

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

These amendments to the Book of Order were approved by the 227th General Assembly (2026) and recommended to the presbyteries for their vote. Background and Rationale are found on each corresponding link.

[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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F-1.0305 (RUS-01-1) | OPENESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

(pp.4-9)

MOTION 26-A: Shall F-1.0305 be added to the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity as follows?

F-1.0305 Faithful Witness in Public Life

The church affirms its calling to bear faithful witness in public life, speaking and acting from the example and teachings of Jesus Christ for justice, peace, mercy, and the dignity of all people. The church rejects any ideology that seeks to establish Christianity as a privileged or dominant force through the power of the state, or that conflates religious identity with national, racial, or ethnic supremacy. Such ideologies, in all their forms, are incompatible with the example and teachings of Jesus Christ, constitute a theological error, undermine the church's faithful witness, and are contrary to the church.

G-2.0102 (ORD-07 D) | ORDERED MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

(pp. 10-12)

MOTION 26-B: Shall G-2.0102 Ordered Ministries be amended as follows?

Section G-2.0102, Ordered Ministries

The Church's ordered ministries described in the New Testament and maintained by this church are deacons and presbyters (ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders). Ordered ministries are gifts to the church to order its life so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. ***Each order of ministry is equally important and "one ministry is not to be ordered above another" in the way that God calls, prepares, and equips (Second Helvetic Confession 5.160, 5.161, 5.162).*** The existence of these ordered ministries in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church.

The government of this church is representative, and the right of God's people to elect presbyters and deacons is inalienable. Therefore, no person can be placed in any ordered ministry in a congregation or council of the church except by election of that body.

Ordination to the ministry of deacon, ruling elder, or minister of Word and Sacrament (also called teaching elder) is unique to that order of ministry.

G-2.0104c GIFTS AND QUALIFICATIONS (RAC-04 4b) | ORDERED MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH (pp. 13-17)

MOTION 26-C: Shall G-2.0104c be added as follows?

G-2.0104 Gifts and Qualifications

c. Anti-Racism Formation

In fulfilling its responsibility for preparation for ministry, a presbytery shall require that inquirers and candidates for ordered ministry receive education and formation in anti-racism as part of

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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their preparation for service in the Church. Such formation shall be provided at intervals and in forms determined by the presbytery, consistent with standards established by the General Assembly.

G-2.06 PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (ORD-02) | GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS (pp. 18-19)

MOTION 26-D: Shall the title of G-2.06 be amended as follows? (Deleted text is in ~~striketrough~~; added text is in ***bold italics***.)

G-2.06 PREPARATION FOR ***THE*** MINISTRY ***OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT***

G-2.0601 NATURE AND PURPOSE OF ORDINATION (ORD-07 A) | PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (pp. 20-25)

MOTION 26-E: Shall Section G-2.0601 Nature and Purpose of Ordination, be amended as follows:

G-2.0601 Nature and Purpose of Preparation

It is important that those who are to be ordained as ministers of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task under the direction of the presbytery. For this purpose, a presbytery shall enter into covenant relationship with those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament and with their sessions and congregations. This relationship shall be divided into the two phases of inquiry and candidacy. ***Presbyteries shall ensure training for the members of the presbytery body responsible for preparation for ministry, including those serving as liaisons for inquirers and candidates, and shall ensure that this training be completed a minimum of every three years and recorded in presbytery minutes. The training shall include anti-racism, intercultural competency, implicit-bias awareness, and the equitable support of LGBTQIA+ inquirers and candidates, so that the preparation process is free from discrimination.***

G-2.0603 PURPOSE OF INQUIRY (ORD-07 B) | PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (pp. 26-30)

MOTION 26-F: Shall G-2.0603 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

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.~~ ***Such preparation shall include a certificate of completion of boundary training, which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training, and anti-racism 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 presbytery shall require background checks for inquirers at the onset of the inquiry process. Additionally, the***

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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presbytery shall require an evaluation of inquirers, including psychosocial and vocational inventories, during their inquiry phase.

