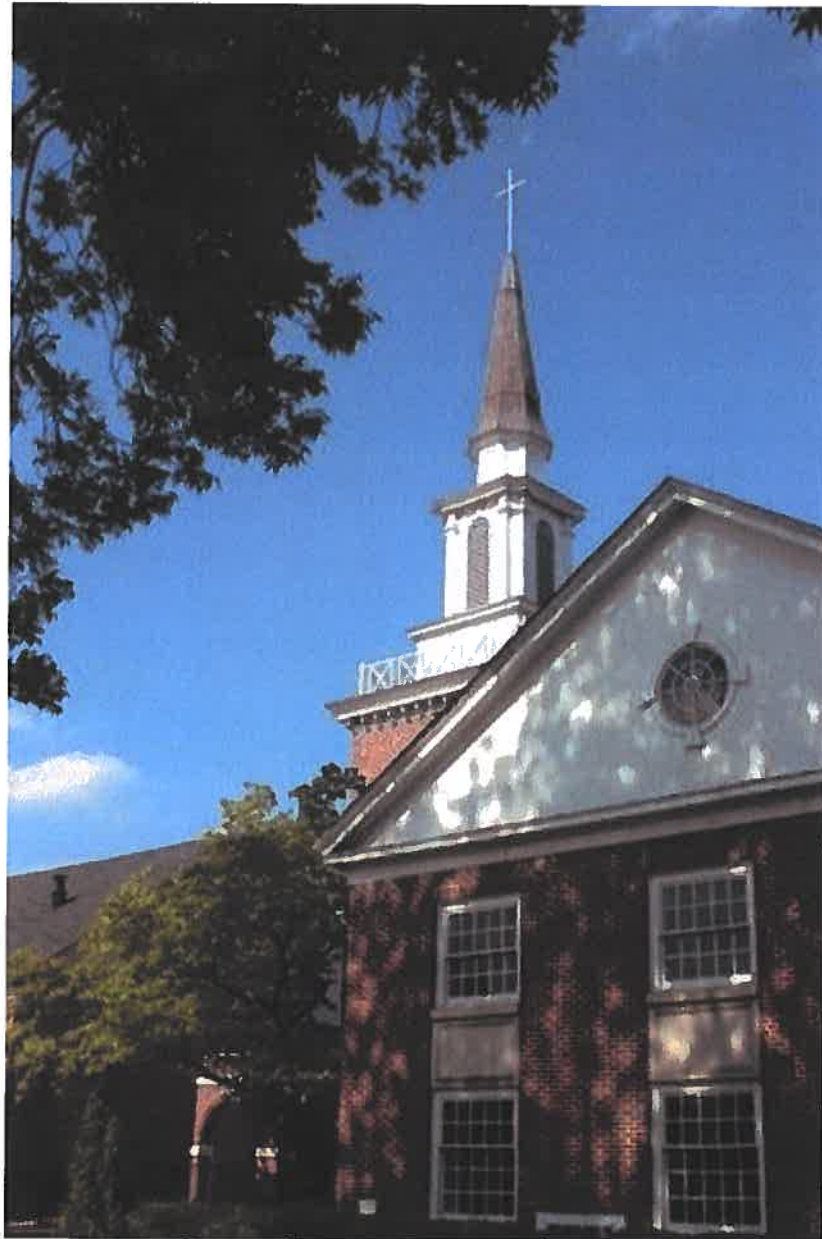


Presbytery of  
Sheppards and Lapsley  
COMMISSIONER PACKET



Winter Stated Meeting  
February 16, 2023

Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church  
3535 Stillman Blvd.  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
205-759-1477

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## **IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR THE UPCOMING February PRESBYTERY MEETING**

This Presbytery meeting will be an **In Person Only Meeting**. Internet connections are weak so, bring your packets.

Below are important details regarding registration link, and packet link.

### **Information for ALL Presbytery meeting participants**

#### **Presbytery Registration (No later than Friday, February 10)**

Please use the link below to register for the meeting. It is very important that you register by February 10<sup>th</sup>, no later than noon. This is so we can get an accurate number for a quorum and lunch reservations.

**<https://forms.gle/AQwg7CxdKFYpxeE86>**

#### **Packet Link**

Ministers and Commissioners, please download, print and read the presbytery packet before the meeting. Click the following link for the packet: <http://pslpcusa.org/meetings/>

*Scroll to the bottom of the page and click the links for the packet and the previous meeting minutes.*

An edited and marked copy of the revisions from the initial version of the standing rules (August 2022) is available [here](#) and <http://pslpcusa.org/meetings/> (under packet link)

**A Worship folder will be sent out the day before the meeting.**

## **ATTENDING A PRESBYTERY MEETING**

As a Commissioner to the Presbytery, we welcome you! When you arrive, there will be a registration area for those that did not register online. Worship folders and nametags will be available for pickup.

The meeting time of Presbytery is 9:30 AM until 3:00 PM., with registration beginning at 9:00 AM. All the business of the Presbytery is contained in this packet.

The packet will detail items that you, as a commissioner, will need to take action upon and items for your information. Some items will have discussion, and some items will be contained within an omnibus motion. All items in the omnibus motion are voted on at one time, during the Clerk's report. As a commissioner, if you desire to ask a question or debate any item you need to stand at the time of the motion's presentation and request that item be extracted. The item will then be removed and voted upon separately. Information items come from various committees and entities of the Presbytery that wish to inform you of things they are working on or committee actions they are empowered to take.

On the day of the meeting, a worship folder will be distributed. This worship folder will contain, in order, all the items that will be presented to the commissioners. The difference between the packet and the worship folder is that the worship folder will not have supplemental material, such as faith statements, addendum and resource items. The packet and worship folder are meant to go hand in hand to help you with the flow and business of the meeting.

Please read the introductory items in the packet. These items contain information about parking, directions to the meeting, how to make motions if you wish, and information on parliamentary process.

The meetings of Presbytery have been designed to provide opportunities for the community to worship and discuss issues together, as well as do the business that is before it for consideration.

Again, welcome!

## GUIDELINES FOR PARTICIPATING IN PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

1. When speaking at Presbytery, please address the Moderator and not the body.
2. Introduce yourself, by stating your name, church and role.
3. Our rules are that each speaker during debate has up to two minutes to address the issue to which they are speaking. The Moderator may give a 30-second warning, so that you may conclude your remarks.
4. Only enrolled commissioners are authorized to vote on issues. Corresponding members are entitled to address the Presbytery.
5. Any motion made from the floor (be it a new motion, a substitute motion or an amended motion) must be given to the Stated Clerk in writing, at the time the motion is made.
6. Any new business must be placed in the hands of the Stated Clerk, **before** the approval of the docket.

## SAVE THE DATES FOR 2023 PRESBYTERY MEETINGS

February 16	Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM
May 18	Independent Presbyterian Church	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM
August 17	Presbyterian Home for Children	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM
November 16	Northern Heights, Selma	9:30 AM – 3:00 PM

## GENERAL NOTES FOR THIS MEETING

1. The offering for this meeting will go to the **Commission on Preparation for Ministry's scholarship fund and the Presbytery Pastoral Care fund**. Please make checks payable to *Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley* or you may use the *QR code to the right*. Please indicate your donation as "Presbytery offering".
2. Requests to include **audio-visual presentations** at the Presbytery Meeting should be addressed to Tammy Strickland at [tstrickland@pslpcusa.org](mailto:tstrickland@pslpcusa.org) no later than Friday, February 10, 2023.
3. Requests for an **excused absence** from today's meeting should be addressed to the Stated Clerk, Jay Wilkins at [statedclerk@pslpcusa.org](mailto:statedclerk@pslpcusa.org) or 205-978-0320, ext. 305.
4. Please contact Tammy Strickland at [tstrickland@pslpcusa.org](mailto:tstrickland@pslpcusa.org) by Friday, February 10, 2023 to reserve **display space (tables) for this meeting**.



**Scan. Pay. Go.**

**Please turn in your hanging name badge when the meeting is concluded.**



## STAY CONNECTED

If you would like to receive the Presbytery newsletter, please contact Tammy at [tstrickland@pslpcusa.org](mailto:tstrickland@pslpcusa.org). For more information about the Presbytery, please visit our website at <http://www.pslpcusa.org>.

## LUNCH

**Brown Memorial** is graciously preparing lunch (\$10) for attendees of this meeting (cash or check only). Please purchase tickets during registration. Make checks for lunch payable to **Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church**.

## DIRECTIONS

### BROWN MEMORIAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

3535 Stillman Blvd.  
Tuscaloosa, AL 35401  
205-759-1477

1. Travelers on Interstates 20 and 59, take Exit 71B (359 North); take the second exit off 359 (marked Stillman College); turn left onto 15th Street. The church is approximately one-half mile on the left (five traffic lights after the turn onto 15th street).

You will see the church on the left and the college on the right. Drive down to the college gate and turn left for the church's parking lot.

2. Travelers on U. S. 82 East, connect with 43 South in Northport and follow to the church/Stillman College campus.

You will see the church on the left and the college on the right. Drive down to the college gate and turn left for the church's parking lot.

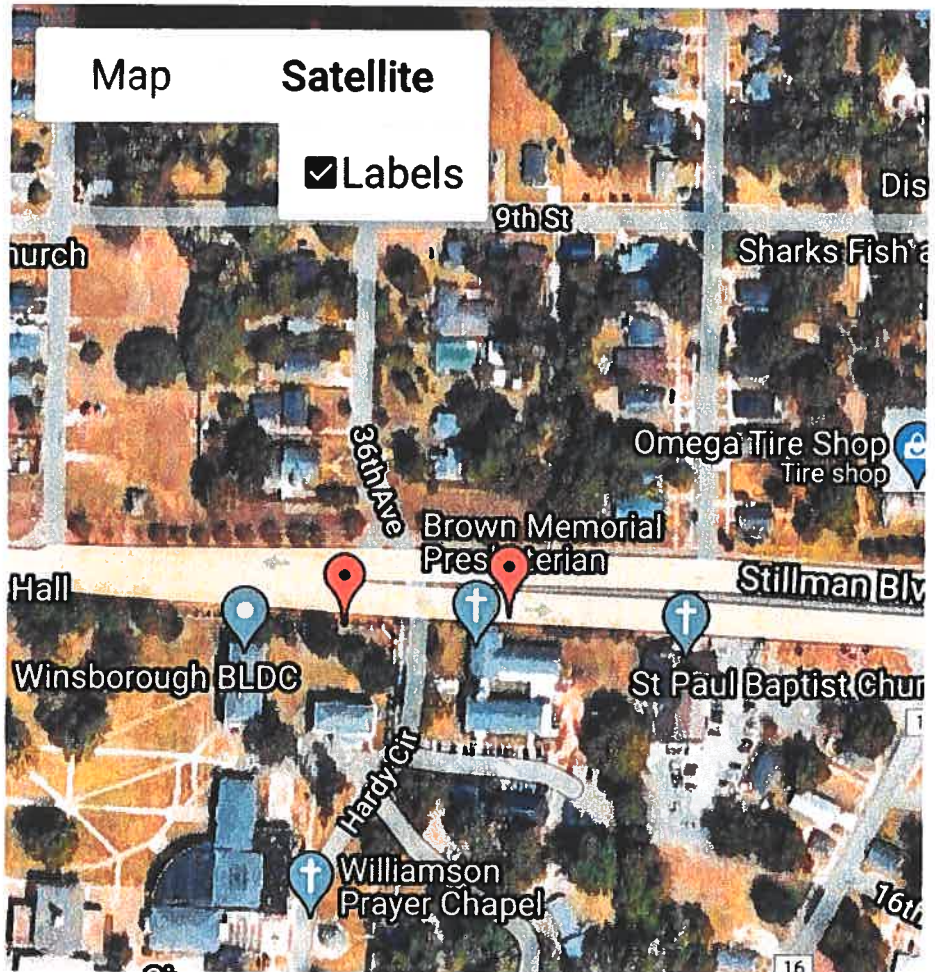
3. Travelers on U. S. 82 West, turn left on 15th Street immediately after 82 West passes University Mall. Proceed to the Church/Stillman College campus.

You will see the church on the left and the college on the right. Drive down to the college gate and turn left for the church's parking lot.



*HMdb.org*

THE HISTORICAL  
MARKER DATABASE



Proposed Presbytery Meeting Docket  
February 16, 2023  
Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church

9:00 AM Registration

9:30 Call to Order and Opening Prayer

Susan Haskell

Organization – Declaration of Quorum, Adoption of Docket, Seating of Corresponding Members, Welcome of First Time Commissioners, Welcome of Visitors, Requests for New Business

Omnibus Motion:

1. To approve the minutes of the November 17, 2022 meeting
2. To approve the requests for absences from today's meeting
3. To receive and record the minutes of the Commission to Ordain and install Abby and Cort Gatliff as Associate Pastors of South Highland Presbyterian Church
4. To approve the dates and locations for meetings of the Presbytery: May 18, 2023, at Independent Presbyterian Church, Birmingham; August 17, 2023, at the Presbyterian Home for Children, Talladega; November 16, 2023, at the Northern Heights Presbyterian Church, Selma.

Election of Nomination and Representation, Classes of 2023 and 2025

10:00 Welcome from Host Brown Memorial Presbyterian Church of Tuscaloosa  
and from the President of Stillman College, Dr. Cynthia Warrick

Service of Worship

Offering

Necrology

Communion

Installation of Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Stated Clerk

Presentation of stole and gavel

Words from Retiring Moderator

Words from New Moderator

Election of Bills and Overtures Committee 2023

Ed Hurley

11:00 Bills and Overtures Committee

Eva Carter, Nick Reed, Lou Ann Sellers

11:30 General Presbyter

Sue Westfall

"Responding in Faith To The Realities of Migration"

Mark Adams of Frontera de Cristo

12:30 Lunch



## Good News from Churches

Jay Wilkins

- 1:15 Executive Council Debbie Feagin  
 Second vote on approval of Standing Rules revision from November 17, 2022  
 Moment for Black History in Sheppards & Lapsley James Ephraim
- 1:30 Presbyterian Home for Children Doug Marshall
- 1:35 Mission Coordinator Ralls Coston
- 1:45 Living River Jenny Thagard
- 1:50 Commission on Ministry John Brock
- 2:20 Trustees Lant Davis
- 2:30 Treasurer Jean Russell
- 2:40 Nominating and Representation Sissy Bain
- 2: 45 Stated Clerk Jay Wilkins

## New Business (Action Items Only)

- 3:00 Adjournment with prayer Moderator Ed Hurley

### **Installation of Moderator, Vice Moderator and Stated Clerk of Presbytery**

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer males and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. Lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as we were called to the one hope of our calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

### **CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP**

We are called by God to be the church of Jesus Christ, a sign in the world today of what God intends for all humankind. The call of Christ is to willing, dedicated discipleship. Our discipleship is a manifestation of the new life we enter through baptism. Discipleship is a gift and a commitment, an offering and a responsibility. **Ed, Deborah, and Jay**, the grace bestowed on you in baptism is sufficient for your calling because it is God's grace. By God's grace we are saved, and enabled to grow in the faith and to commit our lives in ways which *serve* Christ. God called you to a particular service. Show your purpose by answering these questions.

**Who is your Lord and Savior?**

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

**Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his word and showing his love?**

I will with God's help.

**Do you welcome the responsibility of this service because you are determined to follow the Lord Jesus, to love your neighbors, and to work for the reconciling of the world?**

I do.

**Will you serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love, relying on God's mercy and rejoicing in the power of the Holy Spirit?**

I will, with God's help.

**Do, we the members of the presbytery confirm the call of God to Ed and Deborah as Moderator and Vice Moderator and Jay as Stated Clerk in the service of Jesus Christ?**

We do.

**Will you support and encourage them in this ministry?**

We will.

### **INSTALLATION PRAYER**

Faithful God, in baptism you claimed us; and by your Holy Spirit you are working in our lives, empowering us to live a life worthy of our calling. We thank you for leading **Ed, Deborah and Jay** to this time and place. Establish them in your truth, and guide them by your Holy Spirit, that in your service they may grow in faith, hope, and love, and be faithful disciples of Jesus Christ, to whom, with you and the Holy Spirit, be honor and glory, now and forever. Amen

### **CHARGE AND BLESSING**

**Ed, Deborah and Jay** you are installed to service as Moderator, Vice Moderator and Stated Clerk in the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God through Him. May the God of peace make you holy in every way, and keep your whole being, spirit, soul, and body, free from every fault at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen

## Report of the Bills and Overtures Committee

### January 31, 2023

Having reviewed the proposed changes to the *Book of Order*, the Bills and Overtures committee will bring the items before presbytery for a vote in the following manner:

**At the February Presbytery meeting:** a Consent Agenda of all Amendments will be presented and voted on by the Presbytery with the exception of Amendments 22-E, 22-I and 22-P. These amendments will be set apart and voted on individually with explanations.

**Note:**

22-E deals with changing the title of retired pastors from “Honorably Retired” to simply “Retired”.

22-I deals with the addition of “a minimum of twelve weeks paid family medical leave” to the pastor’s terms of call.

22-P (which originated from our presbytery!) requires all presbyteries and councils to have an antiracism policy. During the General Assembly review process, the amendment was amended to also require a harassment policy.

**At the May Presbytery Meeting:** 22-GG, *Replacing the Current Rules of Discipline* will be presented and voted upon.

**Note:** Two Zoom meetings will be held during the months of March and April for all interested persons in the Presbytery who wish to obtain information on changes to 22-GG, *Replacing the Current Rules of Discipline*. The Discussion Groups will be led by Attorney Lee Cleveland and Judge Caryl Privett.

This report will also include two attached documents to aid in preparation prior to the meeting:

- 1 - *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution* (the full description of each proposed amendment)
- 2 - A brief overview of the *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution*  
(prepared by Greg Goodwiller, Executive Presbyter and Stated Clerk of the Presbytery of St. Andrew in Mississippi)

**Proposed Amendments to the Constitution of the PC(USA)**  
**Approved by the 225<sup>th</sup> General Assembly (2022)**

- 22-A F-1.0302c THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH (POL-16 1a)  
*Expands inclusive language with reference to gender identity*
- 22-AA W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 7)  
*Adds “particular specialized pastoral care” rather than adding to an existing list of such specialties*
- 22-B F-1.0404 OPENNESS (POL-16 1b)  
*Expands inclusive language with reference to gender identity*
- 22-BB W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 8)  
*Adds clarifying language in a section on “services of wholeness” to better express a Reformed understanding of those services*
- 22-C G-1.0501 MEETINGS (ROD-06 2)  
*Establishes Robert’s Rules of Order (RONR) as the default parliamentary authority for congregational meetings, and authorizes electronic congregational meetings*
- 22-CC D-3.0106 WHEN JURISDICTION ENDS (ROD-05)  
*Allows a disciplinary process to continue after an accused has renounced jurisdiction*
- 22-D G-1.0503 BUSINESS PROPER TO CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS (ROD-06 1)  
*Adds receiving a disciplinary decision against a church member (as opposed to a minister) to the list of proper business at a congregational meeting*
- 22-DD D-10.0302 IF CHARGES ARE TO BE FILED (ROD-04 3)  
*Grammatical change to an existing provision of the Rules of Discipline*
- 22-E G-2.0503 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP (POL-07)  
*Removes “honorably” before “retired” as the category for retired ministers*
- 22-EE D-10.0303 PETITION FOR REVIEW (ROD-04 1)  
*Amends the current Rules of Discipline to include notifying the person accused if no charges will be filed (instead of just the person(s) who made the accusation)*
- 22-F G-2.0505a(1) TRANSFER OF MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS (POL-15)  
*Adds the requirement to consult with the other denomination when receiving immigrant pastors without otherwise acceptable PC(USA) ordination educational requirements*

- 22-FF AMENDING THE USE OF “THE ACCUSED” IN  
THE CURRENT RULES OF DISCIPLINE (ROD-  
04 2)  
*Changes “the accused” to “the person accused” wherever it occurs in the current  
rules of Discipline*
- 22-G G-2.0603 PURPOSE OF INQUIRY (HSB-05 2)  
*Adds the requirement of boundary training during the inquiry phase of preparation  
for ordination as a minister of the Word and Sacrament*
- 22-GG REPLACING THE CURRENT “RULES OF DISCIPLINE”  
WITH A NEW “CHURCH DISCIPLINE” SECTION (ROD-  
03)  
*Proposed a complete revision of the Rules of Discipline,*
- 22-H G-2.0605 OVERSIGHT (HSB-05 1)  
*Adds a requirement of sessions to “report to the presbytery of any matters of  
sexual misconduct” of their members who are enrolled as inquirers or candidates*
- 22-I G-2.0804 TERMS OF CALL (HSB-06)  
*Adds the requirement of a minimum of twelve weeks of paid family leave in terms  
of call for all installed pastors/associate pastors*
- 22-J G-2.1001 FUNCTIONS (MC-08)  
*Adds language allowing Commissioned Pastors to be commissioned to more than  
one validated ministry at a time*
- 22-K G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINING, AND  
COMMISSIONING (HSB-05 3)  
*Adds the requirement of boundary training for those elders seeking to be  
Commissioned Pastors*
- 22-L G-2.1103 CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS (HSB-05 4)  
*Adds the requirement of boundary training for those elders seeking to be certified  
as Christian Educators*
- 22-M G-3.0104 OFFICERS (MC-05)  
*Adds language that “it is appropriate” to adopt procedures for electronic session  
meetings*
- 22-N G-3.0105 MEETINGS (ROD-06 3)  
*Adds provision that all councils and their commissions and committees may meet  
electronically*
- 22-O G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (HSB-05 9)  
*Adds language regarding boundary training, including sexual abuse to the  
requirement for sexual misconduct policies required of councils*
- 22-P G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (POL-10)  
*Adds the requirement of an antiracism policy to the required policies of councils,  
and clarifies other language in that list*



- 22-Q G-3.0303c RELATIONS WITH SESSIONS (MC-03)  
*Authorizes presbyteries to establish minimum requirements for severance packages in terms of call*
- 22-R G-3.0401 COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MC-06)  
*Authorizes synods to enroll those serving terms in elected offices of the synod as additional members of the synod as a way to fulfill principles of participation and representation*
- 22-S G-4.0301 TRUST AND CONFIDENTIALITY (ROD-07)  
*Expands and clarifies "confidentiality" requirements for ministers and commissioned pastors*
- 22-T W-3.0205 CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (TWE-05 1)  
*Adds administration of the sacrament of Baptism to the list of appropriate actions following the proclamation of forgiveness in a service of worship*
- 22-U W-3.0409 THEOLOGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (TWE-05 2)  
*Adds "when appropriate" to the recommended act of providing an invitation to baptismal preparation for those who come to the table who are unbaptized*
- 22-V W-3.0414 COMMUNION (TWE-05 4)  
*Removes the current requirement that a minister of the Word and Sacrament lead the prayer of thanksgiving that concludes the Lord's Supper liturgy*
- 22-W W-4.0403 ORDER OF WORSHIP (TWE-06)  
*Adds a sentence about "signs and symbols of blessing" to the section on ordination and installation services*
- 22-X W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 5)  
*Adds a sentence on the importance of household worship in faith formation in the Reformed tradition*
- 22-Y W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 6)  
*Adds an additional paragraph to the existing section on household worship*
- 22-Z W-5.0201 THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN  
 THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH (TWE-05 9, 1 &  
 2)  
*Adds "discipleship" to a list of the Church's ministries that are connected to its worship, and adds references to statements in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity*



## Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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These amendments to the *Book of Order* were approved by the 225th General Assembly (2022) and recommended to the presbyteries for their vote.

