 Educational Requirements

“If the inquirer’s or candidate’s presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why certain of the educational requirements should not be met by an inquirer or candidate, it shall make an exception only by three-fourths vote of the members of presbytery present. A full account of the reasons for such an exception shall be included in the minutes of presbytery and shall be communicated to the presbytery to which the inquirer or candidate may be transferred. The successful completion of the course of study specified in such an exception shall fulfill the requirements for the final assessment of readiness to begin ministry.

“G-14.0472 Examination Requirements

“The examination requirements of G-14.0431 shall not be waived until an inquirer or candidate has failed on two attempts to receive a satisfactory grade, unless the inquirer or candidate has a disability, documented by a person or persons of the presbytery’s choice, which disability affects the individual’s test-taking ability. If the presbytery believes that the person should be certified as ready for examination for ordination, pending a call, it shall authorize an exception only by a three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present, and must determine an alternate means whereby it will satisfy itself of competence in the area(s) of difficulty. When the individual successfully completes the alternate pattern, the presbytery may certify readiness in the usual manner. The minutes of presbytery shall contain a full record of the reasons for the exception and the alternate pattern for determining competence. Presbyteries shall submit to the synod the process by which a candidate, who has failed one or more examinations twice, or who has such a documented disability, would be examined. Once that process has been approved, presbyteries may proceed with particular candidates, and note such exemptions in their minutes on each occasion. Such processes will be reviewed every three years.

“G-14.0473 Time Requirements

“The time requirements of the inquiry phase shall not be waived unless the presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why the time requirement should not be met by an inquirer or candidate. It shall make an exception only by three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present. A full account of the reasons for such an exception shall be included in the minutes of presbytery and shall be communicated to the presbytery to which the inquirer or candidate may be transferred. Under no circumstances shall the time requirement be less than one year.

“G-14.0474 If Transferred

“The foregoing exceptions shall hold if the presbytery has received the inquirer or candidate from another presbytery that approved the exemption of any of these requirements, the reception of the candidate having confirmed the action of the dismissing presbytery.

“G-14.0480 Ordination an Act of the Whole Church

“Ordination for the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament is an act of the whole church carried out by the presbytery, setting apart a person to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

“G-14.0481 Place of Examination and Ordination

“The presbytery placing the call to a candidate for ministry shall ordinarily examine and, contingent upon the candidate’s successful completion of that examination and all requirements in G-14.0450, the presbytery responsible for the candidate’s preparation for ministry shall ordinarily ordain the candidate.

“G-14.0482 Examination for Ordination

“The candidate shall appear before the presbytery and shall make a brief statement of personal faith and of commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. The presbytery shall receive the report of its appropriate committee that the candidate has completed all requirements, and has been certified ready for ordination pending approval of the call. The report shall include a summary of waivers and exceptions of requirements granted. The presbytery may conduct further examination of the candidate’s Christian faith and views in theology, the Bible, the Sacraments, and the government of the church as it deems necessary. If the presbytery is fully satisfied of the candidate’s qualifications, it shall approve the call and vote to proceed to his or her ordination and installation.

“G-14.0483 Presbytery of Call

“The presbytery of call shall certify to the presbytery responsible for the candidate’s preparation for ministry that the candidate has been approved for ordination and installation. Ordinarily, the presbytery responsible for the candidate’s preparation for ministry shall ordain the candidate. (See G-14.0300.) Following the ordination, the stated clerk of the ordaining presbytery shall record the action, notify the session of the particular church of which the candidate has been a member so that the session may record the fact that the candidate is now ordained and has been transferred to the roll of the presbytery, and issue a letter of dismissal to the calling presbytery, which shall enroll the minister and proceed to install the minister.

“G-14.0484 Agreement on Place of Ordination

“The presbyteries and the candidate may agree that the ordination take place in the calling presbytery, in which case the presbytery may ordain and install the candidate at the same time at a service of worship in the presence of the calling congregation.

“G-14.0485 Recording the Ordination

“The presbytery shall record the ordination and installation as a part of its official records along with the acceptance and subscription of the new minister to the obligations undertaken in the ordination vows. It shall also be the duty of the stated clerk of the presbytery to enroll the newly ordained minister as a member of the presbytery and to report these actions to the Office of the General Assembly.

“G-14.0490 Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament

“At the service of ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament

“G-14.0491 Ordination Questions

“The presbytery shall utilize the ordination questions laid out at G-14.0300, using these words for Question i: Will you be a faithful minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“G-14.0492 Prayer and Laying on of Hands

“The candidate, having answered the questions in the affirmative, shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery, or presbytery commission, shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament. The member presiding shall then say:

“(Name) _____, you are now ordained a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the church of Jesus Christ. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“G-14.0493 Presbytery Welcomes

“Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the new minister into the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. At the conclusion of the ordination service, the new minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.

“G-14.0500 Pastoral Relations

“G-14.0501 Installed or Temporary Relations

“Every church should have the pastoral services of a minister of the Word and Sacrament. The pastoral relations that may exist between a particular church and a minister of the Word and Sacrament are installed (permanent or designated) or temporary relations (see G-14.0550).

“G-14.0510 Installed Pastoral Relations

“G-14.0511 Permanent Pastoral Relations

“A permanent pastoral relationship of pastor or associate pastor, full or part-time, is established by vote of the presbytery or its committee on ministry to approve the call to a minister of the Word and Sacrament elected by vote of the congregation. A pastor or associate pastor is installed by the presbytery and is a member of the session. The call approved by the presbytery cannot be changed or dissolved except by consent of the presbytery, at the request of the pastor or associate pastor, at the request of the church by action of the congregation, or when the presbytery, after consultation with the minister and the congregation, finds that the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.

“G-14.0512 Co-Pastors

“A congregation may call more than one minister to serve as pastor or associate pastor, sharing duties within the congregation as agreed upon by the session and approved by the presbytery, using co-pastor or co-associate pastor or other suitable titles. When there are co-pastors, the presbytery, the ministers, and the session shall agree on a schedule for sharing the times each will moderate. When a particular church has two pastors serving as co-pastors and the relationship of one of them is dissolved, the other remains as pastor of the church.

“G-14.0513 Succession and Extraordinary Circumstances

“The official relationship of an associate pastor to a church is not dependent upon that of a pastor, but an associate pastor is not eligible to be the next installed pastor in a church that they have served together, or to be called as pastor to serve as co-pastor of that church, except in churches that currently have a co-pastor model in place which has been in effect for at least three years and the congregation desires to continue such a model. An associate pastor shall be directed in his or her work by the pastor in consultation with the session.

“G-14.0520 Designated Pastoral Relations

“G-14.0521 Calling a Designated Pastor

“A designated pastoral relationship, full or part-time, is a call to a minister of the Word and Sacrament established by the presbytery for a term of not less than two nor more than four years. The congregation and the minister must both have agreed to be considered for a designated relationship. The congregation’s pastoral nominating committee shall nominate to the congregation for its consideration and vote, only from among those ministers designated to it by the presbytery’s committee on ministry. The minister is installed by the presbytery and is a member of the session.

“G-14.0522 Renewing or Ending the Call

“The call approved by the presbytery is renewable anytime during the last six months of the term, and cannot be changed or dissolved except by consent of the presbytery, at the request of the pastor or at the request of the church by action of the congregation, when the presbytery, after consultation with the minister and the congregation finds that the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it, or when the term specified in the call expires without action having been taken to renew the call. The presbytery may designate and the congregation may call more than one minister to serve as designated pastor, sharing duties within the congregation as agreed upon by the session and approved by the presbytery. When there is more than one pastor, the ministers and the session shall agree on a schedule for sharing the times each will moderate.

“G-14.0523 Designated Pastor to Pastor

“If there has been an open search process conducted by the committee on ministry and after at least two years of the designated pastor relationship, upon the concurrence of the committee on ministry, the designated pastor, and the session, acting in place of the pastor nominating committee for the single purpose of calling the designated pastor as pastor, a congregational meeting may be held to call the designated pastor as pastor. The session, with the concurrence of the committee on ministry, may call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee to conduct a full pastoral search or to prosecute the call to the designated pastor to become pastor. The action of the congregation shall be reported to the presbytery. If the congregational action is affirmative, the presbytery, after voting to approve the new pastoral relationship, shall install the designated pastor as pastor.

“G-14.0530 Election of a Pastor or Associate Pastor

“When a church is without a pastor, or has a vacancy in an associate pastor position, or after the effective date of the dissolution of the pastoral relationship, the congregation shall, with the guidance and permission of the committee on ministry (G-11.0502d), proceed to elect a pastor or associate pastor in the following manner.

“G-14.0531 Pastor Nominating Committee

“The session shall call a congregational meeting to elect a pastor nominating committee, which shall be representative of the whole congregation. This committee’s duty shall be to nominate a minister to the congregation for election as pastor or associate pastor. Public notice of the time, place, and purpose of the meeting to elect the pastor nominating committee shall be given in accord with G-7.0303b.

“G-14.0532 Confer with Committee on Ministry

“The pastor nominating committee shall confer with the committee on ministry as provided in G-11.0502d. When the committee is ready to report to the congregation, it shall notify the session, which shall call a congregational meeting in accord with G-7.0303b. The action of the congregation, if favorable, shall be presented to the presbytery for its concurrence.

“G-14.0533 Signing the Call

“Persons shall be elected by the vote of the congregation to sign the call and to present and prosecute the call before the presbytery. The moderator of the meeting shall certify to the presbytery that those signing the call were properly elected and that the call was in all other respects prepared as constitutionally required.

“G-14.0534 Terms of the Call

“The presbytery shall ensure that the call meets the requirements of federal and state tax laws and fully discloses the compensation of the minister. If the minister is obligated to fulfill military commitments during a period of pastoral service, an agreement should be added to the terms of call for that obligation and potential mobilization. If the call is for less than full time, the precise terms of the contract should be indicated. The terms of call shall always provide for compensation that meets or exceeds any minimum requirements of the presbytery in effect when the call is made, and the congregation’s obligation to review the adequacy of the minister’s compensation and adjust the compensation to meet changes in the presbytery’s requirements as amended from time to time. The call shall include 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.

“G-14.0540 Installation of Minister

“Every Christian is called by God to serve the church; however, God calls some persons to serve the church in particular and specific ways in congregations. When the congregation, the presbytery, and the minister (or candidate) have all concurred in a call to a permanent or designated pastoral position, the presbytery shall complete the call process by organizing and conducting the service of installation. Installation is an act of the presbytery establishing the pastoral relationship. A commission may be appointed to act for the presbytery.

“G-14.0541 Installation Service

“On the day designated for the installation, the presbytery or commission appointed for this purpose shall convene and shall call the congregation gathered to worship. The service shall have the same focus and form as the service of ordination and the person being installed shall be asked to answer the questions asked at the time of ordination. (G-14.0300)

“G-14.0542 Questions for Congregation

“Following the affirmative answers to the questions asked of the person being installed, an elder shall face the congregation along with the pastor-elect (associate pastor-elect) and shall ask them to answer the following questions:

“a. Do we, the members of the church, accept (Name) _____ as our pastor (associate pastor), chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to guide us in the way of Jesus Christ?

“b. Do we agree to encourage him (her), to respect his (her) decisions, and to follow as he (she) guides us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?

“c. Do we promise to pay him (her) fairly and provide for his (her) welfare as he (she) works among us; to stand by him (her) in trouble and share his (her) joys? Will we listen to the word he (she) preaches, welcome his (her) pastoral care, and honor his (her) authority as he (she) seeks to honor and obey Jesus Christ our Lord?

“G-14.0543 Installation of Minister

“The members of the congregation having answered these questions in the affirmative,

“a. a candidate being ordained and installed shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament and install him or her in the particular pastoral responsibility.

“b. a minister, previously ordained, who is being installed ordinarily shall stand, if able, for the laying on of hands and the prayer of installation.

“G-14.0544 Statement to Minister

“The member presiding shall then say:

“a. (For one being ordained and installed) (Name) _____, you are now a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“b. (For a minister previously ordained) (Name) _____, you are now a minister of the Word and Sacrament in and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“G-14.0545 Welcome

“Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the newly ordained and installed or newly installed minister into their fellowship in the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

“G-14.0546 Charge

“Persons invited by the presbytery may then give brief charges to the pastor (associate pastor) and to the congregation to be faithful in their relationship and in their reciprocal responsibilities.

“G-14.0547 Benediction

“At the conclusion of the service, the newly installed minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.