G-2.0603 PURPOSE OF INQUIRY (CON 09) | PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY

(pp. 31-32)

MOTION 26-G: Shall G-2.0603 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

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.***

2.0606 PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (CON-09)

(pp. 33-34)

MOTION 26-H: Shall a new G-2.0606 in the Form of Government be added as follows?

G-2.0606 Education and Training for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament shall complete boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct; shall complete training in the prevention of abuse of children and youth; and shall provide the presbytery with certificates of completion of these trainings, with recertification at least every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.

G-2.06 PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (ORD-02)

(pp. 35-36)

MOTION 26-I: Shall a new G-2.0606 in the Form of Government be added as follows?

G-2.0606 Education and Training for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament shall complete a graduate course of study at a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, culminating in a master's degree. The course of study shall include Hebrew and Greek languages and exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek.

G-2.0606 SERVICE IN COVENANT RELATIONSHIP (ORD-02) | G-2.06 PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY (pp. 37-38)

MOTION 26-J: Shall the title of G-2.0606 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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G-2.0606 **Supervised** Service **While Under Care of the Presbytery** in ~~Covenant Relationship~~

G-2.0607 FINAL ASSESSMENT AND NEGOTIATION FOR SERVICE (ORD-07 C) | PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY G-2.0607 (pp. 39-51)

MOTION 26-K: Shall G-2.0607 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service be amended as follows:

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament without approval of the presbytery of care. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a minister of the Word and Sacrament shall include:

- a. a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;
- b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a ~~regionally accredited~~ college or university **or an international equivalent as determined by the presbytery;**
- c. a transcript from a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery, showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study, and graduation or proximity to graduation; and
- d. examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. ~~Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.~~ **These materials may be either Standard Ordination Exams or Senior Ordination Portfolios. The body responsible for preparation for ministry in the candidate's and the candidate may together determine which examination materials to use, including a possible combination of the Standard Exams and the Senior Ordination Portfolio.**

(1) Standard Ordination Exams shall be prepared, administered, and evaluated by a body created by the presbyteries.

(2) In the case of use of the Senior Ordination Portfolios, the (Senior Ordination Portfolios) may be prepared by the candidate for ministry according to standards established by a body created by the presbyteries. The body responsible for 40 preparing candidates for ministry in the candidate's presbytery may evaluate the portfolio and subsequently submit both the portfolio and its evaluation to a body established by the presbyteries for final evaluation. Senior Ordination Portfolios, or any senior examination as approved by the presbytery, shall be evaluated using culturally competent, bias-aware standards established by a body created by the presbyteries. Presbyteries shall ensure that evaluation practices are consistent, transparent, and informed by anti-racism, intercultural competency, and equitable assessment principles.

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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G-2.0607 FINAL ASSESSMENT AND NEGOTIATION FOR SERVICE (ORD -02) | PREPARATION FOR MINISTRY
(pp. 52-53)

MOTION 26-L: Shall G-2.0607 Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service be amended as follows:

A candidate may not enter into negotiation for his or her service as a minister of the Word and Sacrament without approval of the presbytery of care. The presbytery shall record when it has certified a candidate ready for examination by a presbytery for ordination, pending a call. Evidence of readiness to begin ordered ministry as a minister of the Word and Sacrament shall include:

- a. a candidate's wisdom and maturity of faith, leadership skills, compassionate spirit, honest repute, and sound judgment;
- b. a transcript showing graduation, with satisfactory grades, at a regionally accredited college or university;
- c. a transcript from a theological institution ~~accredited by the Association of Theological Schools acceptable to the presbytery,~~ showing a course of study including Hebrew and Greek, exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using Hebrew and Greek, satisfactory grades in all areas of study ***in accordance with the educational requirements in G-2.0606,*** and graduation or proximity to graduation; and
- d. examination materials, together with evaluations that declare those materials satisfactory in the areas covered by any standard ordination examination approved by the General Assembly. Such examinations shall be prepared and administered by a body created by the presbyteries.