### FROM THE STATED CLERK

The 225th General Assembly (2022) 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.

- It is recommended that prior to voting, presbyters and clerks review each proposed amendment and its related information. Some sections have more than one proposed amendment.
- The rationale and advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and other advisory and advocacy entities have been abbreviated for each amendment for this booklet. Please note that the advice applies to the original item of business and not necessarily the final version approved by the assembly.
- Each amendment has an item number, which is how the General Assembly tracked the business in both committee and in plenary. The entire record for each item is available in PC-Biz.
- Live links to the General Assembly item numbers are available throughout this document.
- Or, go to PC-Biz at [www.pc-biz.org](http://www.pc-biz.org), click Search, and enter the item number. Click on the item number to reach the summary.
- Presbyteries may use a consent agenda or omnibus motion to vote on amendments as long as each proposed amendment is identified separately. Each amendment has a tracking number of 22-A, 22-B, etc.
- The final item in this booklet deals with replacing the Rules of Discipline in the *Book of Order* with an entirely new section entitled Church Discipline. Please carefully note that any approved amendments to the Rules of Discipline proposed in other items will be superseded by the approval of the new Church Discipline section.
- Presbytery stated clerks are to report a tally of their votes to the Office of the General Assembly no later than **July 9, 2023, at 11:59 p.m. eastern time**. Votes on amendments should be entered through the Stated Clerk's portal. Each month an updated tally will be mailed to all stated clerks. In order to make changes and publish the 2023–2025 *Book of Order* in a timely manner, receipt of votes prior to this deadline would be appreciated.

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

J. Herbert Nelson II  
*Stated Clerk of the General Assembly*

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Presbyterian Church (U S A )

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## 22-A — F-1.0302c

### THE CALLING OF THE CHURCH

#### F-1.0302c THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH (POL-16 1a)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall F-1.0302c in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

**“F-1.0302 The Marks of the Church ...**

**c. The Catholicity of the Church ...**

**... Because the church is catholic, it strives everywhere to testify to Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women, and children~~ *all people* of all times, places, races, nations, ages, *abilities, genders*, conditions, and stations in life.”**

#### Background and Rationale

The current foundational statement (F-1.0403) already uses language inclusive of people with disabilities. This amendment seeks to use consistent language about disability throughout the foundational statements of the *Book of Order*. The PC(USA) resource “Well Chosen Words” (2010) states that using inclusive and expansive language is “one way to acknowledge and celebrate all people and bring recognition and a sense of belonging to people who have been historically marginalized in society and even in the church.” This amendment would reflect this overture by making all parts of the *Book of Order* consistent in their inclusion of people with disabilities. People with disabilities include 26% of the U.S. population (CDC, 2020), making it the largest minority group in America. People with disabilities represent an important part of our church, and they should be named in lists of people to be included. Research shows a significant gap in presence and full participation for people with disabilities into the life of the church (Ault, Collins, and Carter, 2013). The inclusion of people with disabilities in our polity shows our intention to be inclusive of this group. We identify as being “people of the word,” marking both our commitment to biblical scholarship and exegesis and the importance of the words that we use when preaching, teaching, and guiding our church’s polity. These small corrections reflect the value and importance that we put on the use of consistent inclusive language throughout our policies.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve POL-16. While the ACC has expressed its aversion to unnecessarily creating lists of requirements and rubrics, in this present situation the list affirms the mission of Christ’s church. Because a list is deemed to be exhaustive unless it states otherwise, an omission is regarded as exclusionary, not permissive. We believe the witness of scripture and the constitution testifies to the full inclusion of differently abled persons in the faith and governance of the church. A positive affirmation of this principle through constitutional amendment is consistent with this witness.



### **Comment—From the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force**

The LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force proposes that F-1.0302c be further amended to include: (Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in [brackets and *italics*].)

“Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women, and children~~ [*people*] of all times, places, races, nations, [*genders*], ages, abilities ...,” and that F-1.0404 be amended to include the reality of: “a community of ~~women and men of all~~ [*people of all genders*], ages, races, ethnicities, abilities ...”

These changes honor the vital presence and contribution of our trans and nonbinary siblings in faith and are in line with the rationale for the use of “inclusive and expansive language” at the heart of this overture.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

ACWC recommends the 225th GA (2022) approve this item with amendments as follows: (Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in [brackets and *italics*].)

“Because the church is catholic, it strives everywhere to testify to Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women, and children~~ [*all people*] of all times, places, races, nations, ages, abilities, [*genders*,] conditions, and stations in life.”

“... a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of ~~women and men~~ [*all people*] of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, [*genders*,] and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity.

We are grateful to the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey for lifting up abilities as a much needed inclusion into our *Book of Order*. We ask the General Assembly to move further into the use of inclusive language by using the verbiage “all people” instead of men, women, and children.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve POL-16.

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language and then approved Item POL-16 1a, 27/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item POL-16 1a, 381/13.

For the full report on POL-16, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000082/business>.

## 22-B — F-1.0404

### OPENNESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### F-1.0404 OPENNESS (POL-16 1b)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall F-1.0404 in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

**“F-1.0404      Openness ...**

**... a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of ~~women and men~~ *all people* of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, genders, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity.”**

#### Background and Rationale

The current foundational statement (F-1.0403) already uses language inclusive of people with disabilities. This amendment seeks to use consistent language about disability throughout the foundational statements of the *Book of Order*. The PC(USA) resource “Well Chosen Words” (2010) states that using inclusive and expansive language is “one way to acknowledge and celebrate all people and bring recognition and a sense of belonging to people who have been historically marginalized in society and even in the church.” This amendment would reflect this overture by making all parts of the *Book of Order* consistent in their inclusion of people with disabilities. People with disabilities include 26% of the U.S. population (CDC, 2020), making it the largest minority group in America. People with disabilities represent an important part of our church and they should be named in lists of people to be included. Research shows a significant gap in presence and full participation for people with disabilities into the life of the church (Ault, Collins, and Carter, 2013). The inclusion of people with disabilities in our polity shows our intention to be inclusive of this group. We identify as being “people of the word,” marking both our commitment to biblical scholarship and exegesis and the importance of the words that we use when preaching, teaching, and guiding our church’s polity. These small corrections reflect the value and importance that we put on the use of consistent inclusive language throughout our policies.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve POL-16. While the ACC has expressed its aversion to unnecessarily creating lists of requirements and rubrics, in this present situation the list affirms the mission of Christ’s church. Because a list is deemed to be exhaustive unless it states otherwise, an omission is regarded as exclusionary, not permissive. We believe the witness of scripture and the constitution testifies to the full inclusion of differently abled persons in the faith and governance of the church. A positive affirmation of this principle through constitutional amendment is consistent with this witness.

### **Comment—From the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force**

The LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force proposes that F-1.0302c be further amended to include: (Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in [brackets and *italics*].)

“Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women, and children~~ [*people*] of all times, places, races, nations, [*genders*], ages, abilities ...,” and that F-1.0404 be amended to include the reality of: “a community of ~~women and men of all~~ [*people of all genders*], ages, races, ethnicities, abilities ...”

These changes honor the vital presence and contribution of our trans and nonbinary siblings in faith and are in line with the rationale for the use of “inclusive and expansive language” at the heart of this overture.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

ACWC recommends the 225th GA (2022) approve this item with amendments as follows: (Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in [brackets and *italics*].)

“Because the church is catholic, it strives everywhere to testify to Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women, and children~~ [*all people*] of all times, places, races, nations, ages, abilities, [*genders*,] conditions, and stations in life.”

“... a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of ~~women and men~~ [*all people*] of all ages, races, ethnicities, abilities, [*genders*,] and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity.

We are grateful to the Presbytery of Northeast New Jersey for lifting up abilities as a much needed inclusion into our *Book of Order*. We ask the General Assembly to move further into the use of inclusive language by using the verbiage “all people” instead of men, women, and children.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve POL-16.

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language and then approved Item POL-16 1b, 27/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item POL-16 1b, 381/13.

For the full report on POL-16, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000082/business>.

## 22-C — G-1.0501

### MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

#### G-1.0501 MEETINGS (ROD-06 2)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall a new G-1.0501 be inserted into the Form of Government and the current G-1.0501 and subsequent sections be renumbered accordingly, as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-1.0501      *Meetings***

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

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

#### **“G-1.0502      Annual and Special Meetings**

**The congregation shall hold an annual meeting ...”**

### **Background and Rationale**

Rationale for Recommendation 3 (Note: No additional rationale was included for Recommendation 2.)

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity states that in our church “decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). At the core of our understanding of church governance is the notion that the Holy Spirit is present “where two of three are gathered” and guides us in discerning the will of God in our decision making.

The absence of constitutional language authorizing electronic meetings has proved problematic at all levels of the PC(USA) since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, including in disciplinary processes. The proposed language would remedy that by authorizing electronic meetings in congregations and councils of the church, while still requiring that for proper discernment and decision making to occur, participants must be able to “hear and be heard simultaneously,” or as it is stated in our parliamentary authority, provide for the “opportunity for simultaneous aural communication” (RONR 12th ed. 9:31).

It is not the intent of these additions to require electronic meetings or to mandate any specific processes or procedures. Congregations and councils may make those determinations themselves.

Additionally, the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline sometimes explicitly states that meeting face to face is preferable. But as we all learned in 2020 and 2021, sometimes that is simply not possible. These additions provide the authorization required by our parliamentary authority to use electronic meetings whenever a congregation, council, or entity of a council determines that it should do so, in accordance with whatever rules that congregation or council so adopts.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to approve ROD-06. The adoption of these amendments assumes the adoption of the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order* (Part II of the Constitution) and references the language of those amendments.

The amendments proposed in Recommendation 2 and 3 regarding electronic meetings enshrines the option in the constitution; thus, congregations and councils of the church have the ecclesiastical authority to meet by electronic means.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline approved Item ROD-06 2, 24/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-06 2, 378/1.

For the full report on ROD-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#!/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-D — G-1.0503

### MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

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

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-1.0503 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

**“G-1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings**

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

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

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

#### Background and Rationale

##### Rationale for Recommendation 1

Adoption of these amendments is assumed in the proposed revision, which references the language of the amendments.

The proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline, to become Church Discipline, includes a new requirement for decisions with a finding of guilt in disciplinary processes against church members to be reported to the congregation of membership. This is to ensure that such findings are known to the body of membership as part of the overall goal of the restoration of trust in the community. It is a parallel to the requirement that disciplinary decisions against ministers of the Word and Sacrament be read to the entire presbytery of membership (current D-11.0700, and proposed D-9.0102b).

This provision is referenced in both proposed D-9.0102a (dealing with disciplinary decisions of sessions) and proposed D-9.0102c (dealing with disciplinary decisions of presbyteries against members of congregations). It should be noted that this meeting is also required when an alternative resolution is adopted, because of the requirement that such a resolution must be transmitted “to the clerk of session or the stated clerk, who shall report it according to the provisions of D-9.0102.”

The amendment is necessary because business at congregational meetings is limited to those matters specifically listed in G-1.0503.



**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to approve ROD-06. The adoption of these amendments assumes the adoption of the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order* (Part II of the Constitution) and references the language of those amendments.

The amendment proposed in Recommendation 1 will synchronize the Form of Government with the Rules of Discipline.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline approved Item ROD-06 1, 24/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-06 1, 378/1.

For the full report on ROD-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-E — G-2.0503

### MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

#### G-2.0503 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP (POL-07)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.0503 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.0503      Categories of Membership**

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

#### **... c.      Honorably Retired**

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

The only designation of retirement for ministers of the Word and Sacrament allowed in the current *Book of Order* is “Honorably Retired.” That designation may be perfectly fitting for many Presbyterian ministers as they retire from active pastoral roles, but presbyteries sometimes face situations in which a minister’s service has been marked by difficulties and challenges that do not rise to the level of formal disciplinary charges and censure, but which are hardly worthy of the label “Honorable.”

An example of such a situation might be when a pastor has acted inappropriately but no disciplinary charges are brought because of the belief that the damage to a particular church or harmed person would be more devastating than just letting a pastor leave. Victims are then revictimized when that pastor is granted the status of “Honorably Retired.” Another factor might be that church members or others mistrust or do not understand the processes to bring charges. A third example is when a pastor commits boundary violations after honorably serving and leaving a congregation to move to other endeavors. There may also be situations that occurred during a pastor’s membership in a previous presbytery that could be unreported during a transfer process and only later come to light following retirement in a different presbytery.

So how do presbyteries today respond when ministers with service marked by difficulties or challenges on their records seek retirement? Some may maintain those ministers as members at-large or in other in-between statuses rather than offering retirement, to avoid characterizing the minister’s service as “Honorable.” Other presbyteries may go ahead and honorably retire ministers of all types, regardless of the quality and faithfulness of their service. In doing so, however, the term “Honorably” loses its meaning for anyone. Such a retirement may confuse or, as noted above, revictimize people who have been harmed by a troubled pastorate and who may feel that the presbytery is praising the pastor’s service despite the gravity of its problems.

The proposed amendment would maintain the “Retired” category but remove the mandatory designation of “Honorably” that now applies to all retirements. The new designation of “Retired” would be effective for retirements approved by presbyteries on or after the effective date of the amendment under G-6.04e of the *Book of Order*.

This proposed amendment would have no impact whatsoever on a minister of the Word and Sacrament’s access to Board of Pension retirement benefits. That Board of Pensions process is completely separate from a presbytery granting “Retired” status to a minister on its rolls.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2020) that POL-07 presents issues. The item seeks to amend G-2.0503 and G-2.0503c by striking “honorably” before “retired” in the two places where it occurs, and by adding “or other factors satisfactory to the presbytery” to G-2.0503c.

The ACC finds that deleting “honorably” does not alter the substance of those provisions or affect other constitutional provisions.

The ACC advises the assembly, however, that a similar overture was considered by the 210th GA (1998). The overture was referred to the Office of the General Assembly, which presented an amended overture to the 211th GA (1999). That overture would have removed “honorably” but also included a new provision that would have allowed a presbytery to “designate a retired minister as an honorably retired minister if the presbytery is moved by affection and gratitude to do so.” The ACC did not raise any constitutional issues to the proposed amendment, which was subsequently approved by the 211th GA (1999), but then failed to receive the affirmative vote of a majority of the presbyteries.

The amendment as proposed, in addition to striking “honorably” adds “or other factors satisfactory to the presbytery.” The ACC is unaware of any factors other than those already listed in G-2.0503c that would appropriately lead to the retirement of a minister, and the rationale includes no discussion of the additional language. The ACC is concerned that there could be unintended consequences of this language and advises that if the assembly believes that the intent of this overture is appropriate, the additional words “or other factors satisfactory to the presbytery” be stricken.

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The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language following advice from the ACC and then approved Item POL-07, 28/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item POL-07, 270/128.

For the full report on POL-07, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000082/business>.

## 22-F — G-2.0505a(1)

### MINISTERS OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT

#### G-2.0505a(1) TRANSFER OF MINISTERS OF OTHER DENOMINATIONS (POL-15)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.0505a(1) in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

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

**“a. ...**

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

Often immigrant fellowship members come from cultures that recognize a pastor as the leader of the church from their home country. These pastors many times have theological education from Presbyterian institutions in their home countries and have been ordained by their denomination, which may also be in partnership with the PC(USA). However, these pastors, new immigrants themselves, may face cultural and linguistic challenges in the United States. Therefore, taking and passing the ordination exams may be very difficult for them. Developing an educational and/or mentoring program for these pastors is paramount for their successful transition to the PC(USA).

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

[Editor’s note: The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 225th General Assembly (2022) that the overture presented constitutional issues. The ACC presented alternative language to produce the intent of allowing presbyteries to commission ruling elders to service in multiple situations. The committee amended the original overture following ACC advice, and the assembly approved the language. The following is edited advice from the ACC on the original overture.]

The ACC advises the 225th General Assembly that Item POL-15 presents the following issues that the assembly should consider. The item proposes that presbyteries should ordain immigrant ministers from other denominations and provide a means by which immigrant ministers may receive alternative

training and mentoring as their ordination in another denomination is recognized and they are enrolled as members of a presbytery.

**Comment—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR)**

Our structure and polity often create barriers to ministry for the far-too-few areas of diversity within our denomination (for example, see item RGJ-07 *A Resolution Addressing the Lack of Installed Pastoral Leadership in People of Color Congregations in the PC(USA)*). If the PC(USA) is serious about its commitment to diversity, we must be more flexible in order to meet the needs of diverse communities. A more collaborative and individualized approach ensures credentialing does not become a gate-keeping method.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation was formed as a result of the 1983 reunion of the northern and southern streams to become what is now the PC(USA). The vision for GACOR was to address the need for relationships and vision around a better way to embody the diversity of the church. It is tasked with bringing attention and interpretation to representational access and norms around race, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability, theological diversity, and more (G-3.0103). GACOR's comments are designed to bring the richness and complexity of these intersecting realities into the conversation for the body of commissioners.

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The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language and then approved Item POL-15, 28/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item POL-15, 371/23.

For the full report on POL-15, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000082/business>.

## 22-G — G-2.0603

### PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

#### G-2.0603 PURPOSE OF INQUIRY (HSB-05 2)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.0603 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.0603 Purpose of Inquiry**

**“The purpose of the inquiry phase is to provide an opportunity for the church and those who believe themselves called to ordered ministry as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to explore that call together so that the presbytery can make an informed decision about the inquirer’s suitability for ordered ministry. *They shall provide a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.*”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

Editor’s note: This proposed amendment originated as Recommendation 2 from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force, with the following rationale:

Recommendations 1–5 and 8 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 11-09, A Resolution on Sexual Misconduct in the PC(USA). Recommendation 5. The Task Force will Undertake a Comprehensive Examination of Presbyterian Policy, Judicial Process and Rules of Discipline—from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (*Minutes*, 2018, Part 1, p. 1024.)

Rationale for Recommendation 2: The FaithTrust Institute, which provides “Healthy Boundaries” training, and the national organization Darkness to Light, which provides the “Stewards of Children” child sexual abuse prevention training, have both discovered that regularly required training is the most effective way to prevent sexual misconduct and abuse in the church. One of the best ways to provide justice for those who have already been harmed is to require prevention training so that sexual misconduct doesn’t happen again. Therefore, the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force is recommending this constitutional change to require participation in boundary training and child sexual abuse prevention training as a part of a candidate’s preparation for ministry.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised that the 225th General Assembly (2022) disapprove the original Recommendation 2 of Item HSB-05. The committee amended the original recommendation 2 following the ACC advice.



### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns commends and strongly concurs with Recommendation 2 regarding Boundary and Child Protection training for ministers of the Word and Sacrament and commissioned ruling elders. ACWC would highly recommend that deacons and ruling elders also be included in all trainings, as they are church-mandated reporters of abuse as well. All sexual abuse is, at the core, an abuse of power. That is why certain populations—such as children and youth, developmentally disabled adults, and immigrant night shift workers—are more vulnerable to abuse and are often the targets of sexual misconduct. Clergy sexual misconduct sends out ripple effects beyond individual victims to impact spouses and children, families and marriages, congregations, and presbyteries.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

As a denomination, we affirm the need to care for individuals who are victim of sexual misconduct and the need to hold accountable those who commit sexual misconduct against others. However, we still fall short in identifying and addressing situations where sexual misconduct occurs. This item seeks to strengthen the church’s response to sexual misconduct and put procedures in place at all levels to prevent sexual misconduct from happening. ACSWP commends the work of the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force and wholeheartedly lifts up their work presented in this overture.

### **Comment—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA)**

Regarding Recommendation 2, the Office of the General Assembly supports the importance of including boundary training during the preparation for ministry process.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended the original Recommendation 2 by adding the amendment to G-2.0603 instead of G-2.0607e and deleted language about “good standing,” then approved Item HSB-05 2, 39/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item HSB-05 2, 318/46.

For the full report on HSB-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-H — G-2.0605

### PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

#### G-2.0605 OVERSIGHT (HSB-05 1)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.0605 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.0605      Oversight**

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

This proposed amendment originated as Recommendation 1 from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force, with the following rationale:

Recommendations 1–5 and 8 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 11-09, A Resolution on Sexual Misconduct in the PC(USA). Recommendation 5. The Task Force will Undertake a Comprehensive Examination of Presbyterian Policy, Judicial Process and Rules of Discipline—from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (*Minutes*, 2018, Part 1, p. 1024.)

Rationale for Recommendation 1: Inquirers and candidates should be held accountable by the presbytery of care. There have been instances where an inquirer or candidate is accused of unethical behavior or even sexual misconduct, and a real conflict of interest exists through family and friends who serve on or influence their home church session. If inquirers and candidates are accountable to the presbytery for ensuring proper biblical and theological training, they should also be accountable to the presbytery for ensuring proper ethical behavior during their preparation for ministry as well.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised that the 225th General Assembly (2022) disapprove the original Recommendation 1 of Item HSB-05. The committee amended the original Recommendation 1 following the ACC advice.

#### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns commends and strongly concurs with the recommendation. All sexual abuse is, at the core, an abuse of power. That is why certain populations—such as children and youth, developmentally disabled adults, and immigrant night shift workers—are more vulnerable to abuse and are often the targets of sexual misconduct. Clergy sexual misconduct sends

out ripple effects beyond individual victims to impact spouses and children, families and marriages, congregations, and presbyteries.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

As a denomination, we affirm the need to care for individuals who are victim of sexual misconduct and the need to hold accountable those who commit sexual misconduct against others. However, we still fall short in identifying and addressing situations where sexual misconduct occurs. This item seeks to strengthen the church's response to sexual misconduct and put procedures in place at all levels to prevent sexual misconduct from happening. ACSWP commends the work of the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force and wholeheartedly lifts up their work presented in this overture.

**Comment—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA)**

The committee amended recommendation 1 following OGA advice.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended the original Recommendation 1 by removing “subject to the concern and discipline of the presbytery” and inserting “the session shall report,” then approved Item HSB-05 1, 33/5. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item HSB-05 1, 324/46.

For the full report on HSB-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-I — G-2.0804

### CALL AND INSTALLATION

#### G-2.0804 TERMS OF CALL (HSB-06)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.0804 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.0804 Terms of Call**

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

This proposed amendment originated as a recommendation from the Family Leave Policy Task Force as Recommendation 1. The Family Leave Policy Task Force provided the following edited rationale in part:

Recommendation 2 approved by the General Assembly included a General Assembly policy definition of Family Leave as:

- Leave to accommodate the birth, foster placement, or adoption of a child.
- Leave to provide care to an ill or disabled family member.
- Leave to heal following a loss or tragic event.