“G-14.0550 Temporary Pastoral Relations

“All temporary relationships of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, full-time or part-time, are established by the session or commission of the presbytery with the approval of the presbytery through its committee on ministry. These temporary relationships have titles appropriate to the ministerial tasks to which the minister is called, such as stated supply, temporary supply, organizing pastor, interim pastor, and others. A minister serving in a temporary pastoral relationship is called for a specified period not to exceed twelve months in length, which is renewable with the approval of the committee on ministry. A written agreement, covenant, or terms of call signed by the minister, the clerk of session or presbytery commission, and a representative of the committee on ministry shall specify the pastoral functions, compensation, and any special skills or training required for the ministry. A temporary pastor is not installed and is not a member of the session. The presbytery shall appoint a moderator of the session who may be the temporary pastor.

“G-14.0551 May Not Become Next Installed Pastor

“A minister serving in a temporary pastoral relationship other than organizing pastor is not eligible to serve that church in the next permanent or designated pastoral relationship. A presbytery may choose to allow a temporary supply to become the next installed pastor by a two-thirds vote of the presbytery.

“G-14.0552 Organizing Pastors

“An organizing pastor is a minister or commissioned lay pastor appointed by the presbytery to serve as pastor to a group of people who are in the process of organizing a new Presbyterian church. This relationship as organizing pastor shall terminate when the new church is formally organized by the presbytery. At that time the new church may, with the approval of the committee on ministry and the presbytery, call the organizing pastor to be its pastor without being required to elect a pastor nominating committee and conduct a pastoral search, or it may choose to elect a pastor nominating committee and conduct a full pastoral search as provided in the Form of Government.

“G-14.0553 Interim Pastoral Relations

“When a presbytery and session determine that an interim pastor, interim co-pastor, or interim associate pastor is necessary and helpful, the session may consult the committee on ministry and seek an interim minister as soon as a date certain for departure has been announced by a pastor or associate pastor planning to leave. An interim pastor, interim co-pastor, or interim associate pastor is not eligible to serve that church as the next permanent or designated pastor.

“G-14.0560 Commissioned Lay Pastor

“The commissioned lay pastor is an elder of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), who is granted a local commission by the presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service. This commission is valid only in one or more congregations, new church development, or other validated ministries of the presbytery designated by the presbytery. Such an elder is selected by and receives training approved by the presbytery. The elder shall be instructed in Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching, leading worship, pastoral care, and teaching. The elder shall be examined by the appropriate committee of presbytery as to personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and the areas of instruction mentioned previously. An elder who has been commissioned and later ceases to serve in a particular congregation may continue to be listed as available to serve, but is not authorized to perform the functions of a commissioned lay pastor again until appointed to a particular congregation by the presbytery.

“G-14.0561 Period Valid

“The commission shall be valid for a period up to three years as determined by the presbytery. It may be renewed at expiration or terminated at any time at the discretion of the presbytery. Presbytery shall regularly provide resources for the person’s spiritual and intellectual development. A review of the work of the commissioned lay pastor shall be conducted annually. Presbytery shall revoke the commission of any lay pastor who does not abide by these provisions or whose work is evaluated as not adequate to meet the needs of the particular congregation or the presbytery.

“G-14.0562 Authorization to Perform Functions

“When a presbytery, in consultation with the session or other responsible committee, determines that its strategy for mission in a local church requires it, and after additional instruction deemed necessary by the presbytery has been provided, a presbytery may authorize a commissioned lay pastor to perform any or all of the following functions described in a.– e. below.

“a. Administer the Lord’s Supper.

“b. Administer the Sacrament of Baptism.

“c. Moderate the session of the congregation under the supervision of and when invited by the moderator of the session appointed by the presbytery, or when appointed by presbytery as moderator.

“d. Perform a service of Christian marriage when invited by the session or other responsible committee, and when allowed by the state.

“e. Have a voice and vote in meetings of the presbytery (such vote to be counted as an elder commissioner for purposes of parity).

“G-14.0563 Pastoral Care and Confidentiality

“Those serving as commissioned lay pastors shall be bound by the same standards of trust and confidentiality as ministers of the Word and Sacrament (G-6.0204).

“G-14.0564 Supervision

“The commissioned lay pastor shall work under the supervision of the presbytery through the moderator of the session of the church being served or through the committee on ministry. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as a mentor and supervisor.

“G-14.0565 Questions Asked

“When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of an applicant, it shall ask the applicant the constitutional questions in G-14.0300, using these words for Question i: Will you be a faithful commissioned lay pastor, serving the people by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith and caring for the people, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“G-14.0570 Parish Associate Relationship

“A parish associate is a minister who serves in some validated ministry other than the local parish, or is a member-at-large, or is retired, but who wishes to maintain a relationship with a particular church or churches in keeping with ordination to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Such persons, already qualified as continuing members of presbytery, may serve as parish associates. The relation shall be established, upon nomination by the pastor, between the parish associate, the session, and the presbytery. The parish associate shall be responsible to the pastor, as head of staff, on an ‘as needed, as available’ basis and with or without remuneration.

“G-14.0571 May Not Be Next Installed Pastor

“A parish associate may not be called to be the next installed pastor or associate pastor of a church served as parish associate, unless at least six months have elapsed since the end of the parish associate relationship.

“G-14.0572 Presbytery Oversight

“The presbytery shall adopt policies and procedures for oversight by the committee on ministry of the parish associate relationships of its minister members and the churches under its care, including annual review.

“G-14.0573 Termination of the Relationship

“The agreement between the session, the parish associate, and the presbytery shall terminate when the call to the installed pastor is dissolved. The presbytery may dissolve the relationship with the parish associate upon the recommendation of the committee on ministry.

“G-14.0600 Dissolution of Installed Pastoral Relationships

“G-14.0610 Dissolved by Presbytery

“The pastoral relationship between a pastor, associate pastor, and a church may be dissolved only by presbytery. Whether the minister or the church or the presbytery initiates proceedings for a dissolution of the relationship, there shall always be a meeting of the congregation to consider the matter and to request, or consent, or decline to consent to dissolution, as provided in G-7.0304a(3).

“G-14.0611 Minister Requests

“The minister may request the presbytery to dissolve the pastoral relationship. The minister must also state her or his intention to the session. The session shall call a congregational meeting to act upon the request and to make recommendations to presbytery. The presbytery may grant authority to its committee on ministry to dissolve the pastoral relationship and to inform the presbytery in cases in which the congregation and the pastor concur. If the congregation does not concur, the presbytery shall hear from the church, through the congregation’s elected commissioners, the reasons why the presbytery should not dissolve the pastoral relationship. If the church fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining the relationship are judged insufficient, the request of the minister may be granted and the pastoral relationship dissolved.

“G-14.0612 Congregation Requests

“If any church desires the pastoral relationship to be dissolved, a similar procedure shall be observed. A congregation, after a duly called congregational meeting, may request presbytery to dissolve its relationship with its pastor. The pastor shall moderate the congregational meeting (in accordance with G-7.0306) unless he or she deems it to be impractical. The presbytery may grant authority to its committee on ministry to dissolve the

relationship and to inform the presbytery in cases in which the pastor and the congregation concur. If the pastor does not concur, the presbytery shall hear from him or her the reasons why the presbytery should not dissolve the relationship. If the pastor fails to appear, or if the reasons for maintaining the relationship are judged insufficient, the relationship may be dissolved.

“G-14.0613 Presbytery Action

“The presbytery, through its committee on ministry or an administrative commission, may inquire into reported difficulties in a congregation and may dissolve the pastoral relationship if, after consultation with the minister, the session, and the congregation (G-7.0304a(3)), it finds the church’s mission under the Word imperatively demands it.

“G-14.0620 Pastor Emeritus, Emerita

“When any pastor or associate pastor retires, and the congregation is moved by affection and gratitude to continue an association in an honorary relationship, it may, at a regularly called congregational meeting, elect him or her as pastor emeritus or emerita, with or without honorarium, but with no pastoral authority or duty. This action shall be taken only after consultation with the committee on ministry of the presbytery concerning the wisdom of this relationship for the peace of the church. This action shall be subject to the approval of presbytery, and may take effect upon the formal dissolution of the pastoral or associate pastoral relationship or anytime thereafter.

“G-14.0630 Officiate by Invitation Only

“Former pastors, associate pastors, assistant pastors, and ministers who do not have a pastoral relationship with the particular church as defined in this chapter may officiate at services for members of the church, or at services within its properties, only upon invitation from the moderator of the session or, in case of the inability to contact the moderator, from the clerk of session.

“G-14.0700 Persons Called to Certified Ministry

“G-14.0710 Christian Educators

“Christian educators are persons called by God to a ministry of education who demonstrate their faith in and love for Jesus Christ, are dedicated to the life of faith and are serious in purpose, honest in character, and joyful in service. Christian educators serving particular congregations are accountable to the session and under the supervision of the pastor, sharing with them the responsibility of providing for the spiritual growth of members for their ministry, teaching the Bible, recommending curriculum materials and resources, training and supporting lay workers, planning and administering the educational program of their congregations, and other tasks.

“G-14.0711 Training

“It is expected that Christian educators be persons with skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed theology, human development, religious educational theory and practice, and the polity, programs, and mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). They should be encouraged by their session and presbytery to meet, or prepare to meet, the accrediting requirements defined in this section.

“G-14.0720 Certification for Christian Educators

In order to provide effective guidance for educational ministry in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the General Assembly shall offer a handbook containing the training and continuing education process for Christian Educators, which shall be administered and certification granted by the Educator Certification Council on behalf of the General Assembly Council. The handbook shall also provide suggested models for support and accountability that synods and presbyteries may adopt for their own use or modify to fit local circumstances.

“G-14.0721 Accrediting Process

“The handbook shall provide an accrediting process that evaluates the educator’s academic preparation and work experience and examines competency in the following knowledge and skill areas:

“Biblical Interpretation

“Reformed Theology

“Human Development

“Religious Education Theory and Practice

“Polity of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

“Program and Mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

“Worship and Sacraments

“G-14.0722 Educator Certification Council

“The Educator Certification Council shall establish certification standards, designate Educator Certification Advisors in consultation with presbyteries, evaluate certification examinations, and grant certificates and report to the General Assembly Council.

“G-14.0730 Presbytery and Certified Christian Educators

“The presbytery shall

“a. support the certification process by encouraging educators to seek certification, providing guidance through the Educator Certification Advisor, and encouraging sessions to make continuing education funds and time available to educators seeking certification;

“b. provide the following support to the certified Christian educators: service of recognition that shall include the constitutional questions at G-14.0300 (G-11.0103n); establish minimum requirements for compensation and benefits (G-11.0103n); and access to the committee on ministry (G-11.0503); and

“c. grant the privilege of the floor to the certified Christian educator at all its meetings with voice only, and, in the case of certified Christian educators who are ordained elders, voice and vote under the provisions of G-11.0101b. (G-11.0407)

“G-14.0731 Service of Recognition

“When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of an applicant for a certified education position in ministry in the church, a service of recognition shall be provided that shall include the constitutional questions (G-14.0300), using these words for Question i: Will you be a faithful certified Christian educator, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“G-14.0740 Other Certified Persons

“Other certified persons have been called to service within particular churches, governing bodies, and church-related entities. These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication.

“G-14.0741 Organized Associations

“To that end, groups of professionals have organized for community, support, and professional development. Several of these associations have entered into formal liaison relationships with General Assembly entities. These groups include the Administrative Personnel Association, the Presbyterian Association of Musicians, and the Presbyterian Church Business Administrators Association and others.

“G-14.0742 Certification

“Certification is overseen and granted by the individual associations; the requirements for certification are reported to the appropriate body of the General Assembly Council.

“a. Members of the Administrative Personnel Association (APA) include secretaries, administrative assistants, bookkeepers, and support staff in church-related settings.

“b. Members of the Presbyterian Association of Musicians (PAM) include choir directors, organists, ministers, and other persons interested in the quality and integrity of music in the worship experience.

“c. Members of the Presbyterian Church Business Administrators Association include pastors and lay persons serving primarily as administrators in particular churches and church-related entities.

“G-14.0743 Notification of Status

“Names of those who have earned certification through these associations shall be transmitted to the appropriate body of the General Assembly Council, which will forward them to the Office of the General Assembly and to the stated clerk of the presbyteries in which those persons labor.

“G-14.0744 Recognition by Presbytery

“a. The presbytery shall affirm the skill and dedication of these certified persons by providing for recognition at presbytery at the time of their certification, asking them the constitutional questions in G-14.0300, and by inviting these employees to presbytery meetings, granting them the privilege of the floor.”

“b. When the presbytery is satisfied with the qualifications of an applicant for a certified position in ministry in the church, a service of recognition shall be provided that shall include the constitutional questions (G-14.0300), using these words for Question i: Will you be a faithful Certified _____, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?”

Amendments A.2.

[Editor's Note: If Amendment A.1. is approved, the following amendments shall also be approved.]