G-2.07 ORDINATION (ORD-02) (pp. 54-56)

MOTION 26-M: Shall G-2.07 ORDINATION title be amended as follows:

G-2.07 ORDINATION ***TO THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD AND SACRAMENT***

G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINATION AND COMMISSIONING (ORD-07 F) | COMMISSIONING RULING
ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICES (pp. 57-60)

MOTION 26-N: Shall G-2.1002 Training, Examination and Commissioning be amended as follows:

G-2.1002 Training, Examination 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. ***This shall include completion of a denominational baseline for education and preparation of ruling elders for limited pastoral service, study not necessarily at a master's level, and demonstration of competent understanding and application of Presbyterian polity, Reformed worship and sacraments, Reformed***

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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theology, biblical interpretation of the Old and New Testaments, preaching, Christian Education, and pastoral care.

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 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.

G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINATION AND COMMISSIONING (RAC-04 4c) | COMMISSIONING RULING ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICES (pp. 61-64)

MOTION 26-O: Shall G-2.1002 Training, Examination and Commissioning be amended as follows:

G-2.1002 Training, Examination 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, ***and anti-racism 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 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.

G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINATION AND COMMISSIONING (CON-09) | COMMISSIONING RULING ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICES (pp. 65-67)

MOTION 26-P: Shall G-2.1002 Training, Examination and Commissioning be amended as follows:

G-2.1002 Training, Examination 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. Those preparing to be commissioned shall complete boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct; shall complete training in the prevention of abuse of children, youth; and***

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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shall provide the presbytery with certificates of completion of these trainings, 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 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.

G-2.1002 TRAINING, EXAMINATION AND COMMISSIONING (ORD-07 H) | COMMISSIONING RULING ELDERS TO PARTICULAR PASTORAL SERVICES (pp. 68-70)

MOTION 26-Q: Shall G-2.1002 Training, Examination and Commissioning be amended as follows:

G-2.1002 Training, Examination 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. ***A presbytery may determine that a Certified Christian Educator, who is a Ruling Elder has met the education and training requirements for commissioning, provided they are also examined and commissioned in accordance with G-2.1002 and G-2.1004.*** 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 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.

G-2.1101 FORMS OF CERTIFIED CHURCH SERVICE (RAC – 04 4d) | CERTIFIED CHURCH SERVICE (pp. 71-73)

MOTION 26-R: Shall G-2.1101 Forms of Certified Church Service be amended as follows:

G-2.1101 Forms of Certified Church Service

Persons may be certified and called to service within congregations, councils, and church related entities, serving in staff positions. These individuals endeavor to reflect their faith through their work and to strengthen the church through their dedication. They should be encouraged by their session and presbytery to meet, or be prepared to meet, the certification requirements of a national certifying body approved by the General Assembly. Names of those who have earned certification through a national certifying body shall be transmitted to the appropriate body of the General Assembly, which will forward them to the stated clerk of the presbyteries in which those persons labor.

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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Persons certified and called to service within congregations, councils, and church related entities, serving in staff positions, shall participate in ongoing formation and continuing education as required by the certifying body and the presbytery (G-3.0106.)

G-2.1103 CHRISTIAN EDUCATORS (CON 09) | CERTIFIED CHURCH SERVICE

(pp. 74-76)

MOTION 26-S: Shall G-2.1103 Christian Educators be amended as follows:

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 or councils. They shall have skills and training in biblical interpretation, Reformed theology, worship and sacraments, human development, faith development, religious educational 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 presbytery that oversees ministry (G-3.0307). During their term of service in an educational ministry under the jurisdiction of the presbytery, Certified Christian Educators are entitled to the privilege of the floor with voice only at all presbytery meetings, and in the case of Certified Christian Educators who are ruling elders, the privilege of voice and vote at all its 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. Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators shall complete boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct; shall complete training in the prevention of abuse of children and youth; and shall provide the presbytery in which they serve with certificates of completion of these trainings, with recertification at least 75 every thirty-six months.~~ The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet these two requirements. The presbytery shall report a certificate of completion to the national certifying body for these two trainings.

G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (RAC-04 4a) | GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

(pp. 77-81)

MOTION 26-T: Shall G-3.0106 Administration of Mission be amended as follows:

G-3.0106 Administration of Mission

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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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 the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child, youth and adults with vulnerabilities protection policy, and an antiracism 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.

