

SUMMARY OF PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO BOOK OF ORDER

225TH GA (2022)

There are 33 proposed amendments to the Book of Order:

- A. Nine (22-T through 22-BB) provides for various revisions and new language amendments for several sections to the Directory of Worship. These amendments were a result of an overture from Santa Fe Presbytery.

22T 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.

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.

The phrase "the sacrament of baptism" is added. This is ADDITIONAL Language and does not replace other language. Reference (page 42 "Proposed Amendments to the Constitution" (BOA))

22U W-3.0409 THEOLOGY OF THE LORD'S SUPPER
(TWE-05 2)

Adds the phrase "when appropriate" to the existing phrase of recommended act of providing an invitation to baptismal preparation for those who come to the table who are unbaptized.

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.

This is ADDITIONAL language and does not replace other language. Reference (page 43 BOA)

22V 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

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

This amendment removes the phrase "*The minister of Word and Sacrament...*" leads the prayer of thanksgiving. Reference (page 44 BOA)

22W W-4.0403 ORDER OF WORSHIP (TWE-06)

Adds a phrase about “signs and symbols of blessing” in lieu of “laying on of hands” to the section on ordination and installation services.

The proposed change is from restrictive language to permissive language: the laying on of hands would not be required at installation because physical contact may not be edifying or appropriate to some candidate’s physical preferences

The added language is *“signs and symbols of blessings may be conferred on the newly installed or commissioned person”*. Reference (page 45 BOA)

22X. W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 5)

Adds a sentence on the importance of household worship in faith formation in the Reformed tradition.

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

The addition of the words *“Household worship is a central and important practice within the Reformed tradition, an important means of faith formation.”* No language is deleted. Reference (page 47 BOA)

22Y. W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 6)

Adds an additional paragraph to the existing section on household worship as to mealtime prayers.

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

The following language is added “...Prayers of thanks and blessings, and lament at the household table draw upon ancient Jewish practice and the examples of Jesus, his disciples, and the early Christian community. Mealtime prayers 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.” No language deleted.
Reference (page 48 BOA)

22Z 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

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

The amendment adds the phrase “*faithful discipleship and*” in the following sentence “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.*” Reference (page 49 BOA)

22AA W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 7)

Adds the phrase “particular specialized pastoral care” rather than adding to an existing list of such specialties

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

Amendment : Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~, added text *italics.*

“...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.” Reference (page 51 BOA)

22BB 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

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.

Amendment : Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~, added text *italics*.

“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 hand and anointing with oil, provided that these actions are carefully introduced and interpreted: healing ~~always~~ *its many forms* comes as a gift from God, not as a ~~product~~ *an accomplishment* of human prayer...” Reference (page 53 BOA)

B. Five (22-CC through 22-GG) provides for four amendments to the existing Rules of Discipline with a complete revision of the existing Rules of Discipline with a new section called “Church Discipline” (22-GG).

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.

Rules of Discipline Task Force appointed in 2017. This revision seeks to make this portion of the *Book of Order* more accessible to the church; to preserve and enhance the accountability of councils and individuals; to expand the role of mediation and alternate dispute resolution; and, to provide flexibility in crafting censures and remedies.

This revision deletes the entire existing section called “Rules of Discipline” and replaces it with an entire new section called “Church Discipline”. See pages 64-128 BOA. The “Rules of Discipline” have been replaced in their entirety. Reference (pages 64-133 BOA).

NOTE: THE NEXT FOUR PROPOSED AMENDMENTS (22-CC, 22-DD, 22-EE AND 22-FF) ARE AMENDMENTS TO THE EXISTING RULES OF DISCIPLINE. IF AMENDMENT 22-GG ABOVE IS

APPROVED BY A MAJORITY OF THE PRESBYTERIES, THEN THE EXISTING RULES OF DISCIPLINE INCLUDING THESE FOUR AMENDMENTS WILL BE REMOVED FROM THE BOOK OF ORDER.