In recent years the General Assembly has taken actions to encourage various councils of the church to honor the full humanity of its members and employees. The 221st General Assembly (2014) encouraged presbyteries and churches to create parental leave policies with the minimum of six weeks and 100% pay without using other forms of paid leave. The 222nd General Assembly (2016) also voted to encourage the six agencies of the General Assembly (Board of Pensions, Foundation, Office of the General Assembly, Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program, Inc., Presbyterian Mission Agency, and the Presbyterian Publishing Corporation) to improve their paid parental leave policies in accordance with the advice of the 221st General Assembly (2014). The 223rd General Assembly created a task force with a charge of determining the most effective method for ensuring a robust family leave policy throughout the PC(USA). Through its research and deliberations, the Family Leave Policy Task Force (FLPTF) has determined the most effective method of accomplishing this goal for called and installed ministers is through a constitutional mandate. The task force recommends that family leave be interpreted as a dimension of wholeness, one that responds to the need for time away from work. The task force believes there are theological, developmental, and societal justifications for committing to a denomination-wide family leave policy, and while this specific

recommendation provides for called and installed pastors, the task force would urge adoption of this same provision of care for all PC(USA) workers.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

This item proposed to introduce specific minimum terms of call within the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This step creates constitutional problems, and we recommend disapproval of Item HSB-06. The language of Item HSB-06 introduces administrative-operational detail into the *Book of Order*. Councils have a responsibility and should be trusted to adopt policies appropriate to their circumstances that support and nurture their members, families and staff (see G3.0301c, for example). The choice of twelve weeks reflects the societal sensibilities of the present day toward fair employment practices. Likely changes in those sensibilities mean that G-2.0804, if amended in this fashion now, may well require further and repeated amendment in the years ahead. Such amendments are more appropriate in an operations manual than a constitutional document.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns recommends the approval of HSB-06. The PC(USA), as an employer from the national level down to the local congregation, has the opportunity to model just employment practices through family leave policies that encourage balance in life between work and family and are consistent with PC(USA) theology and policies on work and workers.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve item HSB-06. As a denomination, we have affirmed the importance of supporting families. However, in practice, we have created a situation where the majority of our pastors have been left with no parental leave. Without a paid family leave policy, the PC(USA) forces parents to make a choice between proper healthcare for themselves and their children, and adequate income to provide for their families. It forces family members with sick parents or children to choose work over care, which is antithetical to our call to be compassionate to the ill and infirm. By approving this amendment, the PC(USA) can shape our polity in a way that shows the value we place on human life and relationship. Need to care for individuals who are victim of sexual misconduct and the need to hold accountable those who commit sexual misconduct against others. However, we still fall short in identifying and addressing situations where sexual misconduct occurs. This item seeks to strengthen the Church’s response to sexual misconduct and put procedures in place at all levels to prevent sexual misconduct from happening. ACSWP commends the work of the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force and wholeheartedly lifts up their work presented in this overture.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC)**

The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve this item. The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC) supports the need to have appropriate time of leave for ministers.

**Comment—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR)**

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) acknowledges that the procedures of employment matter. Unfortunately, in the area of parental and family leave, the denominational instruction is not as clear. GACOR has continuously supported efforts to create an equitable family leave policy. Often councils and individual congregations do not have parental/family

leave policies in place and must do so if and when the case arises (putting the individual requesting the leave in a precarious position). This can result in decision-making that focuses on the financial cost of the leave rather than the care of the leader and family. The proposed amendment would provide the framework for individuals needing parental or family leave. Committees on representation at the presbytery and synod levels, or the committees tasked with such work, should serve as a resource to their councils concerning employment practices as stated in G-3.0103.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended and approved Item HSB 06, 34/3. The 225th General Assembly (2022) amended and approved Item HSB 06, 346/33.

For the full report on HSB-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-J — G-2.1001

### COMMISSIONING RULING ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICE

#### G-2.1001 FUNCTIONS (MC-08)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.1001 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.1001      Functions**

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

#### Background and Rationale

[Editor’s note: This item was brought by Palo Duro Presbytery and concurred by four presbyteries and a synod. Palo Duro Presbytery presented the following edited background and rationale. For full text on the original overture, please see the PC-Biz link below.]

This overture originated in Palo Duro Presbytery, a presbytery in the PC(USA) covering 72 counties in northwest Texas and comprising 40 congregations. The use of commissioned pastors (CP) or commissioned ruling elders (CRE) in ministry has become more common and more needed, especially in geographically large presbyteries like Palo Duro. ... It would be beneficial in all situations if a presbytery could have CREs or CPs who are commissioned to more than one church, or even to a group of churches to be called on as needed. ... The exact language of G-2.1001 leaves room to conclude that a CRE or a CP is intended to authorize a commission only to a single congregation or mission. There remains conversation and controversy regarding what the *Book of Order* allows presbyteries to do regarding its commissioning of CREs or CPs to service in multiple settings.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 225th General Assembly (2022) that the overture presented constitutional issues. The ACC presented alternative language to produce the intent of allowing presbyteries to commission ruling elders to service in multiple situations. The committee amended the original overture following ACC advice, and the assembly approved the language. The following is edited advice from the ACC on the original overture:

The item seeks to amend G-2.1001 by striking language that references commission of elders to a single ministry and inserting language that explicitly authorizes commissioning to multiple ministries. The ACC notes first, that in 2014, the GA adopted an authoritative interpretation that states, in part, “a ruling elder commissioned for limited pastoral service is not authorized to perform any pastoral service outside of the commission of the presbytery, unless the presbytery gives its permission for any specific service ... .” If the assembly favors expanding the limits of commissioned pastoral service to include commissioning to multiple congregations, language similar to the overture’s proposed changes in the first three sentences of G-2.1001 are appropriate, with some recommended edits. [Editor’s note: The assembly adopted the language recommended by the ACC.]

#### **Advice and Counsel—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC)**

The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve this item. The overture stresses the intention of F-1.0403, which states, “The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person.”

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The Assembly Committee on Mid Councils amended the overture following language proposed by the ACC and then approved Item MC-08, 32/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item MC-08, 399/9.

For the full report on MC-08, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000080/business>.



## 22-K — G-2.1002

### COMMISSIONING RULING ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICE

#### G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINING, AND COMMISSIONING (HSB-05 3)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.1002 in the Form of Government amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.1002 Training, Examining, and Commissioning**

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

This proposed amendment originated as Recommendation 3 from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force, with the following rationale:

Recommendations 1–5 and 8 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 11-09, A Resolution on Sexual Misconduct in the PC(USA). Recommendation 5. The Task Force will Undertake a Comprehensive Examination of Presbyterian Policy, Judicial Process and Rules of Discipline—from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (*Minutes*, 2018, Part 1, p. 1024.)

Rationale for Recommendation 3: The FaithTrust Institute, which provides “Healthy Boundaries” training, and the national organization Darkness to Light, which provides the “Stewards of Children” child sexual abuse prevention training, have both discovered that regularly required training is the most effective way to prevent sexual misconduct and abuse in the church. One of the best ways to provide justice for those who have already been harmed is to require prevention training so that sexual misconduct doesn’t happen again.

The task force concluded that the denomination needs to mandate boundary training and child protection training for commissioned ruling elders and that training needs to be updated every 36 months.

### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised that the 225th General Assembly (2022) disapprove the original Recommendation 3 of Item HSB-05. The committee revised the original recommendation following the ACC advice.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns commends and strongly concurs with Recommendation 3 regarding boundary and child protection training for ministers of the Word and Sacrament and commissioned ruling elders. ACWC would highly recommend that deacons and ruling elders also be included in all trainings, as they are church-mandated reporters of abuse as well. All sexual abuse is, at the core, an abuse of power. That is why certain populations—such as children and youth, developmentally disabled adults, and immigrant night shift workers—are more vulnerable to abuse and are often the targets of sexual misconduct. Clergy sexual misconduct sends out ripple effects beyond individual victims to impact spouses and children, families and marriages, congregations, and presbyteries.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

As a denomination, we affirm the need to care for individuals who are victim of sexual misconduct and the need to hold accountable those who commit sexual misconduct against others. However, we still fall short in identifying and addressing situations where sexual misconduct occurs. This item seeks to strengthen the church’s response to sexual misconduct and put procedures in place at all levels to prevent sexual misconduct from happening. ACSWP commends the work of the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force and wholeheartedly lifts up their work presented in this overture.

### **Comment—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA)**

Regarding Recommendation 3, the Office of the General Assembly supports the importance of including boundary training for commissioned ruling elders.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended the original Recommendation 3 and then approved Item HSB-05 3, 39/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item HSB-05 3, 358/13.

For the full report on HSB-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-L — G-2.1103

### CERTIFIED CHURCH SERVICE

#### G-2.1103 CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS (HSB-05 4)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.1103 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-2.1103      Christian Educators**

##### **a.   Skills and Training**

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

##### **b.   Presbytery Responsibility**

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

### **Background and Rationale**

The General Assembly included this comment:

“The committee encourages the Christian Educators Certification Committee to take up the oversight of the certified Christian educators in presbyteries and congregations, particularly the tracking of required trainings. Gaps in oversight are where it is difficult to ensure that vulnerable people are protected.”

This proposed amendment originated as Recommendation 4 from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force, with the following rationale:

Recommendations 1–5 and 8 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 11-09, A Resolution on Sexual Misconduct in the PC(USA). Recommendation 5. The Task Force will Undertake a Comprehensive Examination of Presbyterian Policy, Judicial Process and Rules of Discipline—from the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (*Minutes*, 2018, Part 1, p. 1024.)

Rationale for Recommendation 4: The FaithTrust Institute, which provides “Healthy Boundaries” training, and the national organization Darkness to Light, which provides the “Stewards of Children” child sexual abuse prevention training, have both discovered that regularly required training is the most effective way to prevent sexual misconduct and abuse in the church. One of the best ways to provide justice for those who have already been harmed is to require prevention training so that sexual misconduct doesn’t happen again.

The task force concluded that the denomination needs to mandate boundary training and child protection training for certified Christian educators and certified associate Christian educators and that training needs to be updated every 36 months.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 225th General Assembly (2022) disapprove the original Recommendation 4 of Item HSB-05. The committee revised the original recommendation following the ACC advice.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns commends and strongly concurs with Recommendation 4 regarding boundary and child protection training for Certified educators. ACWC would highly recommend that deacons and ruling elders also be included in all trainings, as they are church-mandated reporters of abuse as well. All sexual abuse is, at the core an abuse of power. That is why certain populations—such as children and youth, developmentally disabled adults, and immigrant night shift workers—are more vulnerable to abuse and are often the targets of sexual misconduct. Clergy sexual misconduct sends out ripple effects beyond individual victims to impact spouses and children, families and marriages, congregations, and presbyteries.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

As a denomination, we affirm the need to care for individuals who are victim of sexual misconduct and the need to hold accountable those who commit sexual misconduct against others. However, we still fall short in identifying and addressing situations where sexual misconduct occurs. This item seeks to strengthen the church’s response to sexual misconduct and put procedures in place at all levels to prevent sexual misconduct from happening. ACSWP commends the work of the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force and wholeheartedly lifts up their work presented in this overture.

**Comment—From the Office of the General Assembly (OGA)**

Regarding Recommendation 4, the Office of the General Assembly, which oversees educator certification through the work of the Educator Certification Committee, the national certifying body, is

committed to this ministry which provides an intensive process of education for those serving in ministries of Christian education/formation.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended the original Recommendation 4 and then approved Item HSB-05 4, 40/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item HSB-05 4, 305/60.

For the full report on HSB-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-M — G-3.0104

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

#### G-3.0104 OFFICERS (MC-05)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0104 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-3.0104      Officers**

**The pastor of a congregation shall be the moderator of the session of that congregation. In congregations where there are co-pastors, they shall both be considered moderators and have provisions for designating who presides at a particular meeting. If it is impractical for the pastor to moderate, he or she shall invite another minister of the Word and Sacrament who is a member of the presbytery, or a person authorized by the presbytery to serve as moderator. If there is no installed pastor, or if the installed pastor is unable to invite another moderator, the presbytery shall make provision for a moderator. *It is appropriate for councils to adopt procedures that may allow for electronic session meetings.*”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s note: This proposed amendment originated as an overture from the Presbytery of Southern Illinois to allow moderators to moderate from a remote location. The assembly committee amended it following ACC advice. The following rationale was for the original overture.]

In larger metropolitan areas when there is a need for substitute session moderator leadership, there are usually several pools of people from which to draw, such as the pool of retired ministers of the Word and Sacrament or ministers of the Word and Sacrament serving in Presbyterian congregations. The reality is different in presbyteries that have wide geography and very small congregations, many of which lack full-time pastoral leadership. ... We propose a modest change to the *Book of Order*, under which presbyteries would be allowed to establish their own procedures for expeditious one-time appointment of a ruling elder to moderate a session meeting or, alternatively, for the appointment of a minister of the Word and Sacrament to moderate the meeting electronically.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

This proposed amendment originated as an overture from the Presbytery of Southern Illinois to allow moderators to moderate from a remote location. The assembly committee amended following ACC advice. The following edited advice was for the original overture:

The ACC advises the 225th GA to disapprove MC-05 [as] ... the proposed language is redundant and unnecessary. ... The ACC finds that the Constitution allows councils to meet electronically, provided such meetings are authorized in a council’s bylaws or manual of administrative operations.

The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended and approved Item MC-05, 25/6. The 225th General Assembly (2022) amended and approved Item MC-05, 376/21.

For the full report on MC-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000080/business>.

## 22-N — G-3.0105

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

#### G-3.0105 MEETINGS (ROD-06 3)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

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

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-3.0105 Meetings**

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

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

##### **Rationale for Recommendation 3**

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity states that in our church, “decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). At the core of our understanding of church governance is the notion that the Holy Spirit is present “where two of three are gathered,” and guides us in discerning the will of God in our decision making.

The absence of constitutional language authorizing electronic meetings has proved problematic at all levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, including in disciplinary processes. The proposed language would remedy that by authorizing electronic meetings in congregations and councils of the church, while still requiring that for proper discernment and decision making to occur, participants must be able to “hear and be heard simultaneously,” or as it is stated in our parliamentary authority, provide for the “opportunity for simultaneous aural communication” (RONR 12th ed. 9:31).

It is not the intent of these additions to require electronic meetings or to mandate any specific processes or procedures. Congregations and councils may make those determinations themselves. Additionally, the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline sometimes explicitly states that meeting face to face is preferable. But as we all learned in 2020 and 2021, sometimes that is simply not possible. These additions provide the authorization required by our parliamentary authority to utilize electronic



meetings whenever a congregation, council, or entity of a council, determines that it should do so, and in accordance with whatever rules that congregation or council so adopts.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to approve ROD-06. The adoption of these amendments assumes the adoption of the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order (Part II of the Constitution) and references the language of those amendments.

The amendments proposed in Recommendation 2 and 3 regarding electronic meetings enshrines the option in the Constitution; thus, congregations and councils of the church have the ecclesiastical authority to meet by electronic means.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline approved Item ROD-06 3, 24/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-06 3, 378/1.

For the full report on ROD-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-O — G-3.0106

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

#### G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (HSB-05 9)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0106 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-3.0106 Administration of Mission**

**Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions. Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church’s witness to the mission of the triune God.**

**Councils higher than the session may provide examples of policies and procedures that may be gathered into advisory handbooks. These examples illumine practices required by the Constitution but left to councils for specific implementation. Such handbooks may also offer information that enhances or secures the ministry of the particular council.**

**Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council.**

**All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy. *Each council’s policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.***

#### **Background and Rationale**

This proposed amendment originated as a recommendation from the GA Health Safety and Benefits Committee as Recommendation 9 attached to the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force recommendations. The HSB committee concluded that the denomination needs to mandate boundary training and child protection training for all members of councils including sessions of congregations, presbyteries, synods and the general assembly.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended the original Recommendation 4 and then approved Item HSB-05 9, 36/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item HSB-05 9, 351/24.

For the full report on HSB-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-P — G-3.0106

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

#### G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (POL-10)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**  
(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

**“G-3.0106 Administration of Mission ...**

**... “All councils shall adopt and implement ~~a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy~~ the following policies: *a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child and youth protection policy, and an antiracism policy.*”**

#### Background and Rationale

From Selma to Montgomery, from Tuskegee to Tuscaloosa, from Auburn to Anniston, from the Black Belt to Birmingham, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley knows the pain of our racist history and the difficulty of changing behavior. We recognize the General Assembly’s call for “Facing Racism,” for study and action, and give thanks for the resource materials provided. Nevertheless, we see that councils have been slow to respond. Councils have adopted and enforced sexual misconduct policies and policies to protect vulnerable populations. Why have councils not been doing the work of “Facing Racism”? Why have councils responded differently? The responses regarding sexual misconduct and protecting vulnerable people have been directed by “shall,” while “Facing Racism” merely urges, makes available, encourages, and commends. This presbytery, whose very name reflects black and white, women and men, working together in mission for education and health care, calls upon the General Assembly to turn overcoming racism into a “shall” for all our councils.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the constitution is not intended to serve as a manual of operations. Generally, this would advocate against the creation of lists of requirements or rubrics on how to implement requirements.

#### Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve this item...The Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley and other concurring presbyteries are to be commended for their sincere desire to see the PC(USA) implementing the “Facing Racism” policy (2018, renewing a 1999 version). If this overture is passed, it is important that there are both personal and shared outcomes for any antiracism policy and training. Training in and of itself does not mandate tangible action beyond certification that a training is offered, was attended, and completed. In a church that is 89% white and largely suburban, the amendment we propose is meant to encourage mid councils to be both visionary and realistic about the kind of training required to dismantle white supremacy and transform us into the Beloved Community in our particular areas.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (ACWC)**

ACWC advises that the assembly approve this item. We concur with the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee and encourage the approval of including an antiracism policy with suggested language, but we also believe it should be included in a stand-alone manner separate from the mandate to have a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy.

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC)**

The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve this item ... Over the years, the *Book of Order* has been reduced in scope and specific content. Noticeably absent is language related to addressing systemic and structural racism. Previous efforts to address racism in the church and society are not enough. Though they have brought awareness, they have not yielded the desired results for people of color. Facing racism and overcoming racism are only steps to achieving God’s beloved community of eradicating racism. White supremacy and other racist attitudes undermine the work of the church. Therefore, REAC advises the inclusion of “All councils shall adopt and implement a dismantling structural and systemic racism policy and training” as a stand-alone requirement.

### **Comment—From the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR)**

The General Assembly Committee on Representation believes that training in cultural proficiency, implicit bias, and antiracism are important at all levels of the denomination. The inclusion of such training in the *Book of Order* would ensure that members are equipped and aware of the implications of racism in their work. Training like this would be best if connected to the constitutional requirement of advocating for diversity in leadership and equipping the church.

With that affirmation, we also want to highlight the fact that mandatory stand-alone training around bias and privilege have been shown to actually reinforce bias when they are not accompanied by actual strategies for overcoming bias, structural commitment to undoing structural barriers to equity, etc. In other words, the “how” of a mandatory training matters just as much, if not more, as the “if”—without attention to this wider matrix of needs, including best-practices, required antiracism training risks becoming simply another box to check without any greater commitment to transformed interactions, norms and structures within our institutions and within the body of Christ.

The General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR) was formed as a result of the 1983 reunion of the northern and southern streams of what is now the PC(USA). The vision for GACOR was to address the need for relationships and vision of a better way to embody the diversity of the church together. It is tasked with bringing attention and interpretation to representational access and norms around race, gender, sexual orientation, language, disability, theological diversity, and more (G-3.0103). GACOR’s comments are designed to bring the richness and complexity of these intersecting realities into the conversation for the body of commissioners.

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the overture language and then approved Item POL-10, 25/3. The 225th General Assembly (2022) amended and approved Item POL-10, 372/31.

For the full report on POL-10, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#!/committee/3000082/business>.

## 22-Q — G-3.0303c

### THE PRESBYTERY

#### G-3.0303c RELATIONS WITH SESSIONS (MC-03)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0303c in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

**“G-3.0303      Relations with Sessions ...**

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

#### Background and Rationale

[Editor’s note: This rationale was prepared for the original overture, which was significantly amended by the assembly and may or may not apply to the proposed amendment above.]

In 1993, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission ruled in the case *Saurbaugh v. the Presbytery of Great Rivers* that “the *Book of Order* does not give the presbyteries power to require congregations to pay compensation upon dissolution of pastoral relationships” (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 155, Remedial Case 206-13,11.094 attached). In subsequent years, the church has maintained that while a presbytery can have guidelines and policies concerning severance for ministers at the dissolution of a pastorate, the presbytery has no authority to enforce those policies. This overture seeks to remedy that omission in the *Book of Order* by making explicit the authority of presbyteries to create and enforce severance policies by linking that authority to the power to set minimum wages and approve calls.

The overture does not attempt to set a national severance policy but rather to clarify the presbytery’s relationship to both the session and the minister during times of transition.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

[Editor’s note: This advice was prepared for the original overture, which was significantly amended by the assembly.]

The ACC advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to disapprove [original] MC-03. ...

The ACC finds that nothing in the proposed amendment would change the requirement that only agreed-upon [by the congregation approving terms or change to terms of call] terms of dissolution are enforceable ....

### **Advice and Counsel—From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve this item.

When a pastor and a church need to end their mutual relationship, there needs to be equity in severance. Sometimes a pastor leaves without a just severance, which creates unfair stress in a time of transition. Some pastors might receive a fair severance package, others might receive none. This overture calls for presbyteries to establish minimums to prevent both undue hardship and retaliation in the moments that lead to the termination of the relationship between pastor and church.

According to the 2009 “God’s Work in Women’s Hands: Just Compensation and Just Compensation,” the PC(USA) defines pay equity as seeking fairness in compensation. While the policy addresses gender discrimination in compensation, this call for equity should apply to severance packages regardless of gender. By requiring presbyteries to set minimum severance policies, the denomination can move toward a more equitable compensation in the church.

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The Assembly Committee on Mid Councils amended the overture language and then approved Item MC-03, 32/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item MC-03, 386/18.

For the full report on MC-03, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#!/committee/3000080/business>.

## 22-R — G-3.0401

### THE SYNOD

#### G-3.0401 COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITIES (MC-06)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0401 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-3.0401      Composition and Responsibilities**

**“The synod is the intermediate council serving as a corporate expression of the church throughout its region. It shall consist of not fewer than three presbyteries within a specific geographic region.**

**“When a synod meets, it shall be composed of commissioners elected by the presbyteries. Each presbytery shall elect at least one ruling elder and one minister of the Word and Sacrament to serve as commissioners to synod. A synod shall determine a plan for the election of commissioners to the synod, as well as the method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103; both plans shall be subject to approval by a majority of the presbyteries in the synod. The commissioners from each presbytery shall be divided equally between ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament. *A synod may enroll, or provide by rule for the enrollment of, ministers of Word and Sacrament and ruling elders, in numbers as nearly equal as possible, during terms of elected service to the synod. Such enrollment may be used, among other purposes, for fulfilling the principles of participation and representation and may include representation from the synod’s racial ethnic active leadership.* Each person elected moderator or other officer shall be enrolled as a member of the synod until a successor is elected and installed.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s note: This item came as an overture from Lake Huron Presbytery and received concurrence from four presbyteries and one synod. The edited rationale follows.]