Synod and Presbytery anti-racism policies shall include a required training component at least every thirty-six months for teaching elders, commissioned ruling elders, persons certified and called to service within congregations, councils, and church related entities, serving in staff positions, and inquirers and candidates under their jurisdiction. Such training shall be designed to support faithful leadership, accountability, and the Church's commitment to public theology and ethical leadership. The training shall include measurable outcomes.

A council may delegate aspects of its tasks to such entities as it deems appropriate, provided that those entities remain accountable to the council.

The administration of mission demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church, in that councils share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers (F-3.0203). Through their members and elected commissioners, lower councils participate in planning and administration of the work of higher councils, and in consultation between bodies concerning mission, budget, staffing and fair employment practices, and matters of equitable compensation.

The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give effective witness in the world to God's new creation in Jesus Christ, and should strengthen the church's witness to the mission of God.

Each council above the session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within its bounds. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of per capita funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly.

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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Presbyteries may direct per capita apportionments to sessions within their bounds, but in no case shall the authority of the session to direct its benevolences be compromised.

G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (CON-09) | GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS (pp. 82-84)

MOTION 26-U: Shall G-3.0106 Administration of Mission be amended as follows:

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 the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy ***which shall include requirements for boundary training at least every thirty-six months, a harassment policy, a policy on the abuse of children a child, youth and adults with vulnerabilities protection policy, which shall include requirements for abuse prevention training at least every thirty-six months; a harassment policy;*** and an antiracism policy. ***The policies listed here are minimum requirements and do not constitute an exhaustive list of policies that should be included in a council's manual of operations or bylaws.*** 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.

A council may delegate aspects of its tasks to such entities as it deems appropriate, provided that those entities remain accountable to the council.

The administration of mission demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church, in that councils share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers (F-3.0203). Through their 83 members and elected commissioners, lower councils participate in planning and administration of the work of higher councils, and in consultation between bodies concerning mission, budget, staffing and fair employment practices, and matters of equitable compensation.

The funding of mission similarly demonstrates the unity and interdependence of the church. The failure of any part of the church to participate in the stewardship of the mission of the whole church diminishes that unity and interdependence. All mission funding should enable the church to give

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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effective witness in the world to God's new creation in Jesus Christ, and should strengthen the church's witness to the mission of God.

Each council above the session shall prepare a budget for its operating expenses, including administrative personnel, and may fund it with a per capita apportionment among the particular congregations within its bounds. Presbyteries are responsible for raising their own funds and for raising and timely transmission of per capita funds to their respective synods and the General Assembly. Presbyteries may direct per capita apportionments to sessions within their bounds, but in no case shall the authority of the session to direct its benevolences be compromised.

G-3.0206 TRAINING (CON-09) | THE SESSION

(pp. 85-87)

MOTION 26-V: Shall G-3.0206 Training be added as follows:

G-3.0206 Training

All members of session shall complete boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct; shall complete training in the prevention of abuse of children and youth; and shall provide the clerk of session with certificates of completion of these trainings, with recertification every thirty-six months. The session shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements.

G-3.0301 COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY (ORD-07 E) | THE PRESBYTERY

(pp.88-92)

MOTION 26-W: Shall G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibility be amended as follows:

G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibility

The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations i and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner j and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. 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-, ***and shall enroll ruling elders who are commissioned to limited pastoral service under G-2.1001 only for the duration of the active commission. The ruling elder so commissioned shall have voice and vote in the presbytery only during the term of the active commission under this section.***

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

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[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten ministers of the Word and Sacrament, unless an exception is approved by its synod and the General Assembly giving consideration to the responsibilities assigned to presbyteries in G-3-01 and G-3.03.