22-CC. D-3.0106. WHEN JURISDICTION ENDS (ROD-5)

Allows a disciplinary process to continue after an accused has renounced jurisdiction

Under the current Rules of Discipline, the uncompleted judicial process stops if the accused renounces jurisdiction. This amendment allows the church and the councils to proceed through the remainder of the judicial process honoring our obligations to the accusers and others who may have been harmed. The accused may choose to fully participate, to observe but remain silent, send an advocate to represent them in their absence or not participate at all.

The amendments to this provision says the judicial process does not end when a person renounces jurisdiction and adds a new final sentence “[t]he judicial process shall then proceed per the Rules of Discipline.” Reference (page 55 BOA).

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

Minor editing of noun and verb tense in one sentence.

This amendment deletes the phrase “if that person wishes to plead guilty” and replaces it with “if they wish to plead guilty”. Reference (page 58 BOA).

22-EE. D-10.0303. PETITION FOR REVIEW (ROD-04 1)

Amends the current Rules of Discipline to notify both the person accused and the person who made the accusation if no charges will be filed.

This amendment broadens the notice of no charges will be filed to the person accused rather than the current notice to the person who made the accusation only.

The amendment adds the following phrase at the end “in writing, both the person who has been accused and the person making the accusation.” Reference (page 60 BOA).

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

Changes the phrase “the accused” to “the person accused” wherever the term “the accused” occurs in the current Rules of Discipline.

This amendment minimizes any perception of guilt upon the accused and more faithfully takes into consideration the purpose of church discipline.

This amendment is a simple instruction to use the term “the person accused” throughout the current Rules of Discipline in lieu of “the accused”. Reference (page 62 BOA).

C. Two (22-A and 22-B) Expands inclusive language for Gender Identity.

22A. F-1.0302c THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH (POL-16 1a)

Expands inclusive language with reference to gender identity

The current foundation 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.

Amendment : Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~, added text *italics*. ...Because the church is catholic, not strives everywhere to testify to Christ’s embrace of ~~men, women and children~~ *all people* of all times, places, races, nation’s, ages, *abilities, genders, conditions, and stations in life.*” Reference (page 3 BOA)

22B. F-1.0404 OPENNESS (POL-16 1b)

Expands inclusive language with reference to gender identity

This Amendment seeks to use consistent language about disability throughout the foundational statements of the Book of Order.

Justification: Same as 22A.

Amendment : Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~, added text *italics.*”

...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.”

Reference (Page 5 BOA)

D. Three (22-C, 22-M and 22-N) Allows electronic meetings of all councils, commissions and committees

22C. G-1.0501 MEETINGS (ROD-06 2)

Establishes Robert's Rules of Order (RONR) as the default parliamentary authority for all congregational meetings, and authorizes either wholly or hybrid electronic congregational meetings

The absence of language authorizing electronic meetings has proved problematic at all levels of PC(USA). The proposed language remedies this issue.

Following language is added: *"...congregations and their committees may meet electronically at the discretion of their sessions..."*

Reference (page 7 BOA)

22M G-3.0104 OFFICERS (MC-05)

Adds language that "it is appropriate" to allow councils to adopt procedures for electronic session meetings

Justification: The *Book of Order* allows councils to meet electronically, provided such meetings are authorized in a council's bylaws or manual of administration operations. This amendment confirms that general understanding.

Amendment : added text *italics*.

“It is appropriate for councils to adopt procedures that may allow for electronic session meetings.

Reference (Page 29 BOA)

22N G-3.0105 MEETINGS (ROD-06 3)

Adds provision that all councils and their commissions and committees may meet electronically

Justification: Same as 22M.

Amendment : added text *italics*.

“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.”

Reference (page 31 BOA)

E. Four (22-G, 22-K, 22-L and 22-O) Requires Boundary Training policies and training applicants for ministers of Word and Sacrament, Commissioned Pastors and Certified Christian Educators.

22G. 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

Proposed amendment originated from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force.

Amendment : added text *italics*.

“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.”

Reference (page 15 BOA)

22K G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINING, AND COMMISSIONING (HSB-05 3)

Adds the requirement of boundary training for those elders seeking to be Commissioned Pastors

Proposed amendment originated from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force.

Amendment : added text *italics*

“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.”