The current language of G-3.0401 creates a problem in fulfilling the requirements both for the election of commissioners and the principles of participation and representation. Since synods “shall be composed of commissioners elected by presbyteries,” a synod may be prevented from “[hearing] the voices of peoples long silenced” (*Book of Confessions*, A Brief Statement of Faith, 11.4, Line 70) who might not be elected as commissioners. Since synods cannot compel the election of particular commissioners, important constituencies of synods—such as racial ethnic caucuses, immigrant communities, or mission networks—could be excluded from participation in the decisions of the synod. ... The proposed language permits synods to adopt rules, subject to the approval of a majority of their presbyteries, to extend voting privileges to additional persons in the synod for the purpose of participation and representation. ... The amendment ... would preserve the principle of governance by ruling elders and teaching elders (F-3.0202) by requiring that such additional members be balanced as nearly equally as

possible. It would also free synods to find ways to fulfill both the plan for election of commissioners and the plan for participation and representation according to their particular mission needs with creativity and integrity.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve item MC-06 with amendment. The overture provides a path [that] synods may use in order to a) fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G-3.0103, while b) retaining the principle of government by elders (F-3.0202) and c) protecting the rights of lower councils to choose those who represent them in higher councils. ... The overture seeks to allow synods to obtain other voting members. In this respect, the overture shares important parallels with part of G-3.0301: “A presbytery may enroll, or may provide by its own rule for the enrollment of, ruling elders during terms of elected service to the presbytery or its congregations.”

**Advice and Counsel—From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC)**

The Racial Equity Advocacy Committee advises that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve this item. The overture stresses the intention of F-1.0403, which states, “The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person.”

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The Assembly Committee on Mid Councils amended the overture language following language proposed by the ACC and REAC and then approved Item MC-06, 30/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item MC-06, 385/13.

For the full report on MC-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000080/business>.



## 22-S — G-4.0301

### CONFIDENCE AND PRIVILEGE

#### G-4.0301 TRUST AND CONFIDENTIALITY (ROD-07)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-4.0301 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-4.0301 Trust and Confidentiality**

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

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

#### **Background and Rationale**

This recommendation is in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 11-09, A Resolution on Sexual Misconduct in the PC(USA). Recommendation 5. The Task Force Will ... Undertak[e] a Comprehensive Examination of Presbyterian Policy, Judicial Process, and Rules of Discipline—From the Advocacy Committee for Women’s Concerns (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, p. 1024).

... Our privilege of confidentiality is not an invitation to sweep abuse under the rug to protect the institution or to protect perpetrators of misconduct. The scriptures are clear, our mandate to protect the vulnerable and the victimized is greater than our responsibility to those who hold power.

- God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment: “How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute. Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked.” (Ps. 82: 1–4)

- [Jesus says,] “If any of you put a stumbling-block before one of these little ones who believe in me, it would be better for you if a great millstone were fastened around your neck and you were drowned in the depth of the sea. Woe to the world because of stumbling-blocks! Occasions for stumbling are bound to come, but woe to the one by whom the stumbling-block comes! ... Take care that you do not despise one of these little ones. ...” (Mt. 18:6–7; 10)

In light of these biblical mandates, when talking about confidence and privilege, it is essential that we begin with protecting the vulnerable. ...Concerns about the need for confidence in pastoral care and to confess sin do not outweigh the need to protect those who have been victimized.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

[Editor’s note: The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advised the 225th General Assembly (2022) to disapprove the original Item ROD-07. The GA Rules of Discipline Committee recommended disapproval of the original recommendation following the ACC advice. The assembly significantly amended it with a substitute motion and approved the proposed amendment. The ACC gave oral advice to the General Assembly regarding the revised proposed amendment language, which does not significantly change the current constitutional requirement to keep in confidence all information revealed in the exercise of providing pastoral care, the permission to reveal confidential information when the person who revealed it gives express consent, and the ability to reveal confidential information if the person receiving the information reasonably believes that there is a risk of imminent bodily harm to any person.]

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline recommended disapproval of the original ROD-07, 19/5. The 225th General Assembly (2022) amended with a substitute motion and approved Item ROD-07, 325/65.

For the full report on ROD-07, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-T — W-3.0205

### GATHERING

#### W-3.0205 CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS (TWE-05 1)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-3.0205 in the Directory for Worship amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

**“W-3.0205 Confession and Forgiveness ...**

**“... Other actions may follow—a song of praise, such as ‘Glory be to the Father’ or ‘Glory to God’; a summary of the law or call to faithfulness; *the sacrament of baptism*; and the sharing of peace as a sign of reconciliation in Christ.”**

#### Background and Rationale

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy). This amendment acknowledges the common practice of celebrating the sacrament of baptism early in the Service for the Lord’s Day while retaining the Reformed emphasis on baptism as a response to the Word.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to disapprove Recommendation 1 of Item TWE-05. Recommendation 1 seeks to amend W-3.0205, a section in the Directory for Worship that describes confession and forgiveness as an element of the worship service. The proposed language would articulate the possibility that the sacrament of baptism might be administered following confession and proclamation of forgiveness in the worship service.

Although the language of this recommendation is clear and consistent with its intent, the ACC finds that it is unnecessary. Reformed theology commonly links Word and Sacrament as in W-1.0106, but W-3.0307 already provides for the sacrament of baptism to ordinarily be in response to the Word. It does not require that the sacrament only be administered at that time in the service.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 1, 30/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 1, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-U — W-3.0409

### SACRAMENT

#### W-3.0409 THEOLOGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER (TWE-05 2)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-3.0409 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

**“W-3.0409     Theology of the Lord’s Supper ...**

**“... The opportunity to eat and drink with Christ is not a right bestowed upon the worthy, but a privilege given to the undeserving who come in faith, repentance, and love. All who come to the table are offered the bread and cup, regardless of their age or understanding. If some of those who come have not yet been baptized, an invitation, *when appropriate*, to baptismal preparation and Baptism should be graciously extended.”**

#### Background and Rationale

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment provides for gracious hospitality at the Lord’s Supper, emphasizes the theological connection between the sacraments, and underscores pastoral discretion in the invitation to baptism.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to disapprove Recommendation 2 of Item TWE-05. This recommendation seeks to amend W-3.0409 to emphasize pastoral discretion regarding an invitation to baptismal preparation when persons who have not previously been baptized participate in the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. The ACC finds that the proposed change has the potential to weaken the link between baptism and the Lord’s Supper. The use of “should,” rather than the mandatory “shall,” already provides latitude for pastoral discretion in determining the appropriateness of an invitation to baptismal preparation.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 2, 30/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 2, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-V — W-3.0414

### SACRAMENT

#### W-3.0414 COMMUNION (TWE-05 4)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

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

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

**“W-3.0414     Communion ...**

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

#### Background and Rationale

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment provides for more flexibility in the prayer after communion, including the use of a unison congregational prayer.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve Recommendation 4 of Item TWE-05. Recommendation 4 in this overture would eliminate the requirement that the prayer after communion be led only by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or ruling elder authorized by the presbytery to administer communion. The ACC finds that the language of W-3.0414 is unnecessarily restrictive and amendment is advisable.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 4, 31/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) then approved Item TWE-05 4, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-W — W-4.0403

### ORDINATION, INSTALLATION, AND COMMISSIONING

#### W-4.0403 ORDER OF WORSHIP (TWE-06)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-4.0403 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-4.0403      Order of Worship**

**“A service of ordination, installation, or commissioning focuses on Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church. Following the sermon, the moderator (or designee) of the appropriate council briefly states the nature of the ministry to which persons are being ordained, installed, or commissioned. Those who are being ordained, installed, or commissioned gather at the baptismal font. The moderator (or designee) of asks them the constitutional questions (see W-4.0404). A ruling elder asks the corresponding questions of the congregation. When all questions have been answered in the affirmative, those to be ordained will kneel, if able, for the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination. (The presbytery commission lays on hands at the ordination of minister of the Word and Sacrament; its moderator may invite other ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders to participate. Members of the session lay on hands at the ordination of ruling elders and deacons; the session may invite other ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament to participate. Because ordination only takes place once for each office, the laying on of hands is not repeated.) Those previously ordained will stand, if able, along with the congregation, for the prayer of installation. *Signs and symbols of blessing may be conferred on the newly installed or commissioned person.* After this, the moderator makes the declaration of ordination, installation, or commissioning. Members of the session or presbytery welcome the newly ordained, installed, or commissioned person(s). In the case of the installation of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, persons may be invited to charge the minister of the Word and Sacrament and congregation to faithfulness in ministry and mutuality in relationship. When a minister of the Word and Sacrament is ordained or installed, it is appropriate for that person to preside at the Lord’s Supper in the same service; she or he may also give the blessing at the conclusion of the service. When ruling elders or deacons are ordained or installed, it is appropriate for one or more of them to give the charge to the congregation at the conclusion of the service.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s note: The TWE Committee amended the overture following the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This edited background and rationale is for the original overture’s proposed amendment. For the full rationale and original overture, see the PC-Biz link below.]

The laying on of hands is not a sacrament but an act of diverse meanings as witnessed in scripture and the Reformed tradition. It is affirmed by the *Book of Order* and Directory for Worship as an act that is appropriate to various situations in the worship of life of Presbyterians, an act that conveys the “gracious action of God and communicate[s] our grateful response” (W-1.0303, see also W-2.0202, W-3.0407, W-4.0401–.0403, W-5.0204).

The Confession of 1967 includes these words in 9.39–9.40: “... In recognition of special gifts of the Spirit and for the ordering of its life as a community, the church calls, trains, and authorizes certain members for leadership and oversight. The persons qualified for these duties in accordance with the polity of the church are set apart by ordination or other appropriate act and thus made responsible for their special ministries. The church thus orders its life as an institution with a constitution, government, officers, finances, and administrative rules. These are instruments of mission, not ends in themselves. ...”

Ordination is an act of the institution, one of the ways we order our life for mission. Candidates are ordained to a particular service, a call, emphasizing the pragmatic, functional nature of ordained ministry. As the *Book of Order* says, “In baptism, each Christian is called to ministry in Christ’s name. God calls some persons from the midst of congregations to *fulfill particular functions*, so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. ...” (W-4.0401, emphasis added). And, “... The gifts of the Spirit are for building up the Church. Every action in worship is to glorify God and contribute to the good of the people. Worshipers and worship leaders must avoid actions that only call attention to themselves and fail to serve the needs of the whole congregation. ...” (W-2.0202)

The proposed change to the Directory of Worship is from restrictive language to permissive language: the laying on of hands would not be required at installations as there may be occasions when, because of ecumenical considerations or a candidate’s preferences regarding physical contact, it would not be appropriate or edifying. In such a change we reaffirm Calvin’s own guide for worship practices: “But love will best judge what may hurt or edify; and if we let love be our guide, all will be safe” (*Institutes*, IV.x.30).

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

This advice applies to the original overture.

Should the 225th General Assembly (2022) desire to authorize some act of the congregation to signify its blessing upon the newly installed or commissioned person, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that W-4.0403 be amended as follows (suggestions appear in ~~strike through~~ and *italics*): “... [Because ordination only takes place once for each office, the laying on of hands is not repeated.] ~~The moderator may invite the commission and all members of the congregation to participate in the laying on of hands for commissioning and blessing the newly installed minister of Word and Sacrament, ruling elders, or deacons.~~ Those previously ordained will stand, if able, along with the congregation, for the prayer of installation. [*Signs and symbols of blessing may be conferred on the newly installed or commissioned person.*] After this, the moderator makes the declaration of ordination, installation, or commissioning. Members of the session or presbytery welcome the newly ordained, installed, or commissioned person(s).” (The remainder of the paragraph remains unchanged.)

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education amended and approved Item TWE-06, 27/3. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-06, 371/23.

For the full report on TWE-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-X — W-5.0104

### WORSHIP AND PERSONAL LIFE

#### W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 5)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-5.0104 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-5.0104      Household Worship**

**“We respond to God’s grace in the context of personal relationships, particularly when Christians who live together worship together. *Household worship is a central and important practice within the Reformed tradition, an important means of faith formation.* Opportunities for household or family worship include: sabbath-keeping and rhythms of daily prayer; Bible reading, study, or memorization; prayers before meals; singing hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs; and expressions of giving, sharing, and service to others. Congregations are encouraged to nurture and equip households and families for these practices.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment asserts the importance of household worship in faith formation.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) that this item does not present issues of polity. Recommendation 5 of Item TWE-05 would add a sentence emphasizing the role of household worship. If the 225th General Assembly (2022) believes that the intent of Item TWE-05 Recommendation 5 is appropriate, the ACC advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 5, 31/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 5, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.



## 22-Y — W-5.0104

### WORSHIP AND PERSONAL LIFE

#### W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 6)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-5.0104 in the Directory of Worship be amended to add a third paragraph as follows?** (Added text is in *italics*.)

**“W-5.0104 Household Worship ...**

*“... Prayers of thanks and blessing, and lament at the household table draw upon ancient Jewish practice and the examples of Jesus, his disciples, and the early Christian community. Mealtimes provide opportunities to give thanks to God’s works of creation and redemption by which we are sustained for Christ’s service. We respond with heartfelt thanks and praise in the sharing of our daily bread.”*

#### Background and Rationale

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment stresses the significance of mealtimes prayers in household worship.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) that this item does not present issues of polity. Recommendation 6 in TWE-05 would add a paragraph emphasizing the role of mealtimes prayers to the section on household worship. If the 225th General Assembly (2022) finds Recommendation 6 is appropriate, the ACC advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 6, 30/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 6, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-Z — W-5.0201

### WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

#### W-5.0201 THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH (TWE-05 9, 1 & 2)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

1. Shall W-5.0201 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows? (Added text is in *italics*.)

#### “W-5.0201      The Church’s Ministry within the Community of Faith

“God calls the Church in the name of Jesus Christ to mutual love, *discipleship*, and service. Jesus’ ministry and the church’s worship are deeply connected; indeed, worship is ministry. The church’s ministry springs from its worship, where God builds up the body of Christ through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. The church’s ministry flows back into worship as we bring to God the celebrations and concerns of the community of faith.

“Within the church, we seek to love and serve one another through the rhythm of daily prayer, the ministries of Christian education and pastoral care, the activities of councils of the church, and other gatherings of believers. The church’s ministries are shaped and nourished by the Word and Sacraments, and are to be carried out in the spirit of *faithful discipleship* and constant prayer (*F-1.0301; F-1.0302a; F-1.0303; F-1.0403*).”

2. Shall W-5.0301 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows? (Added text is in *italics*.)

#### “W-5.0301      The Church’s Mission in the World

“God sends the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit to join the mission of Jesus Christ in service to the world. Jesus’ mission and the church’s worship are deeply connected; indeed, worship is mission. The church’s mission springs from its worship, where we glimpse the reality and the promise of God’s eternal realm. The church’s mission flows back into worship as we bring to God the joy and suffering of the world.

“Through its mission in the world, the church seeks to bear witness to God’s reign through the proclamation of the gospel, acts of compassion, work for justice and peace, and the care of creation. The church’s mission is shaped and nourished by the Word and Sacraments, and represents the living out of our prayer for the world (*F-1.01; F-1.0303; F-1.0304*).”

## Background and Rationale

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment contributes an emphasis on communal discipleship within the church's practice of ministry and mission.

## Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve the amendment to W-5.0201 and disapprove the [original] amendment to W-5.0301. Recommendation 9 in this item would introduce the concept of discipleship in various places in paragraphs describing a) the church's ministry within the community of faith (W-5.0201) and b) the church's mission in the world (W-5.0301). The ACC finds that sections W-5.0201 and W-5.0301 should be seen as complementary, not contradictory or mutually exclusive. It is unnecessary to amend W-5.0301 to incorporate discipleship as this is sufficiently addressed by the proposed amendment to W-5.0201.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education amended and approved Item TWE-05 9 1 & 2, 32/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 9 1 & 2, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-AA — W-5.0204

### WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

#### W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 7)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the third paragraph of W-5.0204 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?** (Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-5.0204 Pastoral Care ...**

**“... All members are called to take part in the ministry of pastoral care, visiting the sick, supporting the weak, and comforting those who mourn. Ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament have particular responsibility for the exercise of pastoral care within the community of faith. Those with special gifts and appropriate training may be called to *the particular specialized pastoral care ministries of pastoral counseling, or chaplaincy*. In certain circumstances, persons may need to be referred to other qualified and credentialed professionals to receive appropriate counseling and care.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment includes spiritual direction among the examples of specialized ministries of pastoral care while seeking to avoid the appearance of an exhaustive list.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) that Recommendation 7 of Item TWE-05 presents issues that the assembly should consider. This recommendation would add “spiritual direction” to the already named ministries of pastoral care. It has added “particular specialized” and “such as” so that the list created by the addition of “spiritual direction” would not be presumed to be exhaustive. However, the addition of more language is counter to recent constitutional changes that give various councils parameters and responsibility to define their own practices. Decisions about appropriate validated ministries are properly left to the individual presbyteries. In addition, the creation of a list invites more items to be added to it.

The ACC finds that if the assembly believes it is appropriate to expand the understanding of pastoral care ministries, it can be better accomplished, while addressing the issues presented above, by striking “the ministries of pastoral counseling or chaplaincy” in W-5.0204 and inserting “particular specialized pastoral care ministries” so that it would read “Those with special gifts and appropriate

training may be called to ~~the ministries of pastoral counseling or chaplaincy~~ *[particular specialized pastoral care ministries]*.”

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education amended and approved Item TWE-05 7, 32/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 7, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-BB — W-5.0204

### WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

#### W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 8)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the fourth paragraph of W-5.0204 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?** (Deleted text is in ~~striketrough~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-5.0204 Pastoral Care...**

**“Services of wholeness and healing are one way of enacting the church’s ministry of pastoral care. The central element in these services is prayer, calling upon God’s saving grace or giving thanks for healing received, *in life and in death, in body, mind, or spirit*. A service of wholeness includes the proclamation of the Word, focusing on the promise of *peace and* abundant life in Christ. Prayer may be enacted through the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, provided that these actions are carefully introduced and interpreted: healing *always in its many forms* comes as a gift from God, not as a product *an accomplishment* of human prayer. The Lord’s Supper is a fitting way to seal the promise of wholeness proclaimed in the Word. Services of wholeness are to be authorized by the session and are under the direction of the minister of Word and Sacrament, but may involve leadership from ruling elders, deacons, and others with gifts for prayer. They may take place on a regular basis, as an occasional event, or as a part of the Service for the Lord’s Day.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment offers theological and pastoral perspective on the nature of healing and wholeness: that healing happens in a variety of ways and wholeness is not necessarily synonymous with physical recovery.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve Recommendation 8 of Item TWE-05. This recommendation would amend the paragraph describing services of wholeness and healing. The ACC finds that the first proposed amendment, the insertion of the words “in life and in death, in body, mind, or spirit;” the deletion of “abundant” and insertion of “ultimate well-being through” are unnecessary stylistic changes that do not present issues of polity. The ACC finds that a) deletion of the word “always” and insertion of “in its many forms” and b)

deletion of “a product” and insertion of “not an accomplishment of human prayer” are helpful clarifications.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 8, 31/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 8, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-CC — D-3.0106

### JURISDICTION IN JUDICIAL PROCESS

#### D-3.0106 WHEN JURISDICTION ENDS (ROD-05)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall D-3.0106 in the current Rules of Discipline be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~; added text is in *italics*.)

**“D-3.0106     ~~When Jurisdiction Ends~~ *Upon Renunciation of Jurisdiction***

**~~Jurisdiction in the~~ *The* judicial process ~~ends~~ *does not end* when a person in an ordered ministry or a member renounces the jurisdiction of the church. Should the accused in a disciplinary case renounce the jurisdiction of the church as provided in G-2.0407 or G-2.0509, the clerk or stated clerk shall report to the council both the renunciation and the status of the matter at that time, including the name of the accused, *and* the date and fact of renunciation during an investigation or trial, ~~and the charges filed~~. The judicial process shall then proceed per the Rules of Discipline.”**

#### Background and Rationale

[Editor’s note: The assembly approved the above proposed amendment to the current Rules of Discipline in the event that the Rules of Discipline will not be replaced by Church Discipline. If Church Discipline is approved by majority vote of presbyteries, it will replace the entire current Rules of Discipline including any amendments to the current Rules of Discipline. The assembly amended D-7.0302e(2) in the proposed Church Discipline to address the underlying concerns (rather than the exact text) of this proposed amendment.]

The stated purposes of the Rules of Discipline are “to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings” (D-1.0101).

Currently in D-3.0106 an accused person may choose to walk away from church nourishment, correction, and restoration by renouncing the jurisdiction of the church. That choice is the individual’s to make. The church cannot and should not prevent that choice. The church should document and report when that choice is made.

However, also currently in D-3.0106, when an accused person renounces the jurisdiction of the church, the accused individual(s) receives the power to deny the wider church full access to promised justice, dignity, and a just, speedy, and economical determination of disciplinary proceedings.



Under the current Rules of Discipline, when the accused renounces jurisdiction, the judicial process ends. Investigating committees stop. ...

This overture seeks to give investigating committees, permanent judicial commissions, and councils the ability to proceed through the remainder of the judicial process, per the Rules of Discipline, while honoring obligations to the accused. The accused would be informed through every step of the continued process and would be invited to participate. All communication to the accused would still be required. Those who renounce jurisdiction would retain the option to fully participate, to observe but remain silent, or to not participate at all. They may choose to send an advocate to represent them in their absence.

However, the amendments recommended in this overture allow the church and the councils to also honor our obligations to the accusers or those in the wider church who may have suffered harm. ...

With this simple overture, councils will be allowed and encouraged to respect and honor all people in and beyond the church, even if one person chooses to break oaths and walk away.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to disapprove Item ROD-05. ROD-03 requests the amendment of the current Rules of Discipline. The proposed Church Discipline revision is before the same assembly which would, if approved, replace the current Rules of Discipline section of the *Book of Order*. Should the General Assembly affirmatively adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution would recommend to the General Assembly that this overture be answered by the Assembly's action on Church Discipline.

Should the General Assembly not adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly that ROD-05 should be disapproved.

The advice given by the Advisory Committee on the Constitution to the 211th General Assembly (1999) Assembly when faced with a similar overture stated:

At the time of renunciation of the accused, the church has no further authority over the accused, nor is the accused any longer accountable to the church (D-10.0102, which defines the parties to a disciplinary case and D-11.0301). Further, continuation of discipline after renunciation of membership could result in liability in the secular courts. The 202nd General Assembly (1990) in response to a request for constitutional interpretation unanimously adopted the following interpretation of renunciation in relation to a disciplinary trial: "The trial would cease immediately should the person renounce the jurisdiction of the church" (*Minutes*, 1990, Part I, p. 239, paragraph 21.129). ...