[Editor's Note: Changes shown in Amendments A.2.a. deal with advisory handbooks.]

Amendment A.2.a.(1)

The Preface to the *Book of Order* shall be amended by adding a new item “(5)” to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italics.]

“(5) Advisory handbook signifies a handbook produced by agencies of the General Assembly to guide synods and presbyteries in procedures related to the oversight of ministry. Such handbooks suggest procedures that are commended, but not required.”

Amendment A.2.a.(2)

Section G-9.0405 shall be amended to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italics.]

“Each governing body above the session shall, in consultation with the governing body above and below it, develop a manual of administrative operations. In order to provide effective guidance in the ordination, certification, commissioning, and oversight of the work of ministry, the General Assembly shall offer, through its appropriate agencies, advisory handbooks containing suggested models for procedure that synods and presbyteries may adopt for their own use or modify to fit local circumstances. These handbooks shall be developed and updated as needed by the appropriate General Assembly agencies, in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly and middle governing bodies, to ensure conformity with the Book of Order and practicality of use.”

Amendment A.2.a.(3)

Section G-11.0504 shall be amended by making the current wording paragraph a. and adding a new paragraph b. so that it shall read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“a. The presbytery’s committee on ministry may look to synod and the General Assembly for information and assistance in the matter of ministers and pastoral relations. Synods shall create the necessary agency to coordinate the work of presbytery committees. The General Assembly shall create the necessary agency to facilitate and support the work of the presbyteries and the synods in this matter.

“b. The advisory handbook for committees on ministry developed by the appropriate General Assembly entity, in consultation with the Office of the General Assembly and middle governing bodies, shall provide guidance in the ordination, certification, commissioning, and

oversight of the work of ministry through suggested models for procedures that synods and presbyteries may adopt for their own use or modify to establish their own requirements to fit local circumstances.”

[Editor’s Note: Changes shown in Amendment A.2.b. deal with elders and deacons dissolving their relationship in the local church.]

Amendment A.2.b.

Section G-14.0210 shall be deleted, G-6.0500 shall become G-6.0700, and the wording at G-14.0210 shall be moved to G-6.0500 so that the new G-6.0500 shall read as follows:

“G-6.0500 Dissolution of Relationship

“An elder or deacon may resign from the session or board of deacons for good cause, with the session’s consent. On ceasing to be an active member of a particular church, an elder or deacon ceases to be a member of its session or board. When an elder or deacon, because of change of residence or disability, is unable to perform the duties of the office for a period of one year, the active relationship shall be dissolved by the session unless there is good reason not to do so, which reason shall be recorded.”

[Editor’s Note: G-6.0600 is dealt with in Amendment A.2.c. below.]

“G-6.0700 Renunciation of Jurisdiction

“G-6.0701 Renunciation of Jurisdiction

“When a church officer, whether a minister of the Word and Sacrament, elder, or deacon, renounces the jurisdiction of this church in writing to the clerk or stated clerk of the governing body of jurisdiction, the renunciation shall be effective upon receipt. Renunciation of jurisdiction shall remove the officer from membership and ordained office and shall terminate the exercise of office.

“G-6.0702 Persistence in Disapproved Work

“When a church officer, after consultation and notice, persists in a work disapproved by the governing body having jurisdiction, the governing body may presume that the officer has renounced the jurisdiction of this church.

“G-6.0703 Effect of Renunciation

“The renunciation shall be reported by the clerk or stated clerk at the next meeting of the governing body, which shall record the renunciation, delete the officer's name from the appropriate roll, and take such other actions of an administrative character as may be required by the Constitution.”

[Editor's Note: Changes shown in Amendment A.2.c. deal with officers being released from ordained office.]

Amendment A.2.c.

Section G-11.0414a–c and G-14.0211 shall be stricken and the following wording shall become new G-6.0600, so that it shall read:

“G-6.0600 Release from the Exercise of Ordained Office

“a. If a minister, elder, or deacon against whom no inquiry has been initiated pursuant to D-10.0101 and D-10.0201, against whom no charges have been filed, and who otherwise is in good standing, shall make application to the governing body in which he or she holds membership to be released from the exercise of the ordained office, the governing body, upon granting the release, shall delete that person’s name from the appropriate roll. No judgment or failure on the part of the officer is implied in this action.

“b. Release from the exercise of the ordained office of minister, elder, or deacon requires a discontinuance of all functions of that office. The designation of minister, elder, or deacon shall not be used. The status of a minister, elder, or deacon so released shall be the same as any church member.

“c. A person released under this section who desires to be restored to the ordained office shall make application to the governing body that granted the release, or to the presbytery if the church has been dissolved, and upon approval of that governing body, the person shall be restored to the exercise of the ordained office without reordination.”

[Editor's Note: Changes shown in Amendment A.2.d. deal with the ability of a session to employ a minister of another denomination in a temporary relationship.]

Amendment A.2.d.

Section G-14.0514 shall be stricken and the wording shall be inserted to become G-11.0405c so that G-11.0405c shall read:

“G-11.0405 Ministers of Other Churches

“c. Ordained ministers of other Christian churches may be employed by the session of a particular church in a temporary pastoral relationship, provided that such ministers present to the presbytery credentials of good standing in the ecclesiastical body to which they belong, and provided that presbytery gives its approval to the temporary pastoral relationship.”

[Editor's Note: Changes shown in Amendment A.2.e. deal with the call, installation and recognition of validated ministry.]

Amendment A.2.e.

Section G-14.0517 shall be stricken and the wording at G-11.0408 shall become G-11.0408a; and the current wording at G-14.0517a and b shall become new G-11.0408b and c, so that G-11.0408 shall read:

“G-11.0408 Validated Ministry

“a. A minister of the Word and Sacrament who is an active member of presbytery may be engaged (1) in a validated ministry within congregations of this church, (2) in a validated ministry in other service of this church, (3) in a validated ministry in service beyond the jurisdiction of this church, or may be (4) honorably retired.

“b. A call to a validated ministry in other service of this church (G-11.0410) or in service beyond the jurisdiction of the church (G-11.0411) shall ordinarily be in a form which includes a description of the goals and working relationships, financial terms, and the signatures of the minister, a representative of the presbytery, and where possible, a representative of the employing agency.

“c. It is appropriate for presbytery to conduct a service of installation similar to that found in G-14.0540, or a service of recognition, at the inauguration of this ministry.”

Background and Rationale

These proposed amendments are part of the response of the Office of the General Assembly to a referral from the 216th General Assembly (2004), (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, Item 04-12, p. 86) which directed consultation across the denomination regarding interest in a revised Form of Government. This comes after more than fifteen years of requests to substantively revise this part of the *Book of Order*. The OGA has widely consulted with many groups in the church and offered this response:

“1. A request that a task force be appointed to draft a proposal for a new simplified Form of Government to be brought to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

“2. A proposal for immediate simplification of current Chapter 14 of our Form of Government to provide more flexibility to

presbyteries in candidacy and minister placements; [these are Amendments A.]

“3. A proposal for six other amendments to Chapter 14 to be sent, each to be voted upon separately, in response to requests from around the denomination. [Three of these were approved by the 217th General Assembly and are found as Amendments B.1., B.2., and B.3.]

“What is different in the revised Chapter 14?

“1. Slightly different numbering of paragraphs.

“2. Creation of advisory handbooks; some material will be moved into such handbooks.

“3. Condenses inquiry and candidacy processes—moves most details to a handbook.

“4. Collapses pastoral positions—installed (permanent or designated) and temporary.

“5. Combines certified Christian educators and other certified persons into one section.

“6. Moves sections on dissolution of relationship for elders and deacons and release from ordained office to Chapter 6.

“7. Moves paragraph on validated ministry to Chapter 11 with similar subject matter.”

“The 216th General Assembly (2004) directed the Office of the General Assembly “[t]o undertake an extensive cycle of consultation with various groups and constituencies within the PC(USA), including but not limited to: governing bodies (sessions, presbyteries, synods), governing body staff, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution, racial ethnic caucuses, youth, women, pastors, new immigrant leaders, and other person or groups interested in the role of the Form of Government in the mission and ministry of the PC(USA)” and “[t]o bring recommendations to the 217th General Assembly (2006)” (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, p. 86). This report was the response of the Office of the General Assembly (OGA) to that referral.

“The *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* has always been a fluid document, being the living reminder of “‘Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda,’ that is, ‘The church reformed, always reforming,’ according to the Word of God and the call of the Spirit.”¹ Virtually every twenty-five years since Presbyterianism came to this continent, the church has “reformed” its Form of Government, the last substantive reformation of it occurring at Reunion in 1983. Over this past decade, the church has consistently called for a new or different Form of Government.

“During the time since the 216th General Assembly (2004), the OGA, with the able guidance of the Office of Research Services, has undertaken an extensive cycle of information gathering. We have hosted more than thirty focus groups that have been made up of a wide range of participants. More than half of the governing body staff (executive presbyters, stated clerks, associate executives) have participated. A diverse group of Presbyterians involved in new immigrant and racial ethnic

¹ *Book of Order*, G-2.0200

ministries (pastors, elders, staff members) took part as well. We spoke with members of a variety of presbytery committees (COMs, CPMs, councils) and the elected members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly. In addition, we utilized research survey instruments.

“In conducting these consultations, we found an almost universal desire for change in our Form of Government. The great majority of responders hoped that a revision would provide more flexibility in favor of governing bodies and of presbyteries in particular. ...

“There was great interest in an immediate “fix,” namely revising Chapter 14 of the Form of Government to make it shorter and more flexible in favor of presbyteries. Our ... proposal is an attempt to do what *Overture 02-29* asked in 2002; we have updated Chapter 14.² ... In our focus groups, interviews, and surveys the OGA also heard suggestions for a number of substantive changes to Chapter 14, which we suggest the 217th General Assembly (2006) propose as separate amendments. [See Amendments A and B.1.–3. of this report.]

“Our consultations described above lead us to believe that the church needs the flexibility that such a revision would provide to presbyteries as soon as possible. Presbyteries are currently, and regularly, facing circumstances where they lack the flexibility to provide the pastoral leadership that is required by their member congregations. We heard great urgency in our consultations for some immediate relief from the regulatory approach currently manifested in Chapter 14, especially in relation to new immigrant fellowships, new church developments, and congregations. We see no inherent conflict in the 217th General Assembly (2006) permitting the presbyteries to vote on this reasonable revision while awaiting the report of a more dramatic revision proposal in 2008. We heard the presbyteries crying for some modest relief during the intervening three years between

² We have included the relevant changes to Chapter 14 adopted since 2001, when this chapter was last sent to the presbyteries.

now and the possible implementation of a dramatically different Form of Government.”

Advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) to approve Item 05-11, Recommendation 2. They noted:

“The Advisory Committee on the Constitution has examined the work of the Office of the General Assembly in revising the contents of Chapter XIV. The committee believes that OGA has faithfully executed its charge to revise and restructure the contents of the chapter without changing the polity.

The effort to revise the Form of Government has a lengthy history. The 206th General Assembly (1996) charged the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to prepare proposals for revision of the Form of Government “that will take into consideration the possible division into foundational, policy, and advisory components...” (*Minutes*, 1996, Part I, p.285). The outcome of that work was presented to the 212th General Assembly (2000) in the form of a revision of Chapter 14 that contemplated the removal of considerable process-oriented material in the chapter to handbooks that made such processes optional

rather than mandatory. After a year of study and comment, the 213th General Assembly (2001) approved the proposal as Amendment 01-H. Included in the proposed 01-H was an amendment approved on the floor permitting interim ministers to succeed as the next installed pastor of a congregation they have served as interim. Research indicates that the inclusion of this late-developing change was part of the reason for the failure of the amendment at the presbytery level. In 2002, the Presbytery of St. Augustine overtured the 214th General Assembly (2002) to return the substance of 01-H to the presbyteries for vote, but without the provision concerning interim pastors. The assembly referred the overture to the Office of the General Assembly for study as part of a study process to examine the wisdom of revising not Chapter 14 only, but the entire Form of Government.”

The proposed amendments contained in Amendments A.1. and A.2. were referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38-39, 366, 372-390, Item 05-11, recommendation 2), which recommended approval by a vote of 40/6/1. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a show of hands.