Reference (Page 24 BOA)

22L. G-2.1103 CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS (HSB-05 4)

Adds the requirement of boundary training for those elders seeking to be certified as Christian Educators

Proposed amendment originated from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force.

Amendment: Added text in *italics*.

a. Skills and Training

“...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 Responsibilities

“...Certified Christian educator 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.
Reference (page 25 BOA)

22O G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (HSB-059)

Adds language regarding boundary training, including sexual abuse to the requirement for sexual misconduct policies required of councils

Proposed amendment originated from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force.

Amendment: Added text in *italics*

“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.”

Reference: (page 33 BOA)

F. 22-E is to remove “Honorably” from the “Honorably Retired” category for retired ministers.

22E. G-2.0503 CATEGORIES OF MEMBERSHIP (POL-07)

Removes “honorably” before “retired” as the category for retired ministers

...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 may not be worthy of the label

“Honorable.”

Amendment : Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~.

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.~~”

Reference (Page 11 BOA)

G. Terms of Call – 22-I and 22-Q Required paid family leave and minimum severance packages

22I. 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

This proposed amendment originated from the Family Leave Policy Task Force.

Amendment: Added text in *italics*

The terms of call...shall include *provision for a minimum of twelve weeks paid family medical leave and ...*”

Reference: (Page 19 BOA)

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

Authorizes presbyteries to establish minimum requirements for severance packages in terms of call

The amendment 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.

Amendment: Added text in *italics*.

“...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;*”

Reference (page 36 BOA)

H. OTHERS:

- a. Proper business at congregational meeting – disciplinary action against a church member.

22D. 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

This amendment is necessary because business at congregational meetings is limited to those matters specifically listed in G-10503.

Amendment : added text is *italics*.

“G1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings

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

Reference: (Page 9 BOA)

b. Transfer of Ministers of Other Denominations – duty to consult with other denomination (22-F)

22F 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

A more collaborative and individualized approach to credentialing for immigrant pastors ensures that such credentialing does not become a gate-keeping method.

Amendment : Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~, added text *italics*.

“(1) In the case of ministers for immigrant fellowships and congregations, a presbytery may, if it determines that its strategy for missions 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...*
Reference: (Page 13 BOA)

c. Inquirers or candidates accused of sexual misconduct (22-H)

22H 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

This proposed amendment originated from the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force.

Amendment: Added text is *italics*

“ 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.”

Reference: (Page 17 BOA)

d. Commissioned pastors to more than one validated ministry at a time (22-J)

22J. G-2.1001 FUNCTIONS (MC-08)

Adds language allowing Commissioned Pastors to be commissioned to more than one validated ministry at a time

Allows CREs or CPs who are commissioned to more than one validated ministry or churches as needed.

Amendment: Deleted text is ~~strikethrough~~; added text is in *italics*.

When the presbytery, in consultation with ~~the session~~ *one or more sessions* or other responsible committees, determines that its strategy for missions 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...”

Reference: (Page 22 BOA)

e. Councils must adopt an antiracism policy (22-P)

22P 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

Antiracism needs to be upgraded and mandated to the same level as sexual misconduct policy and child and youth protection policies.

Amendment: Deleted text is ~~striketrough~~; added text is *italics*

“...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.*” Reference (page 34 BOA)

f. Synod officers being added as synod members (22-R)

22R. 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

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 purpose of participation and representation.(i.e. constituencies such as racial ethnic caucuses, immigrant communities who may not be elected as commissioners)

Amendment: Added text is in *italics*

“...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.” Reference (page 38 BOA).2323

g. Clarifies definition of “confidentiality” for ministers and commissioned pastors (22-S)

22S G-4.0301 TRUST AND CONFIDENTIALITY
(ROD-07)

Expands and clarifies “confidentiality” requirements for ministers and commissioned pastors

This amendment seeks to clarify that confidentiality is not a justification to ignore abuse or protect perpetrators of misconduct.

Amendment: Deleted text is ~~strikethrough~~; added text is in *italics*.

“ 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...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.”

Reference: (Page 40 BOA)

(02/13/2023)