The disciplinary process is not intended nor designed to discipline people who are not members of the PC(USA). An individual who has renounced the jurisdiction of the church has forsaken the Christian fellowship of the PC(USA) and, further, has given up office in the church, including ordination. The ultimate punishment of the church is exclusion from Christian fellowship. It is difficult to rationalize continuation of a process in a case in which the member has already passed ultimate judgment upon himself or herself. The overture is not clear about how completion of the trial in such a circumstance is redemptive for the church or for the victim.

This advice remains sound. Foundational to our church discipline is that the disciplinary process is undertaken against an individual who has consented by joining a congregation or by ordination to ordered ministry to submit to that jurisdiction. Once that consent has been removed by renunciation of jurisdiction, the councils of the church cannot compel an individual to participate in judicial proceedings or to accept any censure imposed.

**Advice and Counsel—From the Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns (ACWC)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women's Concerns recommends that the 225th General Assembly (2022) approve ROD-05. As the creators of 222nd General Assembly (2016)-approved resolution 05-09, to Ensure Adoption and Implementation of Child/Youth Protection Policies and Resources in the PC(USA) and 223rd General Assembly (2018)-approved resolution 11-09 on Sexual Misconduct in the PC(USA), the ACWC has long been on the forefront of advocating for policy changes that will prevent sexual abuse within the PC(USA).

ACWC is in strong support of amendment D-3.0106, which prevents pastor abusers from walking away from the impact of that abuse by renouncing jurisdiction.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline amended and approved Item ROD-05, 14/9. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-05, 334/50.

For the full report on ROD-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#!/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-DD — D-10.0302

### COMMUNICATE DETERMINATION

#### D-10.0302 IF CHARGES ARE TO BE FILED (ROD-04 3)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall D-10.0302 in the current Rules of Discipline be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“D-10.0302 If Charges Are to Be Filed**

**“If the investigating committee has decided to file charges, it shall promptly inform the accused in writing of the charges it will make, including a summary of the facts it expects to prove at trial to support those charges. It shall ask the accused if ~~that person~~ *they* wish ~~es~~ to plead guilty to the charges to avoid full trial and indicate the censure it will recommend to the session or permanent judicial commission.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s Note: The assembly approved the above proposed amendments to the current Rules of Discipline in the event that the Rules of Discipline will not be replaced by Church Discipline. If Church Discipline is approved by majority vote of presbyteries, it will replace the entire current Rules of Discipline including any amendments to the current Rules of Discipline.]

Accusations are extremely easy to make, whether made by an individual or by a person doing so on behalf of another. When the credibility of those accusations has been substantiated, the Constitution clearly and unambiguously states that an investigative committee “shall promptly inform the accused” if charges are to be made. However, it is silent about the accused’s right to be notified when no charges are to be filed, even though written notice of this outcome is provided to the accuser. When individuals in positions of trust have gone through the protracted ordeal of being forced to defend themselves against charges and accusations that can neither be substantiated by objective facts and/or are deemed to be completely untrue, equity requires they be expeditiously notified of this conclusion as well. This omission constitutes a procedural error and undermines the justice process.

The Constitution’s current language also conveys an impression of bias and partiality, in that it describes one member (the “accused”) by way of labeling but uses supportive and affirming language to describe the other (“the person who submitted the written statement”). Labeling one and not the other is harmful because, consciously or subliminally, it fosters a presumption of guilt on the accused and freedom from guilt on the person making the accusation. Reframing the Constitution’s language removes these false assumptions and more faithfully takes into consideration the purpose of church discipline (D-1.01011).

The additional word revisions would, respectively, promote language consistency throughout the document and provide grammatical clarity.

### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to disapprove ROD-04.

ROD-03 requests the amendment of the current Rules of Discipline. The proposed Church Discipline revision is before the same assembly which would, if approved, replace the current Rules of Discipline section of the *Book of Order*. Should the General Assembly affirmatively adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC would recommend that this overture be answered by the assembly's action on Church Discipline (ROD-03).

Should the General Assembly not adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC advises the General Assembly as follows:

The overture proposes three changes to the current Rules of Discipline. Recommendation 3 would amend Section 10.0302 by deleting the phrase, "if that person wishes" to "if he or she wishes." Should the General Assembly change "the accused" to "the person accused," such a change makes grammatical sense but the General Assembly should consider whether gender binary language is necessary. Should the General Assembly not amend as recommended in Recommendation 2, the change in Recommendation 3 would not be necessary.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline amended and approved Item ROD-04 3, 18/4. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-04 3, 326/19.

For the full report on ROD-04, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#!/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-EE — D-10.0303

### COMMUNICATE DETERMINATION

#### D-10.0303 PETITION FOR REVIEW (ROD-04 1)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the first paragraph of D-10.0303 in the current Rules of Discipline be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“D-10.0303    Petition for Review**

**“If no charges are filed, the investigating committee shall file a written report of that fact alone with the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, and notify ~~the person who submitted the written statement~~, in writing, both the person who has been accused and the person making the accusation.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s note: The assembly approved these proposed amendments to the current Rules of Discipline in the event that the Rules of Discipline will not be replaced by Church Discipline. If Church Discipline is approved by majority vote of presbyteries, it will replace the entire current Rules of Discipline, including any amendments to the current Rules of Discipline.]

Accusations are extremely easy to make, whether made by an individual or by a person doing so on behalf of another. When the credibility of those accusations has been substantiated, the Constitution clearly and unambiguously states that an investigative committee “shall promptly inform the accused” if charges are to be made. However, it is silent about the accused’s right to be notified when no charges are to be filed, even though written notice of this outcome is provided to the accuser. When individuals in positions of trust have gone through the protracted ordeal of being forced to defend themselves against charges and accusations that can neither be substantiated by objective facts and/or are deemed to be completely untrue, equity requires they be expeditiously notified of this conclusion as well. This omission constitutes a procedural error and undermines the justice process.

The Constitution’s current language also conveys an impression of bias and partiality, in that it describes one member (the “accused”) by way of labeling but uses supportive and affirming language to describe the other (“the person who submitted the written statement”). Labeling one and not the other is harmful because, consciously or subliminally, it fosters a presumption of guilt on the accused and freedom from guilt on the person making the accusation. Reframing the Constitution’s language removes these false assumptions and more faithfully takes into consideration the purpose of church discipline (D-1.01011).

The additional word revisions would, respectively, promote language consistency throughout the document and provide grammatical clarity.

### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to disapprove ROD-04.

ROD-03 requests the amendment of the current Rules of Discipline. The proposed Church Discipline revision is before the same assembly which would, if approved, replace the current Rules of Discipline section of the *Book of Order*. Should the General Assembly affirmatively adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC would recommend that this overture be answered by the assembly's action on Church Discipline (ROD-03).

Should the General Assembly not adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC advises the General Assembly as follows:

The overture proposes three changes to the current Rules of Discipline.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the 225th General Assembly that Recommendation 1 be approved. Recommendation 1 changes the requirement that, if no charges are filed, the clerk or stated clerk notifies in writing both the person who has been accused and the person making the accusation. Equity requires that both parties be advised of the investigating committee's decision not to file charges and is an appropriate change to the Rules of Discipline.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline amended and approved Item ROD-04 1, 18/4. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-04 1, 326/19.

For the full report on ROD-04, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-FF — AMENDING “THE ACCUSED”

### AMENDING THE USE OF “THE ACCUSED” IN THE CURRENT RULES OF DISCIPLINE (ROD-04 2)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Further, that all other sections referring to “the accused” in the current Rules of Discipline be modified to read *the person accused*.**

#### Background and Rationale

[Editor’s note: The assembly approved the above proposed amendments to the current Rules of Discipline in the event that the Rules of Discipline are not be replaced by Church Discipline. If Church Discipline is approved by a majority vote of presbyteries, it will replace the entire current Rules of Discipline, including any amendments to the current Rules of Discipline.]

Accusations are extremely easy to make, whether made by an individual or by a person doing so on behalf of another. When the credibility of those accusations has been substantiated, the Constitution clearly and unambiguously states that an investigative committee “shall promptly inform the accused” if charges are to be made. However, it is silent about the accused’s right to be notified when no charges are to be filed, even though written notice of this outcome is provided to the accuser. When individuals in positions of trust have gone through the protracted ordeal of being forced to defend themselves against charges and accusations that can neither be substantiated by objective facts and/or are deemed to be completely untrue, equity requires they be expeditiously notified of this conclusion as well. This omission constitutes a procedural error and undermines the justice process.

The Constitution’s current language also conveys an impression of bias and partiality, in that it describes one member (the “accused”) by way of labeling but uses supportive and affirming language to describe the other (“the person who submitted the written statement”). Labeling one and not the other is harmful because, consciously or subliminally, it fosters a presumption of guilt on the accused and freedom from guilt on the person making the accusation. Reframing the Constitution’s language removes these false assumptions and more faithfully takes into consideration the purpose of church discipline (D-1.01011).

The additional word revisions would, respectively, promote language consistency throughout the document and provide grammatical clarity.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to disapprove ROD-04.

ROD-03 requests the amendment of the current Rules of Discipline. The proposed Church Discipline revision is before the same assembly which would, if approved, replace the current Rules of Discipline section of the *Book of Order*. Should the General Assembly affirmatively adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC would recommend that this overture be answered by the assembly’s action on Church Discipline (ROD-03).

Should the General Assembly not adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly as follows:

The overture proposes three changes to the current Rules of Discipline.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the 225th General Assembly that Recommendation 2 presents issues that should be considered.

Recommendation 2 would amend “the accused” to “the person accused,” in order to neutralize what appears to be bias against one who is accused of an offense as opposed to the person who submits the written statement. However, the identification of “the person who submits the written statement,” is appropriate within the context of the Rules of Discipline in that a person may be filing a statement from their own personal knowledge; or, may be filing a written statement based upon their knowledge of information from any source that an offense has occurred (See D-10.0101(b)). The term “the accused” accurately reflects the position one is in when an accusation has been made. It should also be noted that within the Rules of Discipline, being accused of an offense does not imply in any way that the person is guilty of the offense. Should the General Assembly believe that this language should be adopted, there is no constitutional impediment in making such a change.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline amended and approved Item ROD-04 2, 18/4. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-04 2, 326/19.

For the full report on ROD-04, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.



Report of the General Presbyter  
 Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley  
 January 27, 2023

Greetings and happy new year! I pray that the new year has dawned full of hope for you. Here is some of what I see in the presbytery as 2023 gets underway.

- The new year brings with it the “changing of the guard” as new committee moderators are transitioned into leadership. We had several key people agree to stay on – Kathy Reed as moderator of CPM and John Brock as moderator of COM. But for nearly every other committee new leadership is in place. My thanks to all those new moderators who are stepping up to lead their committees in the vital work they do in the presbytery.
- We have four pastor nominating committee getting underway – Pastor for Grace in Tuscaloosa, Pastor at South Highland (Ed announced his retirement scheduled for the end of December of this year and the search committee for his replacement is underway), Pastor at Oakmont Chapel (and thank you to Rachel Winter as she was selected as their interim pastor till the search committee completes their work), Pastor at Dodson Memorial, Pastor First Pres, Jacksonville, Associate Pastor Nominating Committee for IPC which is seeking an executive associate pastor. Let’s keep these search committees in our prayers. All of these search committees have a COM liaison to assist them through this rigorous process.
- We have several churches in the process of closing or at least selling their property – 2<sup>nd</sup> Presbyterian (Birmingham), Five Mile, First United (Anniston). Please keep them in your prayers as well.
- As you know, Selma was severely damaged by a tornado on January 12<sup>th</sup>. The church building we have there (Northern Heights) remained unscathed though the neighborhood around it was hit very hard. We have received \$7500.00 from the Presbyterian Disaster Assistance program and the council is exploring what kind of long-term assistance we can provide. In the short run various volunteers in the presbytery have been onsite helping with clean up.
- Thank you to the Bills and Overtures Committee for assisting Jay in organizing how our presbytery will take the needed votes of the amendments coming to us from the last General Assembly. (Voting on some of the amendments is on the agenda for today’s meeting.) Special thanks go Lee Cleveland and Caryl Privett for helping us understand the changes proposed for the new Book of Church Discipline which we will vote on in May. Both have served on the PJC and are familiar with the Book of Discipline. They are intending to hold a few zoom informational meetings about the changes throughout the spring for those interested.
- The moderators of the Trustees, COM, and Executive Council are having a summit with the Presbyterian Foundation to develop a proposal for a general outline for how we handle property issues.

- We hosted the Association of Partners in Christian Education in Birmingham at the end of January. Thank you to Jenny Thagard, Cathy Hoop, and the many local volunteers who helped with the hosting!
- We continue to be committed to the Matthew 25 goals of Building Vital Congregations, Eradicating Systemic Poverty, and Dismantling Structural Racism. In terms of Building Congregational Vitality, we are urging churches to take advantage of the excellent discernment process being offered through Project Regeneration of the Presbyterian Foundation. For more information check their website: <https://www.presbyterianfoundation.org/project-regeneration/>
- Today we are delighted to welcome the Rev. Mark Adams mission co-worker serving at Frontera de Cristo on the Mexico/US border. We look forward to hearing from him in this vital ministry.
- The church is at its best and most effective when we work in partnership with one another for the upbuilding of the whole church. I am grateful for the comradery and collegiality that exists in this presbytery. It is not to be taken for granted (and I have seen many presbyteries where such collegiality does not exist) and I commend you for it. "Each has been given a gift to use for the common good."

As ever in prayer,

Sue Westfall  
General Presbyter

## **Welcome, Mission Co-Worker, Mark Adams!**

Today we welcome Mission Co-Worker, Rev. Mark Adams, as our guest. Mark has worked on the US/Mexico border in Douglas, AZ and Agua Prieta, Sonora, Mexico since 1998. Frontera de Cristo means "Border of Christ" in Spanish. It is a privilege to have him with us! He will be preaching at Edgewood Presbyterian Church, 850 Oxmoor Rd, in Homewood at 10:00am on Sunday, February 19. If you want to have lunch with Mark, me (Sue Westfall) and other interested people on Friday, February 17 around noonish, here in Birmingham, please let me know at [swestfall@pslpcusa.org](mailto:swestfall@pslpcusa.org).



US COORDINATOR

### **Mark Adams**

Mark Adams is a native of Clover, South Carolina, and a graduate of Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia. He was ordained in 1998 and has served as US Coordinator of Frontera de Cristo since that time. He is married to Miriam Maldonado Escobar, also a Presbyterian Church (USA) mission co-worker since 2011, and they have three children. Mark sees his 1994 border mission experience in Piedras Negras, Mexico, as the foundation for his present ministry.

Their website is <http://fronteradecristo.org/> or to contact Mark it's [mark@fronteradecristo.org](mailto:mark@fronteradecristo.org).

**Executive Council report to Presbytery  
February, 2023**

**Class of 2023**

Sissy Bain  
Judith Baldwin  
Debbie Feagin\* (through February)  
Susan Haskell  
Neil McCarter\*

**Class of 2024**

Tom Bryson\*  
Ed Hurley\*  
Donna Winn

**Class of 2025**

Terry Hamilton-Poore\*  
Lee Ann Scarbrough\*  
Joe Scrivner\*  
Deborah Thomas

In meetings held on November 9th and December 14, 2022, and January 11th, 2023, the Executive Council:

Approved a recommendation from the Trustees for the sale of Center Point Presbyterian Church for \$190,000;

Approved a Presbytery Christmas party for volunteers on December 14, 2022, from noon until 2 p.m.;

Approved thanking Presbytery volunteers Ralls Coston, Pat Goodman, and James Ephraim for all their hard work, and retaining them for 2023.

Approved a change in the beginning time for Executive Council meetings from 10 a.m. to 9:30 a.m., starting in January, 2023;

Approved, at the request of Sue Westfall, forming a group consisting of Trustee, Finance, Executive Council, and COM members, to be convened by Sue, in order to strategize what to do with churches that are closing.

**Action Item:**

**Vote on second reading of Standing Rules.**

Respectfully submitted,

Debbie Feagin

Submitted to Presbytery 11/17/2022 for first reading  
Submitted to Presbytery 2/16/23 for second reading

### Standing Rules

#### The Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley

8-15-14	Amended 2-18-16	Adopted 11-12-20
Amended 5-14-15	Adopted 5-14-16	Amended May-20-21
Adopted 8-14-15	Revised 9-18-17	Adopted August 21-21
Amended 11-12-15	Amended 5-16-19	Amended November 17-22
Adopted 2-18-16	Amended 8-20-20	

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Submitted to Presbytery 11/17/2022 for first reading

Submitted to Presbytery 2/16/23 for second reading

**\*Revisions to Appendices not under consideration at this time.**

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## **Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley:**

### **Identity Statement – adopted by Executive Council May 2016**

"To partner with and equip present and emerging PC(USA) faith communities in Central Alabama to serve Christ and our neighbors."

### **Statement of Purpose**

As believers, our faith flows from living water as we seek to fulfill the Great Commission: *"All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you."* (Matt. 28:18b-20a NRSV) This living water runs through the stories of our lives as God's covenant people and through the life of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. From creation and baptism to the Congo and the Cahaba, we are connected by life-giving water. We are refreshed by it; we are nurtured by it; we are saved by it. Living water is our past, our present, and our future.

As covenant people, we are life-sharing people. It is through our shared life together that we live in relationship with God and with each other. This shared life is lived out through our congregations, which are the primary agents of God's mission in the world. As the connectional expression of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in central Alabama, we are called by grace to life giving service to our congregations, engaging, equipping, nurturing and empowering them in their collective witness to God's love for all people in Jesus Christ.

As believers reformed and always being reformed *according to the Word of God*, we are participants in God's ongoing creation, embracing the transformative power of God's saving grace through Jesus Christ. In our shared life as the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, we are challenged by the radical call of the Gospel to boldly, consciously, and intentionally live out this transformation with imagination and joy.

As the expression of our shared and transformed life together, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley commits, with God's help to:

- Support congregations both large and small by serving as a resource for and an enabler of their ministries in their communities and throughout the world.
- Equip our lay and ordained leaders, and partner with them, to create and sustain healthy and growing worshipping communities that are faithful and vital witnesses of Jesus Christ.
- Nurture and enhance the many and various gifts God has given the members of our congregations and engage those gifts in the service of the wider church and all God's people, which affirms the relational connection of the Presbyterian Church (USA).
- Empower our congregations and our leaders to be flexible in structure, dynamic in practice and imaginative in their service of the Gospel in a changing world.

To further these purposes, the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley will itself need to be transformed by the Holy Spirit as it creates new structures, redirecting its mission, reconnecting its members and refreshing its leaders to better serve God's people in this time and place.

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## **SR-1.01 Chapter I. The Presbytery**

This council shall be known as the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley of the Presbyterian Church (USA). It shall consist of all the Ministers of Word and Sacrament who have been received into its membership and the PC(USA) churches within its geographical boundaries. It is established by the authority of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and the Synod of Living Waters, and shall have those duties, authorities, powers, and responsibilities as specified by the *Book of Order* (G-3.01, G-3.03).

## **SR-2.01 Chapter II. Authority, Amendments, and Suspension**

SR-2.01.01 This document shall be known as the Standing Rules of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley, Presbyterian Church (USA), and is created by the action of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley as authorized by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), which Constitution is hereby acknowledged as supreme and applicable in all affairs of this Presbytery.

SR-2.01.02 These Standing Rules shall establish the basic organization of the Presbytery and provide for its functioning, both during and between meetings of the Presbytery. These Standing Rules shall serve as the Manual of Administrative Operations for the Presbytery.

SR-2.01.03 These Standing Rules may be amended as follows: A proposed amendment shall be presented in writing to the Executive Council, which in turn shall present the proposal to the next meeting of Presbytery with its recommendations. To become effective, an amendment must be approved by two-thirds of the votes cast at one meeting of Presbytery and adopted without further revision by two-thirds of the votes cast at the next meeting.

SR-2.01.04 These Standing Rules, including paragraph SR-2.01.03, may be suspended by two-thirds of the votes cast at any meeting of Presbytery.

SR-2.01.05 Policies adopted by Presbytery will automatically be added to the appendix to these Standing Rules.



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### **SR-3.01 Chapter III. Meetings and Organization**

SR-3.01.01 Each year the Presbytery shall ordinarily have four stated meetings. A chart outlining items that shall ordinarily occur at stated meetings of Presbytery is attached to the Standing Rules (see Appendix I).

SR-3.01.02 The moderator of Presbytery shall call special meetings at the request of, or with the concurrence of, two Ministers of Word and Sacrament and two ruling elders, representing four different congregations. Notice of a called meeting shall be sent not less than 10 days in advance to each Minister of Word and Sacrament and the session of each congregation. The notice shall set out the purpose of the meeting, and no other business than that listed in the notice shall be transacted.

SR-3.01.03 The Presbytery shall be governed in its meeting and in the action of all its agencies by the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA), the Standing Rules of the Presbytery, and where none of these applies, by *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised*.

SR-3.01.04 Ruling elders are elected as commissioners to Presbytery in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* G-3.0301; and, as prescribed within these Standing Rules.

- a. Churches with 150 or fewer members shall be represented by one ruling elder commissioned by the session, preferably for a one-year term. Churches with membership above 150 shall be represented as follows:
 

151-500	- 2 elders
501-1000	- 3 elders
1001 and above	- 4 elders
- b. Ruling elders serving as moderators of presbytery commissions or committees, chair of the Board of Trustees, officers of Presbytery (SR 4.01), members of the Executive Council, Commissioned Ruling Elders to particular churches or validated ministries, General Assembly commissioners, moderator of Presbyterian Women, and moderators of Youth Council shall be members of presbytery and shall have the privilege of voice and vote for the duration of their terms.
- c. Any ruling elder elected by Presbytery as General Presbyter or Associate Presbyter shall be enrolled as a member of the presbytery for the duration of service in such staff position, whether or not commissioned by his or her session.
- d. Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders engaged in active ministry (G-2.1103b) shall be members of presbytery and shall have the privilege of voice and vote for the duration of their ministry.
- e. Annually, in accordance with G-3.0301, to achieve numerical parity of Ministers of Word and Sacrament and ruling elders to be enrolled as voting members at any stated or called presbytery meeting, the Stated Clerk shall use the following method:
  1. Determine the total number of Ministers of Word and Sacrament enrolled in the presbytery.
  2. Determine the total number of ruling elders allotted by SR-3.01.04 a,b,c and d.
  3. After these totals have been determined, if there are more Ministers of Word and Sacrament than ruling elders, the Stated Clerk shall determine and recommend to Presbytery which of its churches shall be allowed an additional ruling elder commissioner for the calendar year. (According to the Department of Constitutional Services of the General Assembly it is permissible to have more ruling elders than Ministers of Word and Sacrament but not more Ministers of Word and Sacrament than ruling elders.)
- f. Persons serving in positions in 3.01.04 b,c, or d, who are not ruling elders, are entitled to the privilege of voice only at all presbytery meetings

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SR-3.01.05 A quorum of a stated meeting of the Presbytery shall be 20 Ministers of Word and Sacrament and 20 ruling elders, representing at least 20 congregations. A quorum of a called meeting of the Presbytery shall be 15 Minister of Word and Sacrament and 15 ruling elders, representing at least 15 congregations.