Table of Contents and Cross-Reference for New Chapter 14

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order* + indicates new wording

<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>2005 <i>Book of Order</i></u>
Preface	Advisory Handbook Definition	*
G-6.0500	Dissolution of Relationship of Elder or Deacon	G-14.0210
G-6.0600	Release from the Exercise of Ordained Office	G-11.0414, G-14.0211
G-6.0700	Renunciation of Jurisdiction	G-6.0500
G-9.0405	GA Create Advisory Handbooks	*
G-11.0405c	Ministers of Other Churches	G-14.0514
G-11.0408a	Validated Ministries	G-11.0408
G-11.0408b,c	Validated Ministry: Call, Installation, Recognition	G-14.0517a,b
G-14.0000	Ordination, Certification and Commissioning	G-14.0000
G-14.0100	Leadership in the Church	G-14.0100+
G-14.0110	Servant Style	G-14.0103
G-14.0120	Ordained Ministry	G-14.0101+
G-14.0130	Certified Ministry	G-14.0804+
G-14.0140	Commissioned Ministry	G-14.0102+, W-4.3001+
G-14.0200	Preparation for the Office of Elder and Deacon	G-14.0200+
G-14.0210	The Office of Elder or Deacon	G-14.0203+
G-14.0220	Election Provisions	*
G-14.0221	Fair Representation	G-14.0201+
G-14.0222	Terms	G-14.0201a+
G-14.0223	Nominating Committee	G-14.0201b
G-14.0224	Elected Annually	G-14.0201b+
G-14.0225	Nominating Procedures	G-14.0201d
G-14.0226	Exemptions	G-14.0202+
	a. Fair representation	G-14.0202a
	b. Fewer than 70 members	G-14.0201c+
	c. Rotation of terms	G-14.0202b+
G-14.0230	Congregational Meeting	G-14.0204a
G-14.0231	Purpose of meeting	G-14.0204b
G-14.0232	Nominations from floor	G-14.0201e+,G-14.0204b
G-14.0233	Ballots	G-14.0204b
G-14.0240	Preparation and Examination for Office	G-14.0205
G-14.0300	Ordination as Officers of the Church	G-14.0206+,G-14.0405+
G-14.0310	Service of Ordination, Installation, And Commissioning	G-14.0206+,G-14.0405a G-14.0801g,h
G-14.0320	Setting of the Service	W-4.4002+

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<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>2005 <i>Book of Order</i></u>
G-14.0330	Constitutional Questions to Officers and Commissioned Persons	G-14.0207+, G-14.0405b+,G-14.0801g+
G-14.0340	Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons	
G-14.0341	Questions to Congregation	G-14.0208
G-14.0342	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0209a
G-14.0343	Statement	G-14.0209b
G-14.0344	Session Welcomes	G-14.0209c
G-14.0345	Congregation Greet	G-14.0209d
G-14.0400	Preparation for the Office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	G-14.0300
G-14.0401	Presbytery Responsibility for Inquiry and Candidacy	G-14.0301
G-14.0402	Advisory Handbook	*
G-14.0403	Time Requirements	G-14.0303b+,G-14.0401
G-14.0404	Inquiry Phase	G-14.0302
G-14.0405	Candidacy Phase	G-14.0304
G-14.0410	Duties of Presbytery and Session	G-14.0306a(1)+
G-14.0411	Oversight	G-14.0306a(2)
G-14.0412	Presbytery Responsibility	G-14.0306a+
G-14.0413	Session Responsibility	G-14.0306b
G-14.0420	Service in Covenant Relationship	G-14.0307+
G-14.0421	Annual Reports	G-14.0308+,G-14.0309+
G-14.0430	Examinations	G-14.0310c+
G-14.0431	Five Ordination Exams	G-14.0310d+
G-14.0432	Grading the Exams	G-14.0310e+
G-14.0440	Negotiation for Service	G-14.0309d+
G-14.0450	Final Assessment of Readiness to Begin Ordained Ministry	G-14.0310a,b+
G-14.0460	Transfer of or Removal from Covenant Relationship	
G-14.0461	Transfer of Relationship	G-14.0311
G-14.0462	Another Reformed Body	G-14.0314b
G-14.0463	Removal from Relationship	G-14.0312+
G-14.0470	Extraordinary Circumstances	G-14.0313
G-14.0471	Educational Requirements	G-14.0313a
G-14.0472	Examination Requirements	G-14.0313b
G-14.0473	Time Requirements	G-14.0313c
G-14.0474	Confirmation of Exceptions	G-14.0313d
G-14.0480	Ordination an Act of the Whole Church	G-14.0401+
G-14.0481	Place of Examination and Ordination	G-14.0314a+
G-14.0482	Examination for Ordination	G-14.0402+
G-14.0483	Presbytery of Call	G-14.0402a.+
G-14.0484	Agreement on Place of Ordination	G-14.0404+
G-14.0485	Recording the Ordination	G-14.0406+
G-14.0490	Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	G-14.0405+

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>2005 <i>Book of Order</i></u>
G-14.0491	Ordination Questions	G-14.0405b+
G-14.0492	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0405d
G-14.0493	Presbytery Welcomes	G-14.0405e
G-14.0500	Pastoral Relations	G-14.0500+
G-14.0501	Installed or Temporary Relations	G-14.0501a+
G-14.0510	Installed Pastoral Relations	*
G-14.0511	Permanent Pastoral Relations	G-14.0501b+
G-14.0512	Co-Pastors	G-14.0501c+
G-14.0513	Succession and Extraordinary Circumstances	G-14.0501d+
G-14.0520	Designated Pastoral Relations	G-14.0501e
G-14.0521	Calling a Designated Pastor	G-14.0501e+
G-14.0522	Renewing or Ending the Call	G-14.0501e+
G-14.0523	Designated Pastor to Pastor	G-14.0501e+
G-14.0530	Election of a Pastor or Associate Pastor	G-14.0502+
G-14.0531	Pastor Nominating Committee	G-14.0502a+
G-14.0532	Confer with Committee on Ministry	G-14.0502b+
G-14.0533	Signing the Call	G-14.0506a
G-14.0534	Terms of the Call	G-14.0506b+
G-14.0540	Installation of Minister	G-14.0510+
G-14.0541	Installation Service	G-14.0510a+
G-14.0542	Questions for Congregation	G-14.0510a
G-14.0543	Installation of Minister	G-14.0510b
G-14.0544	Statement to Minister	G-14.0510c
G-14.0545	Welcome	G-14.0510d
G-14.0546	Charge	G-14.0510e
G-14.0547	Benediction	G-14.0510f
G-14.0550	Temporary Pastoral Relations	G-14.0513+
G-14.0551	May Not Become Next Installed Pastor	G-14.0513d+
G-14.0552	Organizing Pastors	G-14.0513f+
G-14.0553	Interim Pastoral Relations	G-14.0513b,c+
G-14.0560	Commissioned Lay Pastor	G-14.0801a
G-14.0561	Period Valid	G-14.0801b
G-14.0562	Authorization to Perform Functions	G-14.0801c+
G-14.0563	Pastoral Care and Confidentiality	G-14.0801f+
G-14.0564	Supervision	G-14.0801d
G-14.0565	Questions Asked	G-14.0801g+
G-14.0570	Parish Associate Relationship	G-14.0515a
G-14.0571	May Not Be Next Called Pastor	G-14.0515a
G-14.0572	Presbytery Oversight	G-14.0515b,c+
G-14.0573	Termination of the Relationship	G-14.0515d
G-14.0600	Dissolution of Installed Pastoral Relationships	G-14.0600+
G-14.0610	Dissolved by Presbytery	G-14.0601+
G-14.0611	Minister Requests	G-14.0602
G-14.0612	Church Requests	G-14.0603

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>2005 <i>Book of Order</i></u>
G-14.0613	Presbytery Action	G-11.0103o+
G-14.0620	Pastor Emeritus, Emerita	G-14.0605
G-14.0630	Officiate by Invitation Only	G-14.0606
G-14.0700	Persons Called to Certified Ministry	
G-14.0710	Christian Educators	G-14.0701a,b+
G-14.0711	Training	G-14.0701c+
G-14.0720	Certification for Christian Educators	G-14.0702+
G-14.0721	Accrediting Process	G-14.0703+
G-14.0722	Educator Certification Council	G-14.0704+
G-14.0730	Presbytery and Certified Christian Educators	G-14.0705+
G-14.0731	Service of Recognition	G-14.0705b+
G-14.0740	Other Certified Persons	G-14.0802a+
G-14.0741	Organized Associations	G-14.0802+
G-14.0742	Certification	G-14.0802+
G-14.0743	Notification of Status	G-14.0803
G-14.0744	Recognition by Presbytery	G-14.0804+

**Cross Reference for Chapter 14
In current Chapter 14 Order**

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
G-6.0500	Renunciation of Jurisdiction	G-6.0700
G-11.0408	Validated Ministries	G-11.0408a
G-11.0414	Renunciation of Jurisdiction	G-6.0700
G-14.0100	Ordination for Church Office	G-14.0100+
G-14.0101	Ordination	G-14.0120+
G-14.0102	Commissioning	G-14.0140+
G-14.0103	Servant Style	G-14.0110
G-14.0200	Electing and Ordaining Elders and Deacons	G-14.0200+
G-14.0201	Election Provisions	G-14.0220, G-14.0221+
G-14.0201a	Terms	G-14.0222+
G-14.0201b	Nominations	G-14.0223, G-14.0224+
G-14.0201c	When a Small Church	G-14.0226b+
G-14.0201d	Principles	G-14.0225
G-14.0201e	Floor Nominations	G-14.0232+
G-14.0202	Exemptions for Certain Congregations	G-14.0226+
G-14.0202a	Fair Representation	G-14.0226a
G-14.0202b	Waiver	G-14.0226c+
G-14.0203	Office is Perpetual	G-14.0210+
G-14.0204	Congregational Meeting	G-14.0230
G-14.0204a	Election	G-14.0230
G-14.0204b	Nominating and Voting Requirements	G-14.0231, G-14.0232, G-14.
G-14.0205	Preparation for Office	G-14.0240
G-14.0206	Service of Ordination and Installation	G-14.0300, G-14.0310+
G-14.0207	Constitutional Questions to Officers	G-14.0330+
G-14.0208	Constitutional Questions to Congregation	G-14.0341
G-14.0209	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0342
G-14.0209a	Prayer	G-14.0342
G-14.0209b	Statement	G-14.0343
G-14.0209c	Session Welcomes	G-14.0344
G-14.0209d	Congregation Greets	G-14.0345
G-14.0210	Dissolution of Relationship	G-6.0500
G-14.0211	Release from Exercise of Ordained Office	G-6.0600
G-14.0211a	Application for Release	G-6.0600a
G-14.0211b	Discontinuation of Function	G-6.0600b
G-14.0211c	Desire to be Restored	G-6.0600c
G-14.0300	Preparation for the Office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	G-14.0400
G-14.0301	Presbytery Responsibility	G-14.0401

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<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
G-14.0302	Inquiry Defined	G-14.0404
G-14.0303	Inquiry Phase	G-14.0403+
G-14.0304	Candidacy Defined	G-14.0405
G-14.0305	Candidacy Process	*
G-14.0306	Duties of Presbytery and Session	G-14.0410+
G-14.0306a	Duties of Presbytery	G-14.0410+, .0411, .0412+
G-14.0306b	Support by Session	G-14.0413
G-14.0307	Service in Covenant Relationship	G-14.0420+
G-14.0308	Annual Report	G-14.0421+
G-14.0309	Consultation and Guidance	G-14.0421+
G-14.0309a	Annual Consultation	*
G-14.0309b	Written Report	*
G-14.0309c	Content	*
G-14.0309c(1)	Prior to Theological Education	*
G-14.0309c(2)	First Year Theological Education	*
G-14.0309c(3)	Second Year Theological	*
	Education	
G-14.0309d	Negotiation for Service	G-14.0440+
G-14.0310	Final Assessment	G-14.0450
G-14.0310a	Assess Readiness to Begin Ministry	G-14.0450
G-14.0310b	Requirements to Be Certified Ready	G-14.0450+
	for Examination	
G-14.0310b(1)	Readiness	G-14.0450a
G-14.0310b(2)	Transcript	G-14.0450b
G-14.0310b(3)	Educational Requirements	G-14.0450c
G-14.0310b(4)	Examination Requirements	G-14.0450d
G-14.0310c	Bible Content Examination	G-14.0430+
G-14.0310d	Areas of Examination	G-14.0431+
G-14.0310d(1)	Open Book Bible Exegesis	G-14.0431a+
G-14.0310d(2)	Bible Content	G-14.0431b+
G-14.0310d(3)	Theological Competence	G-14.0431c+
G-14.0310d(4)	Worship and Sacraments	G-14.0431d+
G-14.0310d(5)	Church Polity	G-14.0431e+
G-14.0310e	How Graded	G-14.0432+
G-14.0311	Transfer of Covenant Relationship	G-14.0461
G-14.0312	Removal from Covenant Relationship	G-14.0463+
G-14.0313	Extraordinary Circumstances	G-14.0470
G-14.0313a	Educational Requirements	G-14.0471
G-14.0313b	Examination Requirements	G-14.0472
G-14.0313c	Time Requirements	G-14.0473
G-14.0313d	Confirmation of Action	G-14.0474
G-14.0314	Location of Ordination	
G-14.0314a	Examination and Ordination	G-14.0481+
G-14.0314b	Other Reformed Bodies	G-14.0462
G-14.0400	Ordination for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament	