SR-3.01.06 Requests by Ministers of the Word and Sacrament to be excused from a Presbytery meeting, together with the reason for the request, shall be submitted to the Stated Clerk prior to the meeting.

SR-3.01.07 Clerks of session shall forward to the Stated Clerk of Presbytery the full names and contact information the duly elected commissioners in order that commissioner packets may be sent to them in preparation for the meeting. All alternate ruling elder commissioners shall have the privilege of the floor without vote.

SR-3.01.08 Should a question arise concerning the status of a commissioner to a Presbytery meeting, the Presbytery shall resolve the matter upon recommendation of the Stated Clerk.

SR-3.01.09 The format for any meeting of Presbytery, including the docket and the time, shall be prepared by the Executive Council upon the recommendation of the Stated Clerk, and then recommended at the opening of the meeting.

SR-3.01.10 Provision shall be made for temporary committees as may be required. Members of temporary committees shall be elected by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Moderator or the Executive Council. The floor shall be open for further nominations.

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## **SR-4.01 Chapter IV. Officers**

The Officers of the Presbytery shall be the Moderator, the Vice Moderator, the Stated Clerk, the Recording Clerk, and the Treasurer. Expenses, honoraria, and job descriptions of the Officers will be recommended by the Executive Council and approved by Presbytery.

### **SR-4.01.01 Moderator**

The Presbytery shall elect a Moderator for the following year at the last stated meeting of Presbytery each year. The newly elected Moderator assumes the position at the meeting at which installed. The term shall be for one year or until the successor is installed. The office of Moderator shall ordinarily be filled alternately by ruling elders and Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The Moderator shall serve as a member of the Executive Council and will ordinarily be nominated to serve as the Chair of Executive Council the following year. The Moderator shall serve according to the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G3.0104 and G-3.0105).

The Moderator will:

- a. Moderate meetings of Presbytery.
- b. Send a one-page synopsis of the Presbytery meeting to the Presbytery office within one week of the meeting. It will be forwarded to all Ministers of Word and Sacrament, commissioners, and churches.
- c. Whenever possible, participate in installations and ordinations.
- d. At the first meeting of the year, nominate three persons for election to the Bills and Overtures Committee to serve for a period of one year. The nominations will consist of one teaching elder, and two ruling elders (one male and one female.) The three nominees shall not all be from the same race or ethnicity. If, by reason of absence or other circumstance, a member cannot serve at a given meeting, the moderator will nominate for election a replacement to serve at that meeting only.
- e. Each year, at the end of his/her term, nominate a class to the Committee on Nominating and Representation, for election by Presbytery, one Minister of the Word and Sacrament and two ruling elders, one male and one female. The moderator of the Committee on Nominating and Representation will be nominated by the outgoing Moderator of Presbytery from among the Committee on Nominating and Representation. (See Section SR-6.01.03.02 for description.) Nominate replacements to fill unexpired terms, honoring the membership balance, on the Committee on Nominating and Representation as they occur.
- f. When disciplinary charges are filed with the Stated Clerk between meetings of the Presbytery, the Moderator, with the consent of the Stated Clerk, has the authority to appoint an Investigative Committee to investigate an allegation and determine whether formal charges should be filed. The Committee will be made up of three to five persons (Book of Order D-10.0201a and b) with due consideration-of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction. (F-1.0403 Book of Order) and shall elect its own chair. The Stated Clerk will report any action taken at the next meeting of Presbytery.

### **SR.4.01.02 Vice Moderator**

The Presbytery shall elect a Vice Moderator for the following year at the last stated meeting of Presbytery each year. The newly elected Vice Moderator assumes the position at the meeting at which she/he is installed. The term shall be for one year or until his/her successor is installed. The office of Vice Moderator shall ordinarily be filled alternately by ruling elders and Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The Vice Moderator shall ordinarily be

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nominated to serve as the Moderator the following year and as Moderator of Executive Council the third year.

- a. The Vice Moderator will assume the duties of the Moderator in the absence of the Moderator.
- b. The vice moderator shall serve on the Executive Council.

#### SR-4.01.03 Stated Clerk and Recording Clerk

The Presbytery shall elect a Stated Clerk to serve a term of three years and shall be eligible for re-election for a maximum of three terms. The Stated Clerk shall serve according to the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-3.0104, G-3.0305 and D-11.0700) and according to the more specific duties outlined in the Stated Clerk's Handbook provided by the Office of the General Assembly. When the Stated Clerk is absent or unable to function, the Executive Council shall appoint a temporary Stated Clerk until a permanent Stated Clerk is elected.

- a. The Stated Clerk will:
  1. Serve as parliamentarian.
  2. Assist individuals and groups with advice regarding presentation of matters to the governing body.
  3. See that session records are reviewed in accordance with G-3.0108.
  4. Inform churches of their per capita assessment at the beginning of each year. The assessment shall ordinarily be due on January 1 and delinquent after March, unless being paid monthly.
  5. Give notice at least 10 days in advance of each Presbytery meeting; have prepared and distributed to all appropriate participants a packet containing a proposed docket and all known business coming before Presbytery; enroll Presbytery's members prior to the opening of each meeting; certify the presence of a quorum to the Moderator at each Presbytery meeting; see that accurate minutes are kept of each Presbytery meeting (minutes are to be reviewed by the Stated Clerk and the moderators of the Executive Council and Presbytery and then made available to the Presbytery); annually submit minutes to the Synod for review.
  6. Plan Presbytery meetings in coordination with Executive Council.
  7. Distribute, receive, and report to Presbytery the Annual Statistical Report forms and submit them to Synod and General Assembly.
  8. Fulfill the responsibilities regarding the Child and Youth Protection policy.
    - i. Secure background checks on all Presbytery staff, pastors and educators as indicated in the Child and Youth protection policy.
    - ii. Secure background checks on chaperones and other leaders to Presbytery events involving children and youth as indicated in the Child & Youth Protection Policy.
- b. The Presbytery may elect a Recording Clerk to serve a term of three years and shall be eligible for re-election. The Recording Clerk shall record and distribute a full and accurate record of Executive Council and Presbytery meetings.

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#### SR-4.01.04 Treasurer

The Treasurer shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the Presbytery to serve a term of three years and shall be eligible for re-election.

The Treasurer shall

- a. Receive and disburse all funds of the Presbytery and funds channeled through Presbytery; shall keep a strict and accurate account thereof and, in consultation with the Executive Council, shall arrange for an annual audit of all accounts.
- b. Present a full financial report of the previous year at the February stated meeting of Presbytery and may, if deemed expedient, disseminate reports of the financial situation at other times.
- c. At the end of each year, the Treasurer shall give each church a statement of its giving to and through the Presbytery during the year.
- d. The Treasurer shall provide a monthly financial report to the Executive Council giving the status of actual expenditures versus budgeted accounts. The report shall indicate the general state of actual cash receipts to date compared to projected receipts for the Presbytery.
- e. The Treasurer shall function in accordance with the Financial Policy and accounting procedures (Appendix II).
- f. The Treasurer shall serve on the Finance Committee of Executive Council.

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## **SR-5.01 Chapter V. Staff**

SR-5.01.01 The role of the Presbytery staff shall be to facilitate and enable the entire work of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley. The staff is expected to serve in ways that will enable the component parts of the connectional system to work together. Presbytery staff shall ordinarily serve only as advisory members of any committee or commissions, with voice but without vote.

SR-5.01.02 The Presbytery staff shall consist of such professional and office staff as are authorized by action of Presbytery (G-3.0103 and G-3.0110).

SR-5.01.03 The General Presbyter shall supervise all staff in consultation with the Personnel Committee of the Executive Council. Personnel policies and job descriptions will be recommended by the Personnel Committee and approved by the Executive Council. Personnel policies shall include provisions as stated in G-3.0110.

### **SR-5.01.04**

- a. When a vacancy occurs in any of the Presbytery's professional staff positions, the Executive Council shall be responsible for ensuring that essential functions of the Presbytery continue, and for assessing the mission and needs of the Presbytery. The Executive Council shall have the power to retain temporary and/or interim staff members. When the Executive Council determines that the needs of the Presbytery require a permanent General Presbyter, Associate Presbyter, or Stated Clerk staff position, they shall submit a job description to the Presbytery for approval and ask the Committee on Nominating and Representation to nominate a search committee, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403).
- b. The Presbytery shall approve any General Presbyter, Associate Presbyter, or Stated Clerk search committee, with nominations permitted from the floor. After a search, the search committee shall present a candidate to the Presbytery for approval.
- c. Hires for other staff positions shall be recommended by the General Presbyter, in consultation with the Personnel Committee and authorized by the Executive Council.

## **SR-5.02 Designated Volunteer Positions**

SR-5.02.01 In some cases it may prove helpful or appropriate for certain volunteer positions in the Presbytery to be given a special designation or title such as "Coordinator." These volunteer coordinators are Presbytery staff, valued and integral to the ministry and mission of the Presbytery. They are not employees of the Presbytery.

SR-5.02.02 Designated Volunteer Positions carry out their work under the direction of the General Presbyter in consultation with the Executive Council and are reviewed annually by the General Presbyter. The General Presbyter recommends the appointment, continuation, or discontinuation of Designated Volunteer Positions to the Executive Council. The Executive Council annually authorizes all Designated Volunteer Positions.

SR-5.02.03 In some cases Designated Volunteer Positions may be given an honorarium as a show of appreciation and to offset any expenses incurred. This honorarium may be provided in a lump sum or broken out into several disbursements. The General Presbyter recommends the amount of the honorarium to the Executive Council. The Executive Council annually authorizes all honorariums for Designated Volunteer Positions.



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## **SR-6.01 Chapter VI. Agencies of Presbytery**

The agencies of Presbytery shall be all councils, commissions, committees, and other work groups elected in classes by the Presbytery to accomplish its work and report directly to Presbytery. Task teams may be formed to fill a specific purpose.

A person elected to serve any agency of the Presbytery shall serve a three-year term, or if needed, to fill a vacancy, a portion thereof. Ordinarily a person's term of service on an Agency of Presbytery will begin in January of the calendar year following the November meeting at which they are elected. The term of service will ordinarily end in December of the Class year designated at election. A person shall be eligible to serve two full terms consecutively. Ordinarily, no person shall serve on more than one commission or committee of Presbytery at the same time. Any member of the Executive Council, or committee or commission of Presbytery, who, without prior excuse, fails to attend a majority of meetings held in any year, or any two consecutive meetings, shall cease to be a member of said unit. Moderators of commissions, committees, or task teams shall report to the Executive Council any non-participating members. Upon notification by the Executive Council, the Committee on Nominating and Representation will then present names for replacements at the next stated meeting of Presbytery (see SR-6.01.03.02d). One exception provided for in the Book of Order (see D-5.0102 and D-5.0105) relates to Permanent Judicial Commission.

The agencies of Presbytery are:

### **SR-6.01.01 The Executive Council**

The purpose of the Executive Council is to direct, coordinate, assist and promote all the programmatic work of the Presbytery, constantly evaluating long and short-term goals, ministries, structures and functions, dismissing entities which are no longer needed, and encouraging and blessing new ministries, functions, and structures. The Executive Council shall oversee the implementation of Presbytery priorities and policy and assign responsibility relating to the work of Presbytery. Within the guidelines established, committees and task teams shall be expected to, and are authorized to, function in the way they deem best to accomplish their assigned work. Their actions are always subject to review and confirmation by the Executive Council, with final approval placed with the Presbytery. Matters that require administrative decisions shall be referred to the Executive Council with recommendations for appropriate action.

SR-6.01.01.01 The duties of the Executive Council include:

- a. Addressing matters between meetings of the Presbytery as may be necessary or assigned;
- b. Communicating with the Synod of Living Waters and the General Assembly;
- c. Receiving and making recommendations to the presbytery concerning proposed overtures to the Synod of Living Waters and General Assembly, and proposed amendments to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (USA);
- d. Promoting the ecumenical life of the presbytery;
- e. Planning Presbytery meetings, selecting meeting dates and places, providing worship, and presenting the docket, in coordination with the Stated Clerk;
- f. Developing, for Presbytery's approval, the annual budget and providing for an audit and review of all Presbytery records and minutes;
- g. Receiving and approving nomination of persons who belong to churches in the Presbytery to the Living River Board of Directors and presenting the nominations to Presbytery for election. (The Executive Council shall appoint one of its own members to serve on the Living River Board of Directors);

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- h. Monitoring compliance of the Child and Youth Protection policy. As part of this role, the Executive Council will periodically request and review a report from the Stated Clerk as to compliance with the Policy provisions for which Stated Clerk has responsibility.
  1. The Executive Council shall review a report submitted by a retreat supervisor after each Presbytery retreat or event regarding compliance with the policy.
  2. The Executive council shall review with the Trustees periodically the Presbytery's insurance program concerning events involving children and youth and recommend changes.
  3. The Executive Council shall appoint members of the Safe Child Response Team and arrange for their training.

SR-6.01.01.02 The voting membership of the Executive Council shall be as follows: Presbytery Moderator, vice-moderator, and immediate past moderator who will ordinarily serve as Moderator of Executive Council and will begin serving in February after the installation of the newly elected Moderator of Presbytery. Nine members at-large, three of whom ordinarily serve as moderators of the Personnel; Finance; and Equip, Nurture and Connect (ENC) committees of the Executive Council, and one of whom will serve on the Living River Board of Directors. The members-at-large must have been members of this Presbytery or of a church within this Presbytery for at least two full years and will be elected in as equal numbers as possible with consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403), size of congregation, ruling elders, and Ministers of Word and Sacrament. The members-at-large shall be elected in three classes, serving three-year terms. A member may be elected to two three-year terms. Professional staff and Presbytery officers shall serve as advisory members of the Executive Council, with voice but without vote. The Executive Council shall have the right to meet in executive session outside the presence of staff as needed.

SR-6.01.01.03 The Executive Council shall ordinarily meet monthly and on the call of the moderator of the Executive Council.

SR-6.01.01.04 A quorum shall consist of a majority of the voting membership.

SR-6.01.01.05 The Executive Council may make use of electronic meetings and take electronic votes. (See Appendix IV)

SR-6.01.01.06 Executive Council Committees shall be:

- a. Personnel – The Personnel Committee will have the responsibility to provide oversight, evaluation, and review of the employees of Presbytery. It will recommend stipends to the Finance Committee, keep job descriptions current, establish an appropriate process for review and evaluation of the employees, and conduct an annual evaluation. The Personnel Committee shall be at least five persons. The committee will ordinarily be chaired by an elected voting member of the Executive Council. The other members of the Personnel Committee will be nominated by the Nominating Committee with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and will be elected for three-year terms. Members will be allowed to serve two consecutive terms or a total of six consecutive years.
- b. Finance – The Finance committee has responsibility for oversight of the Presbytery Financials. This includes preparation of the annual budget, an annual financial review of Presbytery funds by an outside party, and oversight and maintenance of the Presbytery Financial Policy and Accounting Procedures found in Appendix II of these Standing Rules. The Finance Committee membership shall be at least 5 persons. The committee will normally be chaired by an elected voting member of the Executive Council. The current Presbytery Treasurer will also be a member. The other three members will be



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nominated by the Nominating Committee of Presbytery with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and will be elected for three-year terms. Members will be allowed to serve two consecutive terms or a total of six consecutive years.

- c. Equip, Nurture and Connect (ENC) will have the responsibility for faith formation and leadership development. Its purpose is to provide educational opportunities for strengthening faith across all age groups, in settings which may not be available to congregations on their own. Equipping persons in leadership development while strengthening connections with peer groups, with the community and with new ideas will be the primary focus of the ENC. The ENC will normally be chaired by an elected voting member of the Executive Council. Membership of ENC shall be at least 5 persons other than the chair, representing the program areas of ENC and a representative from Youth Council. With the exception of the Youth Council representative (elected by presbytery for Youth Council), they are to be nominated by the Nominating Committee of Presbytery with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and elected for a three-year term. Advisory members of the ENC may include professional staff and Living River Executive Director, with voice but without vote.
  1. Presbytery Youth Council has the responsibility for planning and carrying out events, retreats and activities for the youth of the Presbytery. Membership on Youth Council will include both adults and youth. Adult membership will be six adults in three classes, elected by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. Youth membership will have an unspecified number of youth in two classes, Junior and Senior year of high school, elected by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Nominating Committee. Total youth membership shall not normally exceed 18. The term of membership for both youth and adults follows the academic calendar (June - May), with election normally occurring at the May Presbytery meeting. The adult membership shall recommend to the Nominating Committee the slate of youth members as determined by an application process, with due consideration of gender, racial, and geographic diversity.
  2. Committee Task Forces, Planning Teams, or Steering committees may be organized for events and training opportunities for the program areas of ENC (i.e. Small Church, Children, Camp scholarships, Leadership Training, Campus Ministry including UKirk Bham, etc.). These committees and teams will be selected by ENC members for specific programs to carry out the mission of the ENC.
- d. Bills and Overtures Committee
  1. Will have the responsibility of receiving all overtures and amendments which have been referred to Presbytery and providing advice to the Executive Council regarding the action on such overtures and amendments.
  2. Will have the responsibility of receiving new business brought to the floor of a Presbytery meeting and make recommendations to the Presbytery.
  3. The committee shall be nominated by the Moderator of Presbytery according to SR-4.01.01d

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## SR-6.01.02 Presbytery Commissions

There shall be the following constitutional commissions of Presbytery. Each commission will be composed as described below. The term of service shall be three years. Members are eligible for re-election to one additional term. Ordinarily, each commission of Presbytery shall recommend to the Committee on Nominating and Representation annually by September one of its members to serve as moderator for the upcoming year, and the moderator of each Commission shall be elected annually by the Presbytery upon nomination by the Committee on Nominating and Representation. There may be other commissions as needed for specific purposes.

Commissions are responsible to Presbytery and shall report to the Presbytery. They shall establish their own operating guidelines, which shall be approved by the Executive Council, which also shall approve any changes.

### SR-6.01.02.01 Commission on Ministry

The Commission on Ministry (COM) shall function in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-3.0306, G-3.0307, G-2.0702, G-2.0504b, G-2.0902, G-2.1103b and G-2.1001-1002). The Commission will be composed of no fewer than 18 members (half Ministers of Word and Sacrament and half ruling elders) nominated by the Nominating Committee, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and elected by the Presbytery.

The Commission may divide functions among its membership into Pastoral Relationships and Congregational Relationships as detailed in the current Advisory Handbook for Ministry and the handbook entitled "On Calling a Pastor."

The Commission on Ministry shall:

- a. Visit regularly and consult with each minister in the presbytery; report to presbytery the type of work in which each minister is engaged; require an annual report of each teaching elder engaged in validated ministries outside a congregation (G-2.0503a).
- b. Make recommendations to the presbytery regarding calls for the services of its Ministers of Word and Sacrament.
- c. Review annually the status of Members-at-Large [G-2.0503(a) (b)] (G-2.0508) and recommend to Presbytery changes in status when necessary. Examine and sustain the preaching part of the examination for candidates being ordained and make that a part of the motion for presbytery approval.
- d. Visit with each session of the presbytery at least once each year. (G-3.0303 and G-3.0307) and stay in regular contact with each assigned church session as needed throughout each year.
- e. Counsel with churches regarding calls for permanent pastoral relations. Oversee the Pastor Nominating Committee process from the time the pulpit is vacant through installation of the next pastor; recommend Commission for Ordination/Installation at the same time the motion is provided to ordain/install a candidate for membership (G-2.0504a) (G-2.0801) (G-2.0805) (W-4.0404)
- f. Counsel with churches regarding temporary pastoral relations, providing lists of available Ministers of Word and Sacrament, ruling elders, and ministers of another Christian Church after constitutional requirements have been met (G-2.0504b) (G-2.0505) (G-2.0506), to supply vacant pulpits.
- g. Approve temporary pastoral relationships, including designated pastors, and approve moderators for sessions. (G-1.0504) (G-3.0104)

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- h. Provide for the implementation of equal employment opportunity for Minister of Word and Sacrament and candidates, and report to presbytery the steps taken by each calling group to implement equal employment opportunity. (G-2.0104) (G-3.0106)
- i. Find in order calls issued by churches, recommend and present calls to Presbytery, examine Ministers of Word and Sacrament transferring from other presbyteries, dissolve pastoral relationships, grant permission to labor outside the bounds of presbytery, and dismiss Minister of Word and Sacrament to other presbyteries and report actions to Presbytery. [G-3.0301 (a)(b)(c)]
- j. Provide care and oversight of the presbytery's Commissioned Ruling Elder program, including recommendation for commissioning. (G-2.1001 – G-2.1004)
- k. Promote the peace and harmony of the churches.
- l. Counsel with sessions regarding difficulties in their congregation, act as mediator in conflict situations, and/or act to correct difficulties in conflict situations when asked to do so by the parties involved or when authorized by presbytery to do so. [G-3.0303d(1)(2)(3)]
- m. Respond to conflict situations within congregations or where congregations, or leaders within, find themselves in conflict with their ordination vows to be governed by church polity and to abide by its discipline in accordance with the Response/Review Commission guidelines. Approve Ministers of Word and Sacrament as Parish Associates with annual review and the stipulation that the relationship ends when the current installed pastor leaves.
- n. Provide pastoral care for Ministers of Word and Sacrament, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service and Certified Christian Educators. (G-3.0307 and G-2.1103)
- o. Provide a support system and a visitation program for retired Ministers of Word and Sacrament inactive because of health problems.

#### SR-6.01.02.02 Commission on Preparation for Ministry

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry (CPM) shall function in accordance with the provisions of the *Book of Order* (G-2.06). It shall have no fewer than 12 members (half Ministers of Word and Sacrament and half ruling elders) nominated by the Committee on Nominating and Representation, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography and theological conviction (F-1.0403) and elected by the Presbytery.

The Commission on Preparation for Ministry shall:

- a. Have the authority to take Inquirers under care of the commission; to recommend to the presbytery that an Inquirer, after at least a year under care, become a Candidate; and to certify a Candidate ready to receive a call after at least a year as a Candidate.
- b. Have the authority to establish requirements for the process of preparation for ministry.

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#### SR-6.01.02.03 Permanent Judicial Commission

The Permanent Judicial Commission (PJC) shall fulfill all those duties and responsibilities delineated in the *Book of Order* (Rules of Discipline, Chapter 5) of the Permanent Judicial Commission. The PJC shall be composed of four Ministers of Word and Sacrament and five ruling elders, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography and theological conviction (F-1.0403). They shall be elected to serve in three classes to terms of six years as provided in the *Book of Order* (D-5.0102, D-5.0103 and D-5.0105).

#### SR-6.01.02.04 Administrative Commissions

Presbytery shall designate Administrative Commissions as deemed necessary. (G-3.0109b)

#### SR-6.01.03 Presbytery Committees

##### SR-6.01.03.01 Trustees

The Board of Trustees shall fulfill all those duties and responsibilities in the *Book of Order* (G-4.0101-G-4.03). The Board of Trustees shall be composed of nine persons (closely balanced between Ministers and members of churches) elected by the Presbytery through the Committee on Nominating and Representation, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403). The Board will appoint its own Chair from the membership elected.

The duties of the Trustees shall be to:

- a. As directed by Presbytery, hold and convey title of any real property belonging to the Presbytery and list and negotiate any property transactions assigned in accordance with G-4.0205 of the Book of Order.
- b. Administer funds as Presbytery's agent, when directed by Presbytery.
- c. Be responsible for the care and oversight of all properties owned and operated by the Presbytery.
- d. Upon request, advise Presbytery and its churches on property matters.
- e. Any contract, loan or grant entered into by Presbytery over the amount of \$5,000 will require the signature of at least one trustee. Any contract, loan, or grant regarding real property requires trustee signatures in accordance with the above provisions of the Book of Order.
- f. If authorized by the Board of Trustees and the Executive Council, a Standing Commission of Presbytery may be authorized to make decisions on behalf of presbytery for real property matters valued under \$25,000 and/or due to mandatory governmental jurisdiction. The protection of church and presbytery financial interest will be the Trustee's primary concern in all such approval.
- g. Consult sessions and Administrative Commissions on how church property is handled and the procedures for approving encumbrances, dissolving, or dismissing a church in accordance with Appendix III of these Standing Rules noting that costs associated with the activities involved shall be paid by the individual church.
- h. Routine maintenance expenses for properties reverted to Presbytery by dismissal or dissolution shall be paid from the proceeds of the sale or rent of the property.



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#### SR-6.01.03.02 Committee on Nominating and Representation

The Committee on Nominating and Representation shall function in accordance with the *Book of Order* (G-3.0111, F-1.0403, F-3.0106, G-2.0104 and G-3.0103), providing for inclusive membership in the makeup of all functions to which it is asked to nominate persons. It shall have nine members in three classes of one Minister of the Word and Sacrament and 2 ruling elders, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403). The term of office shall be three years and eligibility will end after one term. Nominations to the Committee on Nominating and Representation are made by the Moderator in accordance with SR-4.01.01e.

- a. The Committee shall be responsible for nominating to the Presbytery qualified persons to serve in all elected positions in the various Agencies, Commissions, Committees, and the Executive Council of Presbytery, except as provided by the Presbytery Response/Review/Commission Process.
- b. The Committee shall be responsible for nominating Commissioners and Advisory Delegates to Synod and General Assembly according to criteria developed by the Committee and approved by the Executive Council, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403).
- c. The Committee shall receive recommendations for Youth Council representatives from the current Youth Council and present them, with due consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography and theological conviction (F-1.0403) to Presbytery for its approval.
- d. The Committee shall nominate a person to fill any vacancy for an unexpired term on any Commission or Committee and present the nomination at the next meeting of the Presbytery for its approval. Service ends at the normal scheduled end of the term being filled. After serving, the person would then be eligible to serve two full consecutive terms.

#### SR-6.01.03.03 Anti-Racism Committee

The Anti-Racism Committee is established as a permanent Committee of Presbytery in order to advocate for racial justice and to develop curriculum, identify potential trainers, and coordinate training events for the Presbytery. The Nominating Committee shall appoint the members of the Committee based on recommendations from the Committee and others. The Anti-Racism Committee shall make regular reports on their activities to Executive Council and Presbytery.

- a. The Anti-Racism Committee shall maintain a size of no less than nine members and no more than 13 at any given time.
- b. The Anti-Racism Committee shall be composed of a balanced number of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament and lay congregants (either Elders or parishioners).
- c. The Anti-Racism Committee shall be composed of a balanced number of members with consideration of race, ethnicity, age, gender, disability, geography, and theological conviction (F-1.0403)
- d. The Anti-Racism Committee shall try to include members from small and geographically remote congregations where possible.
- e. Members may serve up to two three-year terms with the option to be nominated after one year of absence.
- f. The Anti-Racism Committee may recommend policy statements to Presbytery based on occurrences, issues, or actions of injustice, hatred, or racism within the Presbytery, State of Alabama, or the nation if such occurrences, issues, or actions are deemed offensive or

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detrimental to the quality of life, health, and safety of groups against which said actions are intended or perpetrated.

- g. The Anti-Racism Committee may partner or engage with other anti-racism groups within the Presbyterian Church USA, or joint ecumenical groups with a similar purpose and scope to strengthen the message of intolerance to racism and injustice on a local, national, and global platform.
- h. The Anti-Racism Committee shall present a proposed budget to Executive Council of Presbytery in September of each year to be voted on and approved for inclusion in Presbytery's Annual Budget.

## **SR-7.01 Chapter VII. Election of Trustees of Institutions**

SR-7.01.01 Institutions for which the Presbytery is to elect Trustees shall submit nominees through the Committee on Nominating and Representation for election by the Presbytery.

SR-7.01.02 All suggestions for nominations submitted by the institutions are to be in conformity with the Provisions of the *Book of Order* and these Standing Rules.

## **SR-8.01 Chapter VIII. Book of Order Changes**

When by General Assembly action, changes are made to portions of the Book of Order Referenced in these Standing Rules, such changes shall be automatically inserted into the Standing Rules by the Stated Clerk and notification shall be made at the next appropriate meeting of Presbytery.



PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS!



Thursday, March 16<sup>th</sup> – The Club - Birmingham **(RESERVED)**



Thursday, May 11<sup>th</sup> – The Von Braun Center - Huntsville **(RESERVED)**



Thursday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> – Country Club Mobile **(RESERVED)**

**Sweet Home Soiree Birmingham 2023** is Thursday, March 16th at The Club starting at 5:30 pm. There will be a plated dinner, live music with Jerry Robbins on the Sax, silent auction, and live auction. The live auction will be conducted by our new auctioneer Terri Walker, AL license #1233. This year we are honoring the Presbyterian Women for making the Presbyterian Home for Children possible in 1868 and their continued support today. In addition, the Home is celebrating 155 years of serving at-risk children, youth and families.

Here's how you can help, please invite 20 couples to our Sweet Home Soiree Birmingham and promote our signature gala in the community. If you could also try to acquire live and silent auction items and company sponsorships, it would greatly help our efforts overall.

Please email your guest list (name, address, and email) to [jbraxton@phfc.org](mailto:jbraxton@phfc.org). We will start mailing invitations February 6th.

If you prefer to purchase a table of 8, let me know and I will get those details to you. Tickets are \$125 and a table is \$1,000.

Help spread the word in your churches and community! We want a packed house at The Club in Birmingham. Please reach out to your church communication teams and pastors to provide event details during Sunday service and for social media posts and newsletters. All are welcome to attend! Sponsorship details are attached. Here is our event site: <https://phfc.org/phfcevents/>



*Save the Date!*

SWEET HOME SOIRÉE

THURSDAY, MARCH 16 at 5:30 PM

THE CLUB  
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

ENJOY A DELICIOUS SERVED DINNER,  
LIVE MUSIC, SILENT AUCTION  
AND LIVE AUCTION!

WE HOPE YOU WILL JOIN US FOR THIS  
SPECIAL EVENING BENEFITING  
PRESBYTERIAN HOME FOR CHILDREN.

PLEASE CONTACT CARL MARTIN IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES,  
WOULD LIKE TO DONATE AUCTION ITEMS, OR WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION.  
CARL MARTIN | MANAGER OF DEVELOPMENT AND DONOR RELATIONS | 256-362-8284 | [cmartin@phfc.org](mailto:cmartin@phfc.org)

## SOIREE 2023

### AUCTIONEER

Terri Walker, CES is dynamic auctioneer has an exceptionally pleasing and understandable auction chant. Her southern drawl adds to her charm and compliments her bid calling skills. She is experienced at entertaining an auction crowd for two to three hours during the live auction. She has a reputation of coaxing the last dollar out of a bidder and making the buyer feel good about it. Terri is a second-generation auctioneer and is an avid jogger.

She has placed First in the International Auctioneers Bid Calling Competition, is a past Grand Champions Tennessee Auctioneer, and served as Chair of the Tennessee Auctioneers Commission. Terri conducts auction educational seminars and has served as instructor at the Missouri Auction School. She and Lance have been involved in more than 1500 auctions. Terri Walker has M.S. and B.S degrees in Education and has completed the Certified Estate Specialist, the BAS designations and two years of the Certified Auctioneers Institute. She has been featured on the cover of Memphis Woman Magazine.



Terri Walker



**WALKER**  
**AUCTIONS**

REAL ESTATE &  
PERSONAL PROPERTY



## Mission Coordinator's Report to Presbytery, February 16, 2023

1. Birmingham area churches raised \$22,953 to build a Habitat for Humanity house in the East Lake area of Birmingham. We have send \$22,000 to Habitat for Humanity Birmingham to help pay for the house. Contributing churches are: Green Pond, Independent, Mountain Brook, Oakmont Chapel, Riverchase, South Highland and Southminster. Thank you to all the volunteers and churches that made this possible.

Also, please remember the Habitat for Humanity chapters in other parts of our Presbytery. Tuscaloosa, Anniston and Montgomery have their chapters. There is a need for affordable housing throughout Alabama.

2. We have donated \$1,000 from the Peacemaking Fund to RECONCILE. RECONCILE works in South Sudan to provide training for the reconciliation of groups in South Sudan. The Peacemaking Fund receives its money from the Presbytery's portion of the Peacemaking Offering in September.

3. Tornadoes tore through large parts of this Presbytery. Sumter, Greene, Hale, Dallas, Autauga, Elmore and Tallapoosa Counties had damage. Hundreds of buildings have been damaged or destroyed, with seven persons killed. This Presbytery is a member of the Alabama Volunteer Organizations Active in Disasters (ALVOAD). I have been attending the bi-weekly ALVOAD Zoom meetings to be informed of the organizations involved, their resources and the needs of the survivors. I spent a day at the Selma Volunteer Reception Center (VRC). Autauga County also has a VRC. VRCs help register volunteers and match them to the needs in the communities. Four members of this Presbytery, Debra Love, James Ephraim, Bill Stribling and Rush Watson met in Selma with the Governor's Office of Volunteer Services and other organizations to learn of the needs in the area. Rush is a past president of ALVOAD. Independent Presbyterian Church has raised funds to aid in this disaster.

Long Term Recovery Committees (LTRC) are being started in Autauga and Dallas Counties. Presbyterians work on long term recovery needs. I plan to be in touch with them to learn of their needs and how we can help.

Please pray for God's comfort and healing for the people in the tornado areas. And pray for God's guidance to us as we work to help them.



**LIVING RIVER**  
A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

**February 2023  
Newsletter**

## 2022 Living River Annual Report

### Thank you to our donors!

Every donation of time, talent, and resources makes Living River's ministry possible. All bolded names are of Living River Bedrock Sustaining Donors. More details about the Bedrock program can be found on Living River's website.

#### **Mark & Diane Aldridge**

Robert & Ree Almon

#### **Steve & Carolyn Ashworth**

#### **James & Susan Bannon**

Jonathan & Heather Benoit

#### **Suzanne Benton**

#### **Don & Mary Blakeley**

Ruth & John Brock

#### **The Brown Family**

Vernon Broyles III

#### **Tom & Ashley Bryson**

#### **Mark & Leigh Ellyn Byars**

#### **John & Linda Carey**

#### **Coke & Molly Clark**

#### **Gretchen Cloud**

#### **Frank Covington**

#### **Paul Dimick**

Joe & Beverly Dodson

Marilee Dukes

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Jane French

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#### **Pat & Charles Goodman**

#### **Michael & Gillian Goodrich**

Ellyn Grady

#### **Mary Grant Dalrymple**

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James & Kay Harrington

#### **Benga Harrison**

#### **Wyatt & Susan Haskell**

#### **Robert Haubein**

#### **Robert & Janice Hay**

#### **Robert & Morgan Hay**

#### **Scott & Angie Hayes**

#### **Mike Henderson**

Sarah Hewitt

Thomas & Peggy Hill

#### **Kent & Lisa Howard**

#### **Tony & Lora Hubbard**

Steven & Stephanie Hunt

Calvin & June Hyer

Harvey & Johanna Jenkins

Sara Kaylor

Helen Keller

Leland & Marty Keller

#### **Will & DeNay Kirkpatrick**

Melinda & Norris Leavelle

Terry & Mari Ley

Bruce & Jeannine Ludwig

#### **Virginia MacRae**

Brian & Chris Anne Massengale

#### **Rachel & Wesley Mathews**

#### **Lori Maxey**

#### **David & Ann McGiffert**

#### **George & Bess Miller**

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Ira & Anne Mitchell

John & Debbie Mitchell

Allison Moore

John Moore

McKittrick Moss

Bill & Betsy Murphy

Al & Janet Nebrig

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Mallory & Martha Reeves

#### **Emily Roberts**

#### **Ed Senter & Jessica Germany**

Jim & Katherine Shepherd

#### **Anita Sherman**

#### **Jack & Anne Smalley**

#### **Alan & Linda Speaker**

#### **Frank & Fairy Sutherland**

Stacey McGill Tarrant

#### **Allen Tartt**

#### **Jenny & George Thagard**

#### **Sharon & Les Thagard**

Kristi Thomson

#### **Wendy & James Tucker**

Steve & Laura Underhill

#### **George & Patsy VanKirk**

George VanKirk

Lawson & Lin Veasey

#### **Myrna Walker**

Howard Walthall & Family

#### **Lee Walthall**

Mike & Phyllis Ward

Dana Waters

Sue Westfall

Janet Widell

#### **Jay Wilkins**

#### **Bill & Frances Woodruff**

Helen Yarboro

## Thank you to our Organizational Donors!

C. Eugene Ireland Foundation  
 Community Foundation of Greater Birmingham  
 E L Spencer Foundation  
 First Presbyterian Church Birmingham  
 First Presbyterian Church Tuscaloosa  
 Montevallo Presbyterian Church  
 Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church  
 Oakmont Chapel Presbyterian Church  
 Presbyterian Women, Brown Memorial  
 Presbyterian Women of the Presbytery  
 Riverchase Presbyterian Church  
 South Highland Presbyterian Church  
 Southminster Presbyterian Church

## Living River Received Two Grants in 2022

**The Independent Presbyterian Church Foundation** gave a three year grant for a development staff position. Living River expanded from two part-time staff to three! Staff for development and programming are essential For Living River's growth. We are raising our Annual Fund target to fully fund this position by the end of the grant. Thank you to The IPC Foundation!

**Shades Valley Presbyterian Church** gave a grant to renovate the Shades Valley Lodge. The Living River board dreams of adding more adult programming and accommodations. Renovating the Shades Valley Lodge (accommodates 16) is a great step forward in hosting adult programming! Thank you Shades Valley!

## Living River's Financial Health

2022 Revenue: \$307,240

2022 Expenses: \$337,453



- The mortgage reduced from \$479,328 on 12/31/21 to \$158,048 on 12/31/22 thanks to a generous donation to reduce the principal and our monthly payments of principal and interest.
- Donations to the Annual Fund for operations were up 25% from 2021.
- Program Revenue was up over 50% from 2021.

## Living River's Impact

- Over 120 children and youth participated in retreats or camps in 2022.
- Rental groups from a diversity of faith backgrounds and organizational affiliations used Living River's facilities.
- Auburn University, The University of Alabama, and The Urban Turtle Project conducted separate research projects.





## Upcoming at Living River Living River's Direction

Living River's Board has identified a vision for this year and years to come! You, your church, and our Central Alabama community were at the heart of the discussions. We plan to offer **more of our own programming (retreats designed to connect participants to God through different activities and lenses)** including an **adult retreat this year!** We hope to build a **second adult or small group lodge** in the near future to host more and bigger adult groups. The board's environmental committee and the staff will continue making academic and environmental connections and will advertise Living River as a research host site more widely. **We have a vision of Living River being a research hub from which the local community can learn!** Lastly, in order to thrive, **we must build and diversify our base of support.** It is because of Living River's friends and donors that we can continue camp, retreat, and environmental ministries. Please reach out to a board member (found on our website) or staff if you have ideas, connections, or want to know how you can plug in beyond our events listed below!

### 2023 Calendar

For more details about a specific event, visit our website!

**Feb. 19** Living River Sunday!  
**March 4** Spring Volunteer Work Day  
**April 28-30** You & Me Retreat  
**April 29** Spring Volunteer Work Day  
**May 19-21** Adult Cahaba Lily Retreat  
 (ft. a keynote speaker and lilies excursion)  
**May 20** Living River Day and Dinner  
 (renewal time, keynote speaker, and dinner)  
**May 30-June 9** Counselor Training  
**June 11-16** Youth Work and Mission Camp  
**June 18-22** Elementary Camp  
**June 23-25** You & Me Camp  
**June 26-July 1** Creative Elem./Middle Camp  
**July 6-9** PHFC/Wilcox Co. Partner Camp  
**September 9** Fall Volunteer Work Day  
**October 22** Living River Day  
**November 9-11** Elementary Retreat

### Other Opportunities at Living River

**Be a Summer Counselor** or share the opportunity with a young adult. Being a counselor is a great way to gain skills, self-confidence, lifelong friendships, and find clarity about future your direction.

**Be a Counselor in Training (CIT)** or share the opportunity with a high schooler. High schoolers can be CITs at any elementary camp. It's a great opportunity to learn and build friendships!

**Do you have administrative skills?** We're a small staff! Living River can always use help with mailings, organization, or administrative tasks.

**Living River needs a truck!** Our onsite truck is beyond repair. Do you have a truck you're able to donate? There are always big facilities projects at Living River!

**Come hike or visit us at Living River.** We have miles of trails! If you've never been to Living River, come for a Living River Day or reach out to us about a visit. We know you'll feel God's nearness to us all at Living River!

## Executive Director's Corner

Rounding the corner from 2022 to 2023, we have many exciting things happening at Living River. **Board Retreat:** In January we had an energy-filled board retreat. We looked back at where we've been, and ahead to where we're going. We welcome new board members, Benga Harrison, April Harrell, Lili Kane and J Benoit. Thank you to our board members who rolled off at the end of 2022, Steve Ashworth, Shirley Finley, Jay Patton, Nick Reed, Emily Roberts, and Laura Underhill. **Shades Valley Lodge Renovation:** The \$150,000 grant we received from the Shades Valley Presbyterian Church Foundation is renovating our 8 bedroom, 4 bath Shades Valley Lodge. The contractors are replacing flooring, tiling bathrooms, painting, upgrading countertops, and more.

**Re-visioning our Environmental Mission:** Intentional conversations are being held with those in congregations, higher education and environmental advocacy as we seek to redefine our mission of fostering the stewardship of creation.

**Summer Camp Registration:** As of the writing of this article, 32 campers are registered for this summer. At the beginning of February last year, we had 2 campers registered. Spread the word! Living River is the place for our children and youth this summer.

**Home-base for Racial Justice Trips:** As I sat with 500+ church educators, pastors, and seminarians at the Association of Partners in Christian Education conference at the BJCC Jan. 23-29, I had an incredible moment with the Director of Children and Youth from Winnetka Presbyterian Church in Winnetka, Illinois. We talked about the impactful dramatic presentation by the Red Mountain Theatre Company of the play, *Memorial*, by Alabama playwright, Quentin Cockrell. She told me about her moving experience at the Birmingham Civil Rights Institute and 16th Street Baptist Church. She had visited with Rachel in the marketplace area of the conference, and learned about Living River's central location for those seeking a home-base for groups wanting to learn about the struggle for civil rights. At midnight, she emailed me to reserve a week at Living River to bring her group to Alabama for their "Justice Journey" this summer. I feel strongly that God is using Living River to serve God's purposes of peace and reconciliation.

**Hold on to your hats, friends! Great things are happening at Living River.**

**-Jenny Thagard**



LIVING RIVER

A RETREAT ON THE CAHABA

2000 Living River Parkway

Montevallo, AL 35115



**Living River: A Retreat on the Cahaba**  
**Year-to-date 12/31/22**

<b>Budget Report</b>			
<b>Sources of Funds</b>	<b>Year-to-date 12/31/22</b>		<b>2022 Annual Budget</b>
Program	89,564	147%	61,000
PSL - Trinity Property	33,515	100%	33,504
Donations	142,775	57%	250,000
Grants	36,000	100%	36,000
Other	5,386	359%	1,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 307,240</b>	<b>80%</b>	<b>\$ 382,004</b>
<b>Uses of Funds</b>			
Personnel & Fees for Services	188,902	91%	208,709
Program Expenses	29,857	103%	29,033
Facilities	76,589	81%	94,506
Mortgage Payments	30,156	90%	33,504
Administration	11,949	81%	14,702
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 337,453</b>	<b>89%</b>	<b>\$ 380,454</b>

<b>Statement of Financial Position</b>			
	<b>12/31/2022</b>		<b>12/31/2021</b>
<b>Assets</b>			
Operating Account	\$ 247,100		\$ 254,237
Capital Account	234,082		245,637
Pledges Receivable	9,334		9,484
Other Current Assets	5,128		31,306
New Covenant Endowment Fund	362,358		414,381
New Covenant Scholarship Fund	6,743		7,985
Fixed Assets - Net	6,939,145		6,936,786
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 7,803,890</b>		<b>\$ 7,899,816</b>
<b>Liabilities</b>			
Accounts Payable	\$ (4,773)		\$ 4,894
Program Deposits	6,900		3,598
Payroll Liabilities	4,332		1,350
Oakworth Mortgage	158,048		479,328
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>164,507</b>		<b>489,170</b>
<b>Net Assets</b>			
<b>Net Assets</b>	<b>7,639,383</b>		<b>7,410,646</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Net Assets</b>	<b>\$ 7,803,890</b>		<b>\$ 7,899,816</b>

COM Report  
February 2023

Information:

1. Appointed Lou Ann Sellers to moderate the session at Grace, Tuscaloosa, until a temporary pastor is found.
2. Recommended the sale of property held by Westminster, Birmingham, as the property was not feasible to be used for ministry.
3. Approved the Rev. Rachel Winter as the interim pastor at Oakmont Chapel.

Action Items:

1. Approve the Rev. Debbie Feagin and the Rev. Catherine Oliver to be declared Honorably Retired.
2. Approve the Rev. Tae Ho Cheong to be granted membership in the Presbytery and appointed to the Supply Preaching List.
3. Approve a change in the expected supply pay to a sliding scale of between \$150 and \$200 per Sunday, depending on the church's budget and ability to pay.
4. Approve the Supply List serving churches for 2023.