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
G-14.0401	Ordination of Candidates	G-14.0403, G-14.0480+
G-14.0402	Examination for Ordination	G-14.0482+
G-14.0402a	Appearance before Presbytery	G-14.0483+
G-14.0402b	Vote to Proceed	*
G-14.0403	Extraordinary Circumstances	*
G-14.0404	Place of Ordination, Installation	G-14.0484+
G-14.0404a	Ordination in Presence of Congregation of Membership	G-14.0484+
G-14.0404b	Place of Installation	G-14.0484+
G-14.0405	Ordination Service	G-14.0300+
G-14.0405a	Presbytery or Commission Convenes for Service	G-14.0310
G-14.0405b	Constitutional Questions	G-14.0330+, G-14.0491
G-14.0405c	Section stricken	
G-14.0405d	Laying on of Hands	G-14.0492
G-14.0405e	Welcome	G-14.0493
G-14.0406	Ordination Recorded	G-14.0485+
G-14.0500	Calling and Installing Ministers of the Word and Sacrament	G-14.0500+
G-14.0501	Pastors, Co-Pastors, and Associate Pastors	G-14.0501+
G-14.0501a	Pastoral Relations	G-14.0501+
G-14.0501d	Cannot Immediately Succeed the Pastor	G-14.0513+
G-14.0501e	Designated Pastor	G-14.0520+, .0521+, .0522+, .0523+
G-14.0502	Election of a Pastor	G-14.0530+
G-14.0502a	Elect a Pastor Nomination Committee	G-14.0531+
G-14.0502b	Work of the Committee	G-14.0532+
G-14.0502c	Report of the Committee	G-14.0530+
G-14.0503	Congregational Meeting	*
G-14.0503a	Convened for Election of Pastor	*
G-14.0503b	Vote by Ballot	*
G-14.0504	Larger Parish	*
G-14.0505	Dissent	*
G-14.0506	The Call	*
G-14.0506a	Persons Elected to Sign the Call	G-14.0533
G-14.0506b	Written Call	G-14.0534+
G-14.0506c	Allowances and Amounts	*
G-14.0506d	Certification	*
G-14.0506e	Minimum Requirements	*
G-14.0506f	Integration	*
G-14.0507	Call Presented and Received	*
G-14.0507a	Presbytery Finds Call in Order	*
G-14.0507b	Call Through Own Presbytery	*
G-14.0507c	Call, Delegation of Authority	*
G-14.0508	Section moved to G-11.0404	

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
G-14.0509	Installation of Minister	*
G-14.0509a	Call Is Presented	*
G-14.0509b	Acceptance of Call	*
G-14.0510	Installations Service	G-14.0540+
G-14.0510a	Presbytery or Commission Convenes	G-14.0541+, G-14.0542
G-14.0510b	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0543
G-14.0510c	Statement	G-14.0544
G-14.0510d	Welcome	G-14.0545
G-14.0510e	Brief Charges	G-14.0546
G-14.0510f	Benediction	G-14.0547
G-14.0510g	Record Service	*
G-14.0511	Welcome	*
G-14.0512	More than One Church	*
G-14.0513	Temporary Pastoral Relations	G-14.0551+
G-14.0513a	Stated Supply	G-14.0551+
G-14.0513b	Interim Pastor	G-14.0552+
G-14.0513c	Interim Associate Pastor	G-14.0552+
G-14.0513d	Temporary Supply	G-14.0550+, G-14.0551+
G-14.0513e	Inquirer or Candidate as Temporary Supply	G-14.0550+
G-14.0513f	Organizing Pastor	G-14.0551+, G-14.0552+
G-14.0514	Ministers of Other Churches	G-11.0405c
G-14.0515	Parish Associates	G-14.0570
G-14.0515a	Minister in Validated Ministry Other Than the Local Parish	G-14.0571
G-14.0515b	Designation Made Under Supervision of COM	G-14.0572
G-14.0515c	Annual Review	G-14.0572+
G-14.0515d	Termination of Relationship	G-14.0573
G-14.0516	Section moved to G-14.0801	
G-14.0517	Validated Ministry: Call, Installation, Recognition	G-11.0408
G-14.0517a	Call	G-11.0408b
G-14.0517b	Service	G-11.0408c
G-14.0600	Dissolution of Pastoral Relationship	G-14.0600+
G-14.0601	By Presbytery	G-14.0610+
G-14.0602	Request by Minister	G-14.0611
G-14.0603	Request by Congregation	G-14.0612
G-14.0604	Section stricken	
G-14.0605	Pastor Emeritus, Emerita	G-14.0620
G-14.0606	Officiate by Invitation Only	G-14.0630
G-14.0607	Section stricken	
G-14.0700	Certified Christian Educator	G-14.0700+
G-14.0701	Christian Educators	G-14.0710+, .0711+
G-14.0702	The Certified Christian Educator	G-14.0720+

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
G-14.0703	Certification	G-14.0721+
G-14.0704	Educator Certification Council	G-14.0722+
G-14.0705	Presbytery	G-14.0730+,G-14.0731+
G-14.0800	Other Certified Employees	*
G-14.0801	Commissioned Lay Pastor	
G-14.0801a	Local Commission to Provide Pastoral Services	G-14.0560
G-14.0801b	Period Valid	G-14.0561
G-14.0801c	Authorization to Perform Functions	G-14.0562+
G-14.0801d	Supervision	G-14.0564
G-14.0801e	Moderator of Session	*
G-14.0801f	Trust and Confidentiality	G-14.0563+
G-14.0801g	Questions Asked	G-14.0310, G-14.0330+, G-14.0565+
G-14.0801h	Prayer and Statement	G-14.0310
G-14.0802	Other Certified Lay Employees	G-14.0740+, .0741+, .0742+
G-14.0803	Notification of Status	G-14.0743
G-14.0804	Recognition by Presbytery	G-14.0130+, G-14.0744

AMENDMENTS B

INTRODUCTION

Proposed amendments 06-B.1, 06-B.2. and 06-B.3 came to the 217th General Assembly (2006) from the Office of the General Assembly in response to a referral from the 216th General Assembly (2004), (*Minutes*, 2004, Part I, Item 04-12, p. 86).

During the time since the 216th General Assembly (2004), the OGA, with the guidance of the Office of Research Services, undertook an extensive cycle of information gathering. More than thirty focus groups were hosted that were comprised of a wide range of participants. More than half of the governing body staff (executive presbyters, stated clerks, associate executives) participated. A diverse group of Presbyterians involved in new immigrant and racial ethnic ministries (pastors, elders, staff members) took part as well. Members of a variety of presbytery committees (COMs, CPMs, councils) and the elected members of the Committee on the Office of the General Assembly were consulted. In addition, research survey instruments were utilized.

In conducting these consultations, an almost universal desire for change in our Form of Government was found. The great majority of responders hoped that a revision would provide more flexibility in favor of governing bodies and of presbyteries in particular.

There was great interest in an immediate “fix,” namely revising Chapter 14 of the Form of Government to make it shorter and more flexible in favor of presbyteries (see Amendments A.1. and A.2.).

Amendments 06-B.1., 06-B.2., and 06-B.3. offer the church as separate options the possibility of moving the ordination questions to the Directory for Worship, of allowing for licensure of candidates under care, and for eliminating the synod’s role in approving the extraordinary examination process for inquirers and candidates.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following three proposed amendments (Amendments B) to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes and that the Stated Clerk be authorized, for any of these amendments that may be approved, to make editorial changes as may be needed to conform other sections of the *Book of Order* (including internal cross-references) to the changes and report such changes to the 218th General Assembly (2008).

Editor’s note: If Amendments A1 and A2 are passed by the presbyteries and any of the Amendments B are approved as well, the *Book of Order* will be amended so as to incorporate the approved amendment(s).

06-B.1. Moving Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning Questions and Service Information to the Directory for Worship--

On Amending G-14.0206 - .0209, G-14.0405, G-14.0510-.0511, G-14.0801g & h, and W-4.4000 (Item 05-11, B.1.)

Editor's note: If Amendments A1 and A2 are passed by the presbyteries and Amendment B-1 is approved as well, the *Book of Order* will be amended at G-14.0310, G-14.0320, G-14.0330, G-14.0340-.0345, G-14.0490-.0493, G-14.0540-.0547 and W-4.4000 so as to incorporate the approved amendments.

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

a. Shall the language at G-14.0206 be deleted and shall *“Ordination, installation, and commissioning questions and service information are found at W-4.4000.”* be inserted so that G-14.0206 shall read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-14.0206 Service of Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning

~~“The service of ordination and installation shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The minister presiding shall state briefly the nature of the offices of elder and deacon.”~~

“Ordination, installation, and commissioning questions and service information are found at W-4.4000.”

b. Shall G-14.0207– G-14.0209 be deleted.

c. Shall the language at G-14.0405 be deleted and shall *“Ordination questions and installation service information may be found at W-4.4000.”* be inserted at G-14.0405 so that it shall read:

“G-14.0405 Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament

“Ordination questions and installation service information may be found at W-4.4000.”

d. Shall the language at G-14.0510–G-14.0511 be deleted and shall *“Ordination questions and installation service information may be found at W-4.4000.”* be inserted at G-14.0510 so that it shall read:

“G-14.0510 Installation of Minister

“Ordination questions and installation service information may be found at W-4.4000.”

e. Shall the language at G-14.0801 g & h be deleted and shall *“Commissioning questions and service information may be found at W-4.4000.”* be inserted at G-14.0801g. so that it shall read:

“G-14.0801g Questions Asked

“Commissioning questions and service information may be found at W-4.4000.”

f. Shall the language at W-4.4000 be deleted and shall the following language be inserted so that W-4.4000 shall read :

“W-4.4000 Ordination, Installation and Commissioning

“W-4.4001a Ordination and Installation

“a. In ordination the church sets apart with prayer and the laying on of hands those who have been called through election by the church to serve as deacons, elders, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. (W-2.1005) In installation the church sets apart with prayer those previously ordained to the office of deacon, elder, or minister of the Word and Sacrament, and called anew to service in that office.

“W-4.4001b Service of Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning

“b. The service of ordination and installation for elders, deacons, or ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and for the commissioning of certified Christian educators, certified persons and commissioned lay pastors, shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The minister presiding shall state briefly the nature of the office.

“W-4.4002 Setting of the Service

“The service of ordination and installation, or commissioning, may take place during the Service for the Lord’s Day as a response to the proclamation of the Word. (W-3.3503). Ordination and installation, or commissioning, may also take place in a special service that focuses upon Jesus Christ and the mission and ministry of the church and which includes the proclamation of the Word. The service of installation of a pastor or associate pastor shall be conducted at a convenient time to enable the substantial participation of the presbytery.

“W-4.4003 Constitutional Questions to Officers and Commissioned Persons

“The moderator of the governing body of those to be ordained, installed, or commissioned shall ask them to stand before the-body of membership and to answer the following questions:

“a. Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Savior, acknowledge him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?

“b. Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God’s Word to you?

“c. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?

“d. Will you fulfill your office in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?

“e. 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?

“f. Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbors, and work for the reconciliation of the world?

“g. Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?

“h. Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?

“i. (1) (For elder) Will you be a faithful elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service? Will you share in government and discipline, serving in governing bodies of the church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(2) (For deacon) Will you be a faithful deacon, teaching charity, urging concern, and directing the people’s help to the friendless and those in need, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(3) (For minister of the Word and Sacrament) Will you be a faithful minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(4) (For commissioned lay pastor) Will you be a faithful commissioned lay pastor, serving the people by proclaiming the good news, teaching faith and caring for the people, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“(5) (For certified Christian educator) Will you be a faithful certified Christian educator, teaching faith and caring for people, and will you in your ministry try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“W-4.4004 Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons

“At the service of ordination or installation of elders and deacons:

“W-4.4004a Questions to Congregation

“a. The elders- and deacons-elect having answered in the affirmative, an elder shall stand with them before the congregation and shall ask the congregation to answer the following questions:

“(1) Do we, the members of the church, accept (names) _____ as elders or deacons, chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?

“(2) Do we agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?

“W-4.4004b Prayer and Laying on of Hands

“b. The members of the church having answered these questions in the affirmative, those to be ordained shall kneel, if able, for prayer and the laying on of hands by the session. Those previously ordained ordinarily shall stand, along with the congregation, if able, for the prayer of installation. The session may invite other elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament to participate in the laying on of hands.

“W-4.4004c. Statement

“c. The moderator shall say to those who have thus been ordained and installed:

“You are now elders and deacons in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“W-4.4004d Session Welcomes

“d. Then the members of the session, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the newly ordained and installed, or newly installed, elders and deacons into their fellowship in ministry.

“W-4.4004e Congregation Greets

“e. After the service, it is appropriate for the members of the congregation to greet their new elders and deacons, showing affection and support.

“W-4.4005 Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament

“At the service of ordination to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament

“W-4.4005a Ordination Questions

“a. The presbytery shall utilize the ordination questions laid out at ~~G-14.0300~~, W-4.4003, using these words for Question i.(3): Will you be a faithful minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

“W-4.4005b Prayer and Laying on of Hands

“b. The candidate, having answered the questions in the affirmative, shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery, or presbytery commission, shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament. The member presiding shall then say:

“(Name) _____, you are now ordained a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the church of Jesus Christ. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“W-4.4005. Presbytery Welcomes

“c. Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the new minister into the ministry of the Word and Sacrament. At the conclusion of the ordination service, the new minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.

“W-4.4006 Installation of Minister of the Word and Sacrament

“Every Christian is called by God to serve the church; however, God calls some persons to serve the church in particular and specific ways in congregations. When the congregation, the presbytery, and the minister (or candidate) have all concurred in a call to a permanent or designated pastoral position, the presbytery shall complete the call process by organizing and conducting the service of installation. Installation is an act of the presbytery establishing the pastoral relationship. A commission may be appointed to act for the presbytery.

“W-4.4006a Installation Service

“a. On the day designated for the installation, the presbytery or commission appointed for this purpose shall convene and shall call the congregation gathered to worship. The service shall have the same focus and form as the service of ordination and the person being installed shall be asked to answer the questions asked at the time of ordination.

“W-4.4006b Questions for Congregation

“b. Following the affirmative answers to the questions asked of the person being installed, an elder shall face the congregation along with the pastor-elect (associate pastor-elect) and shall ask them to answer the following questions:

“(1) Do we, the members of the church, accept (Name) _____ as our pastor (associate pastor), chosen by God through the voice of this congregation to guide us in the way of Jesus Christ?

“(2) Do we agree to encourage him (her), to respect his (her) decisions, and to follow as he (she) guides us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?

“(3) Do we promise to pay him (her) fairly and provide for his (her) welfare as he (she) works among us; to stand by him (her) in trouble and share his (her) joys? Will we listen to the word he (she) preaches, welcome his (her) pastoral care, and honor his (her) authority as he (she) seeks to honor and obey Jesus Christ our Lord?

“W-4.4006c Installation of Minister

“c. The members of the congregation having answered these questions in the affirmative,

“(1) a candidate being ordained and installed shall kneel, if able, and the presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of minister of the Word and Sacrament and install him or her in the particular pastoral responsibility.

“(2) a minister, previously ordained, who is being installed ordinarily shall stand, if able, for the laying on of hands and the prayer of installation.

“W-4.4006d Statement to Minister

“d. The member presiding shall then say:

“(1) (For one being ordained and installed) (Name) _____, you are now a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“(2) (For a minister previously ordained) (Name) _____, you are now a minister of the Word and Sacrament in and for this congregation. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him. Amen.

“W-4.4006e Welcome

“e. Then the members of the presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the newly ordained and installed or newly installed minister into their fellowship in the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

“W-4.4006f Charge

“f. Persons invited by the presbytery may then give brief charges to the pastor (associate pastor) and to the congregation to be faithful in their relationship and in their reciprocal responsibilities.

“W-4.4006g Benediction

“g. At the conclusion of the service, the newly installed minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.”

Background and Rationale

The Office of the General proposed these amendments, and noted:

“Moving these sections from Chapter 14 into the Directory for Worship will accomplish at least three things:

- “Placing this section into the Directory for Worship embodies our belief that ordination and installation of officers must always occur in the context of worship. Our theology teaches us that these acts are forms of worship at least as much as they are of governance.
- “Having one portion of the *Book of Order* dedicated to the ordination questions for elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament makes clear our understanding that ordination is to function (G-6.0102) and that everyone being ordained answers the same questions (except for the final one, which is directed to each office individually).
- “The church has been asking for a shorter Chapter 14 and this is one way to move lengthy portions to a more logical placement.”

Advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 216th General Assembly (2006) to approve Item 05-11, Amendment B.1.

The ACC’s rationale included the following:

“The amendment would, if approved, move the questions for ordination, installation, and commissioning, together with other instructions for such services, out of Chapter XIV and into the Directory for Worship (DfW). ...

“The ACC finds no constitutional barrier to the action proposed in this amendment. Since the Directory for Worship has equal standing with the Form of Government as part of the *Constitution* of the church, transferring ordination/installation/commissioning questions and service information to the DfW does not result in a loss of constitutional force regarding these questions. Moreover, their placement in the DfW is in keeping with the character and contents of the DfW, since ordination, installation, and commissioning are all acts of worship.”

The proposed amendments contained in Amendment B.1. were referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38-39, 366, 390-395, Item 05-11, amendment B.1.), which recommended approval by a vote of 45/0/0. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a show of hands.

06-B.2. Adding Licensure of Candidates-- On Amending G-14.0309 (Item 05-11 B.2.)

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-14.0309 be amended by adding a new section to become G-14.0309e. so that the section shall read: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-14.0309e. Licensure

“When a candidate has completed all requirements for ordination, except completion of the examinations of G-14.0310d (1)–(5), the candidate and the presbytery may agree that the candidate will serve an internship prior to undertaking the exams described in G-14.0310d (1)–(5). The presbytery may grant such candidate a license to preach, and when its strategy for mission requires it, a limited license to administer the sacraments. A minister of the Word and Sacrament shall be assigned as mentor and supervisor. Upon successful completion of the examinations described in G-14.0310d (1)–(5), such candidate may be invited by the session to serve in any of the positions described in G-14.0513.

Editor’s note: If Amendments A1 and A2 are passed by the presbyteries and Amendment B-2 is approved as well, the *Book of Order* will be amended at G-14.0441 so as to incorporate the approved amendment.

Background and Rationale

This amendment was proposed by the Office of the General Assembly, which noted:

“Many of the focus groups who gave feedback on the Form of Government project mentioned a desire for reinstating an old concept, but putting it into a new setting: licensure of candidates who have completed the preparation process except for passing all the ordination exams. The thinking is as follows:

- “Deans in seminaries see the wisdom of allowing candidates to have hands-on experience, including administering the sacraments, as they prepare to finish their exams outside the academic setting. Since the exams aim to test assimilation of academic training with pastoral sense, this experience often serves to aid them in passing the exams.

- “Presbyteries with many small churches are hoping that such candidates will be able to pastor some of these congregations; they can do so now, but cannot celebrate the sacraments. Experience has taught us that once such a

candidate is serving such a small congregation it is much more likely that the candidate will stay on for a few years even after they are ordained. This is a winning situation for all concerned.

- “Many large church pastors would like to be able to mentor a young pastor in a large congregation setting, which many candidates will not be able to experience otherwise.”

Advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) to approve Item 05-11, Amendment B.2. and proposed alternative language that was not approved.

A part of the ACC’s rationale said:

“The committee finds no constitutional barrier to the creation of this provision.

“Licensure is not a new idea for the church. In 1872, the PCUSA adopted rules governing the licensure of candidates to preach, but the

practice goes well back into the early history of Presbyterianism in this country. ... The practice of licensing candidates to preach was part of the PCUS *Book of Church Order* from at least as early as 1907 but is absent from the 1961 edition. Licensure was part of the polity of the PCUSA and was brought into the UPCUSA, where it remained until reunion, when it was omitted from the *Book of Order*.

“The effect of approving this amendment would be to restore the option to the presbytery to provide a period of internship for candidates

during which they might hone their skills as pastors and preachers before being released to the full exercise of ministry. ...”

Proposed Amendment B.2. was referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38-39, 366, 395-396, Item 05-11, Amendment B.2.), which recommended approval by a vote of 45/0/0. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a show of hands.

06- B.3. Removing Synod Approval of Extraordinary Exam Process— On Amending G-14.0313b. (Item 05-11 B.3.)

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-14.0313b. be amended by striking the last three sentences as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through.]

“G-14.0313b Examination Requirements

“The examination requirements of G-14.0310b(4) shall not be waived until an inquirer or candidate has failed on two attempts to receive a satisfactory grade, unless the inquirer or candidate has a disability, documented by a person or persons of the presbytery's choice, which disability affects the individual's test-taking ability. If the presbytery believes that the person should be certified as ready for examination for ordination, pending a call, it shall authorize an exception only by a three-fourths vote of the members of the presbytery present, and must determine an alternate means whereby it will satisfy itself of competence in the area(s) of difficulty. When the individual successfully completes the alternate pattern, the presbytery may certify readiness in the usual manner. The minutes of presbytery shall contain a full record of the reasons for the exception and the alternate pattern for determining competence. ~~Presbyteries shall submit to the synod the process by which a candidate, who has failed one or more examinations twice, or who has such a documented disability, would be examined. Once that process has been approved, presbyteries may proceed with particular candidates, and note such exemptions in their minutes each occasion. Such processes will be reviewed every three years.”~~

Editor's note: If Amendments A1 and A2 are passed by the presbyteries and Amendment B-3 is approved as well, the *Book of Order* will be amended at G-14.0472 so as to incorporate the approved amendment.

Background and Rationale

This amendment was proposed by the Office of the General Assembly, whose comments follow:

“The suggestion for this amendment came from several focus groups, including one made up of synod execs and stated clerks. There are a number of problems with the current requirement that synods approve an alternate ordination exam process for a presbytery:

- “For the alternate exam process to be useful enough for each individual situation in which it might be needed, it would have to be too specific to be practical.

- “The timeline often acts as a bureaucratic delay in a candidate’s process without adding the benefits of a true safeguard.
- “Synods often simply approve such processes without careful scrutiny. Presbyteries are very able to judge for themselves the adequacy of the alternate process.”

Advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 216th General Assembly (2006) to approve Item 05-11, Amendment B.3. The ACC’s rationale included the following:

“The effect of this amendment would be to remove any requirement that the synod approve the process used by the presbytery in determining a candidate’s readiness for ministry. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution finds that this removal is in keeping with other provisions of our polity, which assign the assessment of a candidate’s readiness for ministry to the presbytery ... but make no mention of any role or responsibility on the part of the synod.”

The proposed amendment was referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38-39, 366, 397-398, Item 05-11, Amendment B.3.), which recommended approval by a vote of 45/0/0. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a show of hands.

Cross References, if Amendments A and B Are Approved

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order* + indicates new wording

<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>2005 Book of Order</u>
<u>Amendment B.1:</u>		
G-14.0310	Service of Ordination, Installation, and Commissioning	*
G-14.0320	Setting of the Service	W-4.4002+
G-14.0330	Constitutional Questions to Officers	G-14.0207+, G-14.0405b+, G-14.0801g+
	and Commissioned Persons	
G-14.0340	Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons	
G-14.0341	Questions to Congregation	G-14.0208
G-14.0342	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0209a
G-14.0343	Statement	G-14.0209b
G-14.0344	Session Welcomes	G-14.0209e
G-14.0345	Congregation Greet	G-14.0209d
G-14.0490	Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	
G-14.0491	Ordination Questions	G-14.0405b
G-14.0492	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0405d
G-14.0493	Presbytery Welcomes	G-14.0405e
G-14.0540	Installation of Minister	G-14.0510+
G-14.0541	Installation Service	G-14.0510a+
G-14.0542	Questions for Congregation	G-14.0510a
G-14.0543	Installation of Minister	G-14.0510b
G-14.0544	Statement to Minister	G-14.0510e
G-14.0545	Welcome	G-14.0510d
G-14.0546	Charge	G-14.0510e
G-14.0547	Benediction	G-14.0510f
W-4.4000	Ordination and Installation and Commissioning	W-4.4000+
W-4.4001		
W-4.4001a	Ordination and Installation	W-4.4001
W-4.4001b	Service of Ordination, Installation and Commissioning	G-14.0206+, G-14.0405b+, G-14.0801g,h
W-4.4002	Setting of the Service	W-4.4002+
W-4.4003	Constitutional Questions to Officers and Commissioned Persons	G-14.0207+, G-14.0405b+, G-14.0801g+
W-4.4004	Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons	
W-4.4004a	Questions to Congregation	G-14.0208
W-4.4004b	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0209a