**Churches requesting permission to continue supply relationships for 2023:**

- a. **First, Alex City** requests permission to continue their relationship with Bruce McClendon.
- b. **First, Anniston** does not request permission of their relationship with Terry Tingle. They will rotate pastors from the pulpit supply list.
- c. **Arlington** requests permission to continue their relationship with Cervelma Jones. Terms \$450
- d. **Bethel** requests permission to continue their relationship with Neil McCarter. Terms \$30,000 yrly
- e. **Bold Springs** requests permission to continue their relationship with Chuck Kukal.
- f. **Calvary** requests permission to continue their relationship with Lisa Winston. Terms \$413 weekly
- g. **Cahaba Springs** requests permission to continue their relationship with deNay Kirkpatrick.
- h. **Church of the Covenant** requests permission to continue their relationship with Lin Veasey. Terms \$9000
- i. **First, Dadeville** requests permission to continue their relationship with Sandra Crosslin. (independent Methodist) \$200 per Sunday
- j. **Fairfield Highlands** requests permission to continue their relationship with John Harrison.
- k. **Gardendale** requests permission to continue their relationship with Jeff Bonner. Terms \$17,160
- l. **Good Hope** requests permission to continue their relationship with Vanesa Nelson. Terms \$500 mo.
- m. **Goodwater** requests permission to continue their relationship with Pete McElrath. Terms \$600 monthly
- n. **Green Pond** requests permission to continue their relationship with Beverly Dodson. Terms \$7800 yearly
- o. **Marion Junction** requests permission to continue their relationship with Dr. George Wood.
- p. **Montevallo** requests permission to continue their relationship with Wayne McLaughlin. Terms \$250 per Sunday
- q. **New Trinity** requests permission to continue their relationship with Cervelma Jones. Terms \$400 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday
- r. **First, Piedmont** requests permission to continue their relationship with Gary Black.
- s. **Pisgah** requests permission to continue their relationship with Ira Blanchard. Terms \$250 per service
- t. **Riverchase** requests permission to continue their relationship with Robert Emerick. Terms \$1800 monthly
- u. **Second** requests permission to continue their relationship with Steve Jones. Terms \$44,750 yearly
- v. **First, Sylacauga** requests permission to continue their relationship with Charles Sims. Terms \$36,100 yearly
- w. **Union Springs** requests permission to continue their relationship with Dr. William Sauser. Terms \$9600 yrly.
- x. **Valley Creek** requests permission to continue their relationship with Cecil Williamson. Terms \$200 per service
- y. **Westminster, Birmingham**, requests permission to continue their relationship with Jerome Bell. Terms \$13, 700
- z. **Westminster, Tuskegee** requests permission to continue their relationship with Michael Thurman. Terms \$250 per Sunday.



Statement of faith

by Rev. Tae Ho Cheong

I believe in God Father in heaven

and His only begotten Son Jesus Christ and the Comforter, the Holy Spirit.

I believe in Triune God, God Father and Son Jesus and the Holy Spirit,

as God Creator and God Almighty and only Savior and Redeemer

of the world through Jesus Christ on the Cross.

I believe Salvation comes from only God Father in heaven and His Son Jesus Christ.

I believe the presence of Jesus Christ with us and the power of God upon us continues through the empowering of the Holy Spirit as Jesus promised "I will be with you to the end of this world."

I believe this Triune God is the author of life and the owner of the church of Jesus Christ and the head of the church by holding seven stars in His right hand.

I believe, One , Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic church of Jesus Christ.

I believe in the ultimate authority of the Holy Scriptures in both Old and New Testament.

I also believe the full effectiveness of one baptism and one communion table in the name of Jesus Christ.

## Faith Journey of Tae Ho Cheong

Studying 11th century theologians, I found Anselm, who was born in **Italy**, and educated in **France**, and ending his life as Archbishop of Canterbury in **England**. To some extent, there seems to be some similarities between his life journey and mine. For I was born in the **rural area** of South Korea and for education purpose, I moved to **Seoul, the capital city** of South Korea, at 5th grade, and after finishing college, I came to **USA** in the year of 1985.

Starting my immigration life **from New York** for 3 years, working at fish market in Utica Ave, *Brooklyn*, and at stores *in Harlem*, New York City, I moved down to **Atlanta** for theological study.

Studying for 7 years in two master degrees at C.T.S. in Decatur, GA, immediately, I ran into Korean-American ministry in USA for 26 years straight. I served Korean Church in Pensacola for 24 years fully in **Pensacola** Florida until *the end of 2021*.

However, last year on Thanksgiving evening, I was checked into E.R. due to stomach, breathing, and swallowing issues. My wife strongly encouraged me to stop ministry for my health purpose for a while at least.

Moving to Opelika, in early part of January of 2022, and working for 10 months in secular world, I had a back pain which required at least 2 months of rest. During past secular work period, I had 4 times of English-Korean simultaneous preaching opportunities at 2 churches.

We have been faithful worshippers by doing *a primary practice of Christian stewardship and self-offering* as shown in the Book of Order **W-5.0103** through Auburn-Opelika Korean Presbyterian Church during this past one year.

Now, I am here to adventure *the shift of my ministry paradigm* from only **Korean-American** church context into **American** church context, if possible. I sincerely seeking for God's guidance on it under the leadership of this Presbytery.

**Trustees' Report**  
**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**  
**February 16, 2023, Assembly**

The Trustees of the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley has one item for action at this assembly.

**For Action**

Westminster Presbyterian Church (Birmingham) has requested that the Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley consent to the listing and sale of some real estate that is no longer needed by the church. The property in question is located at 25 – 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue South West, Birmingham, AL 35211, which is across the street from the main church building. The property is the site of a very small house called the “activity house,” which has not been used since March 2020 for reasons of safety and health. The house is too small to allow social distancing within it, and repairs to the house are necessary.

The Presbytery’s Commission on Ministry has met with representatives from Westminster Presbyterian Church and has considered the church’s reasons for selling the property. The Commission on Ministry, taking into account the full mission and ministry of the church, has recommended to the Presbytery Trustees that the church’s request to sell the property should be approved.

The trustees recommend and move as follows:

That the Presbytery authorize and approve the sale by Westminster Presbyterian Church of the property (the “Property”) located at 25 – 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue South West, Birmingham, AL 35211;

That the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery be, and he hereby is, authorized and directed in accordance with section G-4.0206a of the Book of Order to communicate, through the session of the church, the written permission of the Presbytery to the sale of the Property; and

That the trustees of the Presbytery are authorized to take such other actions on behalf of the Presbytery as they deem necessary and appropriate to the sale of the Property.

Respectfully submitted by:

Lant Davis, Moderator  
 Bill Stribling  
 Shelaine Bird  
 Beverly Krannich, Secretary  
 Terry Newland

Katherine Michael  
 Krysten Scrivner  
 John Tally  
 Charles Griffin

Date : 01/26/2023

Time : 9:12:30 AM

**Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley**  
**Analysis of Revenues & Expenses - Summary**  
**January to December 2022**

Accounts	MTD Actual (This Year)	MTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Actual (This Year)	YTD Budget (This Year)	YTD Budget/Actual (This Year)	Annual Budget (This Year)
<b>Revenues</b>						
General Fund	\$63,329.68	\$21,283.61	\$256,466.31	\$255,402.00	\$1,064.31	\$255,402.00
NCD Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Mission Giving-Income	\$1,812.08	\$1,851.88	\$22,607.59	\$22,223.00	\$384.59	\$22,223.00
Per Capita Income	\$14,152.32	\$16,340.00	\$184,216.33	\$196,080.00	(\$11,863.67)	\$196,080.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$79,294.08</b>	<b>\$39,475.49</b>	<b>\$463,290.23</b>	<b>\$473,705.00</b>	<b>(\$10,414.77)</b>	<b>\$473,705.00</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
<b>Council</b>						
Council Expenses-Other	\$0.00	\$689.62	\$8,500.00	\$8,275.00	(\$225.00)	\$8,275.00
<b>Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>						
Executive Presbyter	\$9,997.00	\$9,909.63	\$117,454.26	\$118,916.00	\$1,461.74	\$118,916.00
Mission Development Exec	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Administrative Salaries	\$900.00	\$300.00	\$3,600.00	\$3,600.00	\$0.00	\$3,600.00
Benefits - Administration	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Staff Expenses	\$3,600.79	\$300.00	\$3,600.79	\$3,600.00	(\$0.79)	\$3,600.00
<b>Total Salaries &amp; Allowances</b>	<b>\$14,497.79</b>	<b>\$10,509.63</b>	<b>\$124,655.05</b>	<b>\$126,116.00</b>	<b>\$1,460.95</b>	<b>\$126,116.00</b>
Council Vocation Committees	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Council</b>	<b>\$14,497.79</b>	<b>\$11,199.25</b>	<b>\$133,155.05</b>	<b>\$134,391.00</b>	<b>\$1,235.95</b>	<b>\$134,391.00</b>
<b>Development</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Equip, Nurture, Connect</b>						
Other ENC Expenses	\$1,351.70	\$2,000.11	\$16,932.43	\$24,000.00	\$7,067.57	\$24,000.00
<b>Total Equip, Nurture, Connect</b>	<b>\$1,351.70</b>	<b>\$2,000.11</b>	<b>\$16,932.43</b>	<b>\$24,000.00</b>	<b>\$7,067.57</b>	<b>\$24,000.00</b>
<b>Mission</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$25.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>	<b>\$300.00</b>
UKirk Birmingham	\$15,376.25	\$2,460.76	\$41,968.84	\$29,530.00	(\$12,438.84)	\$29,530.00
Trustees	\$4,556.04	\$5,598.37	\$58,227.57	\$67,180.00	\$8,952.43	\$67,180.00
Anti-Racism	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Presbytery Per Capita Expenses</b>						
Stated Clerk & Moderator	\$2,521.31	\$2,221.85	\$26,068.46	\$26,660.00	\$591.54	\$26,660.00
Presbytery Commissions	(\$76.95)	\$558.26	\$3,162.47	\$6,700.00	\$3,537.53	\$6,700.00
Asst.to Stated Clerk/Ofc Mgr	\$4,914.80	\$4,854.35	\$58,385.25	\$58,250.00	(\$135.25)	\$58,250.00
<b>Total Presbytery Per Capita Expenses</b>	<b>\$7,359.16</b>	<b>\$7,634.46</b>	<b>\$87,616.18</b>	<b>\$91,610.00</b>	<b>\$3,993.82</b>	<b>\$91,610.00</b>
Per Capita-Expenses	\$12,089.31	\$8,705.99	\$102,435.92	\$104,471.00	\$2,035.08	\$104,471.00
Mission Giving-Expenses	\$1,812.08	\$1,851.88	\$22,607.59	\$22,223.00	(\$384.59)	\$22,223.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$57,042.33</b>	<b>\$39,475.82</b>	<b>\$462,943.58</b>	<b>\$473,705.00</b>	<b>\$10,761.42</b>	<b>\$473,705.00</b>
<b>Net Operating Total</b>	<b>\$22,251.75</b>	<b>(\$0.33)</b>	<b>\$346.65</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$346.65</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Other Revenues</b>						
Designated Income (Loss)	\$32,562.46	\$0.00	\$35,422.09	\$0.00	\$35,422.09	\$0.00
Gain on Debt Forgiveness	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Other Revenues</b>	<b>\$35,094.69</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$64,056.73</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$64,056.73</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Other Expenses</b>						
<b>Total Other Expenses</b>	<b>\$5,502.89</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$39,648.68</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>(\$39,648.68)</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Net Total</b>	<b>\$51,843.55</b>	<b>(\$0.33)</b>	<b>\$24,754.70</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$24,754.70</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>

## **THE PRESBYTERY OF SHEPPARDS & LAPSLEY FINANCE REPORT FOR 2022**

2022 was a fairly stable, uneventful financial year for the Presbytery of Sheppards & Lapsley. We had no Paycheck Protection loan or new sales/leases of closed churches. Let us start with:

### **OPERATING INCOME-**

Actual revenues were \$463,290 or (\$10,415) less than plan. This revenue reduction resulted from a combination of reductions - (\$11,864) in Per Capita Income and (\$21, 829) in Mission Giving. Partially offsetting these reduced revenues were \$21,671 in unbudgeted lease revenues.

Operating Expenses were \$462,944 or \$10,761 lower than plan. We account for UKirk Birmingham with both revenues and expenses. The budget goal is that UKirk revenues offset expenses. In 2022, actual UKirk revenues were \$30,851 compared to expenses of \$15,439.

**Operating net income at Year End 2022 was on par with the breakeven budget.**

### **OTHER REVENUES AND EXPENSES-**

Below Operating revenues and expenses are Other Revenues of \$28,634 in Notes Receivables interest and \$35,422 in Investment income revenues. Year-end Investments balance was \$958,529. Other expenses included Legal fees of \$6,134 and Living River donations of \$33,514.

Adding this income and expenses to the Operating income nets a total bottom line of \$24,755.

During 2022, our finance group also updated Appendix II of the Standing Rules, the Manual of Financial and Accounting Procedures. In particular, we looked at the original purpose and history of our restricted funds to identify which funds, based on their original intent and history, could be available for Presbytery growth needs .

Jean Russell

Treasurer

The Committee on Nominating and Representation presents Rev. Lou Ann Sellers, Associate Pastor at First Presbyterian Church, Tuscaloosa, Alabama as nominee for Commission on Ministry filling the unexpired term in the class of 2024.

Respectfully submitted,

Sissy Bain, Moderator

Committee on Nominating and Representation

Stated Clerk Report  
February 16, 2023

Omnibus Motion:

1. To approve the minutes of the November 17, 2022 meeting
2. To approve the requests for absences from today's meeting
3. To receive and record the minutes of the Commission to Ordain and install Abby and Cort Gatliff as Associate Pastors of South Highland Presbyterian Church
4. To approve the dates and locations for meetings of the Presbytery: May 18, 2023, at Independent Presbyterian Church, Birmingham; August 17, 2023, at the Presbyterian Home for Children, Talladega; November 16, 2023, at the Northern Heights Presbyterian Church, Selma.

Information

- If your Session's minutes from 2019 (or longer) have not been reviewed, [1] you may drop them off at the presbytery office or, [2] call the Stated Clerk to initiate conversations as how to send/bring them to the office. Or, [3] you may do a check list of your own minutes, print, sign, scan, and email them to [statedclerk@pslpcusa](mailto:statedclerk@pslpcusa).
- Per Capita - Of the \$204,105.00 budgeted for 2022, \$191,641.93 was received from 57 Churches. Many thanks to those who have supported Per Capita! Much encouragement to those who have yet to give!
- Our Per Capita Assessment for 2023 is \$27.00.
  - \$9.85 of this goes to the General Assembly,
  - \$3.98 to Synod of Living Waters,
  - \$12.17 to Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley and
  - \$1.00 to Campus Ministry.
- The Stated Clerk is implementing the Background Check phase of our Child and Youth Protection Policy. The "CYPP" calls for such background checks to be on an every three year cycle. The only exemption is for those who are no longer engaged in ministry or who have had a "BGC" within the last three (3) years. Please contact the Stated Clerk with any questions or concerns you may have.
- End of Year Summary

Ministers as of 01/01/2022	<u>118</u>	Churches as of 01/01/2022	<u>67</u>
Ordained	<u>3</u>	Loss, Dissolution	<u>2</u>
Received, Presbytery	<u>2</u>	Churches as of 01/01/2023	<u>65</u>
Received, Denomination	<u>1</u>		
Restored	<u>1</u>		
Dismissed, Presbytery	<u>5</u>		
Death	<u>5</u>		
Ministers as of 01/02/2023	<u>115</u>		

- The churches deadline to enter statistics is today, February 16, but the Presbytery can enter the information for you if you contact us no later than March 1, 2023.



The Presbytery Of Sheppards And Lapsley  
Report Of The Commission on Preparation For Ministry — February 2023

INQUIRERS

Annabelle Beavers  
Kendra Grace-Love  
Daniel Killilea  
Theodore Longlois  
Madison Vaughn

CHURCH

First, Tuscaloosa  
Grace, Tuscaloosa  
South Highland, Birmingham  
Independent  
Grace, Tuscaloosa

INSTITUTION

Union (Richmond)  
Louisville  
Louisville  
TBD  
Graduate - Columbia

CANDIDATES

Bennett Alldredge  
Avery Arden  
Peyton Chandler  
Patrick O'Connor  
Barbara Tomek-White

First, Tuscaloosa  
Grace, Tuscaloosa  
Independent, Birmingham  
Immanuel, Montgomery  
First, Auburn

Graduate - Princeton  
Graduate - Louisville  
Vanderbilt  
San Francisco  
Graduate - Austin

## FOR INFORMATION:

No information items at this time.

## FOR ACTION:

No action items at this time.

Submitted on behalf of the Commission on Preparation for Ministry:

Rick Atkerson (2025), Caroline Barnett (2024), Jim Bannon (2024), Joe Genau (2023), Shelley Hancock (2023), Sheila Holland (2024), Jeff Johnson (2025), Nicole Newton (2025), Kathy Wolf Reed (2023), Andy Spaulding (2024), Adrienne Stokes (2025), and Lee Walthall (2023).

Respectfully,  
Rev. Kathy Wolf Reed, Moderator



THE BOARD OF PENSIONS  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)



**Keenan Rodgers**  
Church Consultant

m: 215-341-8143

[krodgers@pensions.org](mailto:krodgers@pensions.org)

We at the Board are working hard to support our ministers and employees of the Presbyterian Church (USA) in new and creative ways. If you have other ideas about how we can help, please let me know. I am happy to meet with presbytery and church committees to discuss your thoughts and hopes of how we can strengthen the benefits offered to those that serve the Church.

*The Board of Pensions is a national agency of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), offering a broad range of benefits to PC(USA) churches, agencies, and mid councils, as well as affiliated employers.*

Member/Employer Services: 800-773-7752, M-F 8:30-6:00pm EST

## Assistance Program

As part of our commitment to mutual care and wholeness, the Board of Pensions has once again expanded access to the Assistance Program to serve more ministers, employees, retirees, and surviving spouses who have financial need. This latest Assistance Program expansion includes broadened eligibility, increased grant amounts, and two new grants. [Read more](#)

## Retirement Conversations

Retirement Conversations is a new online alternative to the Board's in-person THRIVE seminar. It is designed to leverage Board University's on-demand educational offerings covering a wide range of topics related to retirement. This online content is followed by live engagement, focused discussion, and Q&A with other participants, as well as Board University educators. Retirement Conversations is open to plan members, spouses, and surviving spouses within one year of retirement. [Read more](#)

## Other important information:

- **New Benefits Connect Coming:** An extensive upgrade is planned later this year for the Benefits Connect system that members and church employers alike use to enroll in and administer benefits. Watch for more updates on [pensions.org](http://pensions.org).
- **New Year Updates:** The new year is a great time for pastors to ensure that personal information is updated and correct in [Benefits Connect](#). If terms of call have been updated, please share with the Board to ensure that all benefits impacts are reflected accurately. This includes updates to [Effective Salary](#). A Pastor's Participation [dues calculator](#) is available if needed.
- **International SOS:** Members covered by the PPO, EPO, or HDHP medical plans or the Medicare Supplement Plan have the protection of International SOS coverage when traveling abroad. [See more](#)



THE BOARD OF PENSIONS  
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

2000 Market Street | Philadelphia, PA 19103-3298 | 800-773-7752 (800-PRESPLAN)

[pensions.org](http://pensions.org)

# 2023 Benefits That Serve the Church

*Employers have the flexibility to choose from a variety of benefits that best meet your church's budget and the needs of ministers and employees.*

## RETIREMENT PROGRAMS

### Defined Benefit Pension Plan ● + #

The pension plan offers financial security in retirement as guaranteed monthly income, funded through employer dues and investment earnings.

### Retirement Savings Plan ● +

Our 403(b)(9) plan can help participants build savings and achieve long-term retirement goals, with pretax and Roth after-tax contribution features.

## FINANCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAMS

### Death and Disability Plan ● + #

This comprehensive plan offers salary continuation, a lump-sum death benefit, and a monthly benefit in the event of long-term disability. Supplemental coverages are also available.

### Term Life Plan ●

This low-cost coverage option is available in tiers from \$5,000 to \$50,000, or an income-based benefit amount equal to one times a member's effective salary.

### Temporary Disability Plan ● + #

For a disability up to 90 days, this benefit provides employees with up to 60 percent of effective salary (subject to IRS annual limits) after a 14-day waiting period.

### Long-Term Disability Plan ●

This benefit offers financial protection during a long-term disability that extends beyond 90 days, providing a benefit of up to 60 percent of effective salary (subject to IRS annual limits) throughout the disability.

## HEALTH PROGRAMS

### Medical Plan ● +

Three coverage options are available: a preferred provider organization (PPO), an exclusive provider organization (EPO), and a qualified high deductible health plan (HDHP). All feature personalized support for navigating healthcare, generous preventive care and prescription drug benefits, an employee assistance plan, telemedicine, and an online well-being program.

### Vision Eyewear Plan ● +

Employees can save hundreds of dollars every year on the cost of eyeglasses, contacts, and more through this low-cost benefit.

### Dental Plan ● +

This plan provides coverage for a wide range of basic and major services, and orthodontic treatment for children under age 22.

## TAX-ADVANTAGED ACCOUNTS

### Flexible spending account: dependent care ●

Participants can use pretax dollars to pay for eligible care expenses for children under age 13 and certain older family members.

### Flexible spending account: healthcare ●

Participants can pay for eligible healthcare expenses, such as deductibles, copays, and prescription drugs — all with pretax dollars.

### Health savings account ●

When offered along with the high deductible health plan (HDHP), these accounts can be used to pay for qualified healthcare expenses.

#### Work requirement key

- 20 hours or more per week; no requirement for ministers in self-employed validated service
- 20 hours or more per week
- No hourly work requirement
- Requires participation in PC(USA) or other employer-sponsored plan

#### Included in package and employer required to offer

- + Pastor's Participation
- # Minister's Choice



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Presbytery of Sheppards and Lapsley

2023 Spring Youth Retreat

Where: Living River

When: February 24th-26th

Cost: \$80/person

Arrive: 7pm Friday Night

Depart: 9:30am Sunday Morning

Registration:

[pslpcusa.org/retreats](https://pslpcusa.org/retreats)

## PRESBYTERY CALENDAR – 2023

### FEBRUARY

16	Winter Presbytery meeting (in person only), 9 AM-3:00 PM, Host church, Brown Memorial
17	Presbytery office closed
20	Presidents' Day
22	Ash Wednesday
23	Personnel, 9:00 AM, via Zoom Living River Board, 7:00 PM
24-26	Youth Retreat at Living River
27	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
28	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom

### MARCH

1	Presbytery staff meeting, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
8	Executive Council, 9:30 AM, via Zoom/In person
14	COM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
16	PHFC Soire, The Club, 5:30 PM Living River Board, 7:00 PM
27	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
28	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom

### APRIL

2	Palm Sunday
3-7	Holy Week
5	Presbytery staff meeting, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
6	Maundy Thursday
7	Good Friday, Presbytery office closed
9	Resurrection of the Lord/Easter
11	COM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
12	Executive Council, 9:30 AM, via Zoom/In person
27	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
28	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom

### MAY

3	Presbytery staff meeting, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
9	COM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/In person
10	Executive Council, 9:30 AM, via Zoom/In person
18	Spring Presbytery meeting (hybrid), 9 AM-3:00 PM, Host church, Independent Presbyterian
22	CPM, 10:00 AM, via Zoom/in person
23	Anti-Racism, 10:00 AM, via Zoom
29	Presbytery office close in recognition of Memorial Day