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>2005 Book of Order</u>
W-4.4004c	Statement	G-14.0209b
W-4.4004d	Session Welcomes	G-14.0209c
W-4.4004e	Congregation Greets	G-14.0209d
W-4.4005	Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	
W-4.4005a	Ordination Questions	G-14.0405b
W-4.4005b	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0405d
W-4.4005c	Presbytery Welcomes	G-14.0405e
W-4.4006	Installation of Minister	G-14.0510+
W-4.4006a	Installation Service	G-14.0510a+
W-4.4006b	Questions for Congregation	G-14.0510a
W-4.4006c	Installation of Minister	G-14.0510b
W-4.4006d	Statement to Minister	G-14.0510c
W-4.4006e	Welcome	G-14.0510d
W-4.4006f	Charge	G-14.0510e
W-4.4006g	Benediction	G-14.0510f
<u>Amendment B.2:</u>		
G-14.0440	Licensure	*
G-14.0441	Negotiation for Service	G-14.0309d+
<u>Amendment B.3:</u>		
G-14.0472	Examination Requirements	G-14.0313b+

Cross References if Amendments A and B are Approved In current Chapter 14 Order

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order* + indicates new wording

<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
<u>Amendment B.1.</u>		
G-14.0207	Constitutional Questions to Officers & Commissioned Persons	G-14.0330
	Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons	G-14.0340
G-14.0208	Questions to Congregation	G-14.0341
G-14.0209a	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0342
G-14.0209b	Statement	G-14.0343
G-14.0209c	Session Welcomes	G-14.0344
G-14.0209d	Congregation Greets	G-14.0345
G-14.0405b	Constitutional Questions to Officers And Commissioned Persons	G-14.0330
	Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	G-14.0490
G-14.0405b	Ordination Questions	G-14.0491
G-14.0405d	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	G-14.0492
G-14.0405e	Presbytery Welcomes	G-14.0493
G-14.0510	Installation of Minister	G-14.0540
G-14.0510a	Installation Service	G-14.0541
G-14.0510b	Installation of Minister	G-14.0543
G-14.0510c	Statement to Minister	G-14.0544
G-14.0510d	Welcome	G-14.0545
G-14.0510e	Charges	G-14.0546
G-14.0510f	Benediction	G-14.0547
G-14.0801g	Constitutional Questions to Officers & Commissioned Persons	G-14.0330
G-14.0206	Service of Ordination, Installation & Commissioning	W-4.4001a
G-14.0207	Constitutional Questions to Officers & Commissioned Persons	W-4.4003
	Ordination or Installation of Elders or Deacons	W-4.4004
G-14.0208	Questions to Congregation	W-4.4004a
G-14.0209a	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	W-4.4004b
G-14.0209b	Statement	W-4.4004c
G-14.0209c	Session Welcomes	W-4.4004d
G-14.0209d	Congregation Greets	W-4.4004e
G-14.0405a	Service of Ordination, Installation & Commissioning	W-4.4001a
G-14.0405b	Constitutional Questions to Officers and Commissioned Persons	W-4.4003
	Ordination of Minister of the Word and Sacrament	W-4.4005

* indicates not found in 2005 *Book of Order*

+ indicates new wording

<u>2005 Book of Order</u>	<u>Paragraph or Provision</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
G-14.0405b	Ordination Questions	W-4.4005a
G-14.0405d	Prayer and Laying on of Hands	W-4.4005b
G-14.0405e	Presbytery Welcomes	W-4.4005c
G-14.0510	Installation of Minister	W-4.4006
G-14.0510a	Installation Service	W-4.4006a
G-14.0510a	Questions for Congregation	W-4.4006b
G-14.0510b	Installation of Minister	W-4.4006c
G-14.0510c	Statement to Minister	W-4.4006d
G-14.0510d	Welcome	W-4.4006e
G-14.0510e	Charges	W-4.4006f
G-14.0510f	Benediction	W-4.4006g
G-14.0801g, h	Constitutional Questions to Officers & Commissioned Persons	W-4.4001a
W-4.3001	Commissioned Ministry	G-14.0140+
W-4.4000	Ordination and Installation	W-4.4000+
W-4.4001	Ordination and Installation	W-4.4001a+
W-4.4002	Setting of the Service	W-4.4002+
W-4.4003	Form and Order	W-4.4004, W-4.4005, W-4.4006
<u>Amendment B.2:</u>		
*	Licensure	G-14.0440
G-14.0309d	Negotiation for Service	G-14.0441+
<u>Amendment B.3:</u>		
G-14.0313b	Examination Requirements	G-14.0472+

**06-C. Enabling New General Assembly Council Structure—
On Amending G-9.0703, G-13.0107, G-13.0201 and G-13.0202 (Item 08-08)**

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following amendments to the *Book of Order* to presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

a. Shall G-9.0703 “General Assembly Agency Staff” be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“General Assembly agencies shall elect, with the concurrence of the General Assembly Council, an executive or executives, subject, however, to confirmation by the General Assembly. Other administrative staff positions for General Assembly agencies may be authorized by those agencies with concurrence of the General Assembly Council.”~~

b. Shall G-13.0107 “Synod Participation” be stricken and new text inserted as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“Each synod shall have part in the General Assembly’s mission structure through the membership of at least one elder or minister from each synod, proposed for nomination by the synod after consultation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee, and elected by the General Assembly, on the General Assembly Council, and on each permanent committee of the General Assembly. The General Assembly Nominating Committee shall coordinate this process, keeping in mind the need for synod representatives and members at large, and seeing that special attention is given to the principles of participation and representation expressed in G-9.0104, G-13.0111, and G-13.0202.~~

“Each synod will have a representative, nominated by the synods, on each permanent committee of the General Assembly. The General Assembly Nominating Committee will coordinate this process, keeping in mind the need for synod representatives and members-at-large, and seeing that special attention is given to the principles of participation and representation expressed in G-4.0403, G-9.0104, G-13.0111, and G-13.0202.”

c. Shall G-13.0200 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-13.0200 2. General Assembly Council

“G-13.0201 Responsibilities

The General Assembly shall create an Assembly Council which shall have the following responsibilities:

“a. to cultivate and promote the spiritual welfare of the whole church;

~~“b. to institute and coordinate a churchwide plan for~~ *to provide resources to support equal employment opportunity and affirmative action for members of racial ethnic groups, for women, for various age groups, for persons regardless of marital condition (married, single, widowed, or divorced), and for persons with disabilities;*

~~“c. to develop and engage in churchwide planning to propose, for General Assembly approval determination, the mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities of the church General Assembly Council, doing so by taking into account the mission work being done by sessions, presbyteries, and synods, and to propose for General Assembly approval an accompanying budget that will implement the mission work plan of the General Assembly Council;~~

~~“d. to coordinate the work of General Assembly agencies and bodies, synods and presbyteries, in light of these mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities;~~

~~“e. to review the work of General Assembly agencies and bodies in light of General Assembly mission directions, goals, objectives, and priorities;~~

~~“f. to prepare and submit a comprehensive budget to the General Assembly in accordance with the provisions of G-9.0404b;~~

~~“g. to correspond or consult with presbyteries, synods, and their councils in matters relating to churchwide planning, budget development, and the coordination of the work of the church;~~

~~“h. to act, in matters of administrative staff, with synod councils and General Assembly agencies, as provided in G-9.0701, G-9.0702, and G-9.0703;~~

~~“i. to consult with the synods with regard to equitable compensation, personnel policies, and fair employment practices;~~

~~“j. [This section was stricken by action of the 206th General Assembly (1994).]~~

~~“k. d. to act in those specific matters assigned to the General Assembly Council by the General Assembly or this Constitution, acting always according to previously enacted General Assembly policies, reporting fully to each subsequent General Assembly its actions;~~

~~“l. e. to perform such additional responsibilities and duties as may be assigned by the General Assembly.”~~

“G.13.0202 Membership

~~“a. The membership, terms of office, and officers of the General Assembly Council shall be approved by the General Assembly as provided for in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council. governed by Articles 5.1, 5.2, and 5.3 of the Articles of Agreement until the end of the respective applicability periods specified in those Articles, at which times the following provisions shall commence taking effect automatically, in stages or phases consistent with the provisions of such Articles:~~

“Voting Members

~~“a. The General Assembly Council shall consist of the following voting members, each of whom shall be an active member of a congregation, or a continuing member of a presbytery, of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):~~

~~“(1) The Moderator of the General Assembly and the Moderator’s most recent living predecessor.~~

~~“(2) One (1) member proposed for nomination by each synod, after consultation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee in order to ensure inclusiveness and needed skills, elected by the General Assembly for a four-year term and eligible for one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial.~~

~~“(3) One (1) member proposed for nomination by each of those presbyteries constituting the number of presbyteries established in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council as approved by the General Assembly, after consultation with the General Assembly Nominating Committee in order to ensure inclusiveness and needed skills, elected by the General Assembly for a four-year term and eligible for one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial. Presbyteries chosen to propose nominations will be selected on a rotation system to be established by the General Assembly Nominating Committee.~~

~~“(4) The number of members at large constituting the members at large established in the Manual of Operations of the General Assembly Council as approved by the General Assembly nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee, elected by the General Assembly for a four-year term, and eligible for one additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial.~~

~~“(5) Two (2) youth/young adult members, younger than twenty-six years of age when elected, nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee for a four-year term and eligible for an additional term. No member may serve more than two terms, full or partial.~~

~~“(6) The moderator of Presbyterian Women.~~

~~“Advisory Members~~

~~“b. In addition to the voting members, the General Assembly Council shall include the following advisory members, who shall have the privilege of the floor but not the right to vote:~~

~~“(1) Four (4) Ecumenical Advisory Members from other churches in the United States and from partner churches in other countries, nominated by the General Assembly Nominating Committee on recommendation of the coordinating body for ecumenical involvement and elected by the General Assembly for a two-year term, with eligibility for one additional two-year term. However, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Assembly Council, may, from time to time, increase or decrease the number of Ecumenical Advisory Members.~~

~~“(2) [This section was stricken by action of the 206th General Assembly (1994).]~~

~~“Corresponding Members~~

~~“c. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly and the Executive Director of the General Assembly Council shall be corresponding members of the General Assembly Council and have the right to speak but not vote; and the General Assembly Council may designate other persons to function in the same manner.~~

~~“d. b. In the nominating process, the General Assembly Nominating Committee shall consult with the General Assembly Council to identify needed skills and shall provide for diversity and inclusiveness in accordance with G-4.0403. It will maintain a goal of at least~~

twenty percent racial ethnic membership for the General Assembly Council. It will also follow the provisions of G-9.0104, G-9.0105, and G-13.0111 and shall ensure that, exclusive of the Moderator and predecessor Moderator(s), one third of the members are ministers of the Word and Sacrament (both women and men), one third laymen, and one third laywomen. The committee will also provide that members be nominated in such a manner as to provide ~~two~~ three classes of approximately equal size. Any vacancy occurring during a term shall be filled pursuant to General Assembly policies.

~~“Chair, Vice Chair, Recording Secretary~~

~~“e. The General Assembly Council shall elect annually its chair and vice chair from among its voting members. The Stated Clerk of the General Assembly shall be the Recording Secretary of the General Assembly Council.~~

~~“G-13.0203~~

~~“[Text remains unchanged.]~~

Background and Rationale

These amendments were proposed by the General Assembly Council as part of a larger evaluation of the Council’s structure and its work. Their rationale included the following comments:

“The ... self-assessment the General Assembly Council (GAC) completed in January 2003 clearly showed the need for the council to be closer to congregations, presbyteries, and synods, and to look for ways to better communicate to them. It also indicated the large size of the council was a concern, and that there was a need to look at the size and the relationship between elected and staff roles to guide and best support the mission of the church. Taking all of this into consideration, in February 2004 the Mission Work Plan called for the GAC to evaluate, develop, and propose a structure of the GAC (elected and national staff) that would strengthen connectedness with presbyteries and synods.

“The current structure of the GAC served us faithfully and well in an era where General Assemblies met annually, terms of office began and ended each year during an assembly, and the work of the staff was structured within divisions. But the winds of the Spirit are leading us in a new direction:

“1. Biennial assemblies have changed terms of office and altered the functions of the GAC over a two-year period.

“2. Because the Mission Work Plan has built a new structure around four goal areas that do not fit naturally into the existing GAC structure, it is important to re-envision a GAC governance structure that supports this new reality.

“3. Strengthening connectedness with presbyteries and synods requires enhancements to our ability to communicate and our capacity to act quickly as a leaner, more efficient entity.

“4. Because presbyteries and synods are in close touch with the mission needs of the church and are creating new governance patterns and structures that are more fluid, flexible, and effective, we believe the GAC can learn from these middle governing bodies. A smaller council and a commitment to meet annually with presbytery and synod executives will encourage communication and mutual learning to happen.”

Comment from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) with the following comments regarding Item 08-08.

“Rather than address these amendments in the order they are presented in the *Book of Order*, these comments first address the proposals that would amend the function of the General Assembly Council, and then address those that would amend current provisions regarding its structure and composition, and the composition of other committees of the General Assembly.

“1. Proposed amendment to G-13.0201: This proposal would significantly change the role and responsibilities of the General Assembly Council. Specifically, the proposed amendment would remove from the General Assembly Council essentially all oversight and coordination responsibilities, without providing assignment of those responsibilities elsewhere. While the Assembly is free to adopt these changes, it should consider whether such changes are consistent with G-9.0901. ...

“2. Proposed amendments to G-9.0703: The proposed revision of this section is consistent with the revisions proposed to G-13.0201, and its consideration should be governed by the same considerations described above with respect to G-13.0201.

“3. Proposed amendments to G-13.0202: The proposed revision of this section would remove constitutional requirements that govern the composition of the General Assembly Council, and would move those requirements to the Council’s manual of operations. This manual of operations is approved by the General Assembly, but does not require the concurrence of a majority of presbyteries. ...

“4. Proposed amendments to G-13.0107: The proposed revision of this section should be assessed to determine whether all permanent committees of the General Assembly require representation from each Synod. The term “permanent committees” is not specifically defined by the provision, but presumably would include all committees whose membership is not otherwise defined by Book of Order. The Assembly should consider whether the size of permanent committees should be defined by the

mission of the committee rather than a formalistic approach. ...”

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommended a number of changes to the proposed language that were not approved.

Comment from the General Assembly Nominating Committee:

“... [The] specific language of the proposed rewording of G-13.0107 raises several concerns from the perspective of the General Assembly Nominating Committee.

“The phrase ‘Each synod will have a representative, nominated by the synod ...’ can be interpreted to mean that synods directly nominate persons to serve on each permanent committee. This is a significant change from the current process of synods proposing several persons from within their bounds who will be nominated by a church-wide process through the General Assembly Nominating Committee. If synods directly nominate one person rather than providing several names to the General Assembly Nominating Committee, the pool of potential nominees is reduced limiting the possibility of ensuring the desired diversity of committee membership as required in G-4.0403. Furthermore, both the language and the implied process suggest that these persons’ primary identification is with the synod that nominated them rather than the group to which they are elected.”

The General Assembly Nominating Committee proposed alternate language for G-13.0107 that was not approved.

The proposed amendments contained in Amendment C were referred to the Assembly Committee on Mission Coordination (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 37, 640-643, Item 08-08, recommendation 2.), which recommended approval by a show of hands. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a show of hands.

06-D. Opening COM to Access by Commissioned Lay Pastors--

On Amending G-11.0503 (Item 05-05)

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-11.0503 be amended as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“The committee shall be open to communication at all times with the ministers, *elders who are commissioned as lay pastors*, elders who are members of sessions, sessions of the presbytery, and Certified Christian Educators within the bounds of the presbytery.”

Background and Rationale

This amendment was proposed as an overture by the Presbytery of the Western Reserve. The Presbytery noted:

“Elders who are commissioned as lay pastors act as the pastor of a congregation, with the responsibilities given by the presbytery. Churches and their pastors fall under the care and guidance of the committee on ministry. An elder serving on the session of a particular church served by a commissioned lay pastor has constitutional access to the committee on ministry. An elder who has been commissioned to serve as the pastor, but who is most likely not a member of the church, may or may not have been named moderator of the session, and may not be recognized as named under G-10.0101 as being included in the membership of the session, should be able to have the same access to the committee on ministry as a minister who serves similar functions in the particular church.”

Advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) to approve this overture.

The ACC’s advice included this rationale:

“A committee on ministry is open to communication with ministers, elders, and certified Christian educators so that it can assist in providing congregations with good pastoral care and in seeing that those providing that pastoral care are properly treated by congregations. A commissioned lay pastor is granted a commission to ‘... lead worship and preach the gospel, watch over the people, and provide for their nurture and service ...’ (*Book of Order*, G-14.0801a). Because these functions are akin to the services provided by pastors, it would be appropriate for the committee on ministry to be in a similar relationship to both pastors and commissioned lay pastors. In practice many committees on ministry are already overseeing the work of commissioned lay pastors. It would be appropriate to amend the *Book of Order* to give formal recognition to this practice.”

The proposed amendment to G-11.0503 was referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38-39, 356, Item 05-05), which recommended approval by a vote of 45/0/0. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a show of hands

**06-E. Members of the Synod—
On Amending G-12.0101 (Item 05-01)**

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-12.0101 be amended by inserting “a.” at the beginning of the current paragraph, deleting the final sentence, and adding a new paragraph “b.” to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“G-12.0101

“Synod is the unit of the church’s life and mission which consists of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.

“a. When a synod meets it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. The synod shall determine, with the consent of a majority of its presbyteries, the basis of election and the ratio of commissioners to members represented in the presbyteries, as well as its method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in G-9.0104 and G-9.0105. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. ~~Each person elected moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed, and then shall be enrolled as a corresponding member of the synod.~~

“b. When a synod meets, in addition to commissioners elected by the presbyteries, the officers of the synod and other individuals as determined by the governing documents of the synod may be enrolled during their respective terms of office so long as the balance of elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament is maintained in the voting members of the body.”

Background and Rationale

The Presbytery of Lake Huron, a member of the Synod of the Covenant, proposed an amendment to G-12.0101 on behalf of the Synod of the Covenant, since the synod assembly will not meet until after the meeting of the 217th General Assembly (2006) and the synod council does not have the authority to submit an overture to the General Assembly. They noted:

“The *Book of Order* permits presbyteries to enroll officers, committee chairpersons, and council members as members of the presbytery for the term of office. The Council of the Synod of the Covenant believes that the same privilege should be granted to synods. This would allow persons in the specified positions to have both voice and vote at meetings of the synod

assembly, a privilege currently denied to persons in key and responsible positions. It would allow those persons and the groups they represent to have participation and representation in actions taken by the assembly.”

The Presbytery of Lake Huron concurred with the synod council and submitted this overture on its own behalf and with the concurrence of the synod council.

**Advice from the Advisory Committee on
the Constitution**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) that it concurred with the intent of the overture, but offered different language for the change to G-12.0101. This

language was approved by the committee and recommended to the General Assembly.

Portions of the ACC's rationale included these words:

"The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that if the General Assembly wishes to concur with the intent of the overture, that language which is more consistent with the language of G-13.0101 be approved to be submitted to the presbyteries.

"The paragraph would have a sub-paragraph a., which consists of the balance of the current 12.0101, except that the last sentence would be deleted. A new sub-paragraph b. would be added.

"Individual Presbyterians are members either of a particular church, or in the case of ministers of the Word and Sacrament, of a presbytery. The two upper governing bodies are not viewed as having individual members, but of receiving commissioners from the presbyteries to meetings of the synod or General Assembly.

"Section G-12.0101, which this overture seeks to amend, was amended in 1985 to add the sentence that is now the last sentence in that section. 'Each person elected moderator shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed, and then shall be enrolled as a corresponding member of the synod.' The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that the proposed new sub-

paragraph a. retains that option as well as broadening those whom a synod may choose to enroll in meetings. The governing documents may specify that one who has served as moderator as a corresponding member. The governing documents may specify whether those enrolled under sub-paragraph a. serve with or without vote.

"The advisory committee would also note that while the role of synods is delineated in Chapter Twelve, there is great diversity in how the sixteen synods have chosen to structure themselves. It is appropriate that each synod determine who may be enrolled in its meetings so long as it adheres to the principle that the presbyteries elect the commissioners on the basis set forth in paragraph a.

"The Advisory Committee on the Constitution believes that the wording proposed in this advisory opinion will permit more latitude to the synods in determining who participates in meetings of the synods."

The proposed amendment to G-12.0101 was referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Polity (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 38, 351, Item 05-01), which recommended approval as amended by a vote of 47/0/0. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by way of the committee's consent agenda

06-F. Naming Certified Christian Educators as Mandated Reporters On Amending G-14.0701 (Item 12-03)

The 217th General Assembly (2006) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-14.0701 of the Form of Government be amended by adding a new section "d." to read as follows: [Text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

"d. Certified Christian educators and certified associate Christian educators shall report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge gained in the course of service to the church, of harm, or risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity when (1) such information is gained outside of privileged communication; or (2) he or she reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse."

Editor's note: If Amendment A is passed by the presbyteries, this amendment would be added at G-14.0732.

Background and Rationale

This amendment was proposed by the Presbytery of Genesee Valley. The Presbytery noted:

"The 216th General Assembly (2004) and a majority of the presbyteries approved amending G-6.0204 (regarding ministers of Word and Sacrament), G-6.0304 (regarding elders), and G-6.0402 (regarding deacons) so that all three offices of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) are church-mandated reporters of physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor or an adult who lacks mental capacity. Without specifically mentioning the role of commissioned lay pastor (CLP), the amending of G-6.0304 inherently applies to the CLP role because, by definition, every CLP is an elder (G-14.0801). However, the newly enacted amendments do not inherently apply to the two roles of certified Christian educator, because not all certified Christian educators are elders.

"Persons who are called to and employed in the ministry of Christian education in our church are expected to 'share the responsibility of providing for the spiritual growth of members for their ministry ...' (G-14.0701b). It is ethically consistent for the church to expect our accredited Christian educators to adhere to the same standard of practice for officers of the church in circumstances where children, minors,

or adults who lack mental capacity may be at risk for harm or abuse. If we entrust people who are vulnerable into the care and ministry of those who are specifically accredited to provide Christian education in our church, then extending this standard of practice regarding mandated reporting will have both symbolic and practical value in order to demonstrate our commitment to the spiritual well-being of all the people of Jesus Christ."

Advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution:

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 217th General Assembly (2006) to disapprove this overture, Item 12-03.

The ACC's rationale included this advice:

"Mandated reporters are set by state law and stipulate that certain persons, typically in positions that include oversight of children, have a mandated responsibility to report any incident of suspected child abuse or neglect to the authorities, such as a state's Department of Children and Family Services. Mandated reporters include social workers, nurses, physicians, family therapists, counselors, child

care personnel, schoolteachers, administrators, et. al.

“Everyone has the right and responsibility to report suspected child abuse to the civil authorities. The *Book of Order*, in its current form, does not prohibit any Christian educator from reporting suspected child abuse or neglect to an officer in the church and thereby paving the way for mandated reporting. A church’s personnel policies are an appropriate place for a provision of mandated reporting for its Christian educators. Too, a presbytery may build such a provision for certified Christian educators into its manual of operations or standing rules. Therefore, the right and responsibility of being good stewards of the children entrusted to the church’s care should be viewed as a sacred trust held by all in the community of faith.

“... The language employed in the overture is somewhat similar, but not the same, as that used in the current *Book of Order* amendments made for ministers, elders, and deacons. Several significant distinctions exist between this proposed amendment and the similar amendments approved at the 216th General Assembly (2004).

“First, certified Christian educators are not officers of the church by reason of such a position, and are not guided or bound by ordination vows. A crucial purpose in the amendments approved for ministers, elders, and deacons was to limit the circumstances in which, because of their ordained status, such officers might claim that disclosure of information regarding sexual misconduct was shielded from mandatory reporting by confidential communications made to an ordained officer of the church. In contrast, certified Christian educators, since they are not officers of the church, have no argument that they could shield such communications as confidential communications made to an ordained officer of the church. Thus, the reasons for the 2004 amendments do not apply to certified Christian educators.

“Moreover, officers, in particular, are subject to the discipline of the church as expressed in ordination vow number five, which is the same for all three offices, “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?” (Ministers, G-14.0207; elders and deacons, G-14.0404). Certified Christian educators, under the provisions of G-14.0702 do not have to be Presbyterian, and as such are not subject to the disciplinary processes as defined in the Rules of Discipline.

“No amendment to the *Book of Order* is necessary to reinforce these responsibilities with respect to Certified Christian Educators.”

Comment from the Advocacy Committee on Women's Concerns:

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC) advised Item 12-03 be approved.

ACWC’s rationale included these words:

“The ACWC supports measures that will promote the protection of children and adults lacking mental capacity. As a church, we have a crucial responsibility to our children and adults lacking mental capacity to provide for them a safe, nurturing community. The ACWC believes that because certified Christian educators are in close contact with children, it is important that they be held to the same standards of reporting, as are our ordained ministers, elders, and deacons.”

The proposed addition to G-14.0701 was referred to the Assembly Committee on Church Growth and Christian Education (*Minutes*, 2006, Part I, pp. 14, 1060, Item 12-03), which recommended approval as amended by a vote of 36/6/4. The 217th General Assembly (2006) approved the committee's recommendation by a vote of 440/18/4

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