The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304)

In light of this charge, the presbytery has responsibility and power to:

- a. *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.* This responsibility shall include organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members; overseeing congregations without pastors; establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them; guiding the preparation of those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament; establishing and maintaining those ecumenical relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its district; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the areas of mission, prophetic witness, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration to the end that the church's witness to the love and grace of God may be heard in the world.
- b. *provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received.* This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at its meetings at least annually and for fellowship groups, new church developments, and other non-congregational entities meeting within its bounds; authorizing and training specific ruling elders to administer or preside at the Lord's Supper when it deems it necessary to meet the needs for the administration of the Sacrament; and exercising pastoral care for the congregations and members of presbytery in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the presbytery may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.
- c. *nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ.* This responsibility shall include ordaining, receiving, dismissing, installing, removing, and disciplining its members who are ministers of the Word and Sacrament I; commissioning ruling elders to limited pastoral service; promoting the peace and harmony of congregations and inquiring into the sources of congregational discord; supporting congregations in developing the graces of generosity, stewardship, and service; assisting congregations in developing mission and participating in the mission of the whole church; taking jurisdiction over the members of dissolved congregations and granting transfers of their membership to other congregations; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within its bounds; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with Church Discipline.

General Assembly 227

Summary of Proposed Amendments to the Constitution

These amendments to the Book of Order were approved by the 227th General Assembly (2026) and recommended to the presbyteries for their vote. Background and Rationale are found on each corresponding link.

[FULL GA227 PROPOSED AMENDMENTS](#)

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

G-3.0301 COMPOSITION AND RESPONSIBILITY (ORD-07 G) | THE PRESBYTERY

(pp. 93-97)

MOTION 26-X: Shall G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibility be amended as follows:

G-3.0301 Composition and Responsibility

The presbytery is the council serving as a corporate expression of the church within a certain district and is composed of all the congregations and ministers of the Word and Sacrament within that district. The presbytery shall adopt and communicate to the sessions a plan for determining how many ruling elders each session should elect as commissioners to presbytery, with a goal of numerical parity of ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders. This plan shall require each session to elect at least one commissioner ~~j~~ and shall take into consideration the size of congregations as well as a method to fulfill the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403 and G3.0103. Ruling elders elected as officers of the presbytery shall be enrolled as members during the period of their service. 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.

The minimum composition of a presbytery is ten duly constituted sessions and ten ministers of the Word and Sacrament, unless an exception is approved by its synod and the General Assembly giving consideration to the responsibilities assigned to presbyteries in G-3-01 and G-3.03.

The presbytery is responsible for the government of the church throughout its district, and for assisting and supporting the witness of congregations to the sovereign activity of God in the world, so that all congregations become communities of faith, hope, love, and witness. As it leads and guides the witness of its congregations, the presbytery shall keep before it the marks of the Church (F1.0302), the notes by which Presbyterian and Reformed communities have identified themselves through history (F-1.0303) and the six Great Ends of the Church (F-1.0304)

In light of this charge, the presbytery has responsibility and power to:

- a. *provide that the Word of God may be truly preached and heard.* This responsibility shall include organizing, receiving, merging, dismissing, and dissolving congregations in consultation with their members; overseeing congregations without pastors; establishing pastoral relationships and dissolving them; guiding the preparation of those preparing to become ministers of the Word and Sacrament; establishing and maintaining those ecumenical ⁹⁴ relationships that will enlarge the life and mission of the church in its district; providing encouragement, guidance, and resources to congregations in the areas of mission, prophetic witness, leadership development, worship, evangelism, and responsible administration to the end that the church's witness to the love and grace of God may be heard in the world.
- b. *provide that the Sacraments may be rightly administered and received.* This responsibility shall include authorizing the celebration of the Lord's Supper at its meetings at least annually and for fellowship groups, new church developments, and other non-congregational entities meeting within its bounds; authorizing and training specific ruling elders to administer or

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preside at the Lord's Supper when it deems it necessary to meet the needs for the administration of the Sacrament; and exercising pastoral care for the congregations and members of presbytery in order that the Sacraments may be received as a means of grace, and the presbytery may live in the unity represented in the Sacraments.

- c. *nurture the covenant community of disciples of Christ*. This responsibility shall include ordaining, receiving, dismissing, installing, removing, and disciplining its members who are ministers of the Word and Sacrament I; commissioning ruling elders to limited pastoral service; promoting the peace and harmony of congregations and inquiring into the sources of congregational discord; supporting congregations in developing the graces of generosity, stewardship, and service; assisting congregations in developing mission and participating in the mission of the whole church; taking jurisdiction over the members of dissolved congregations and granting transfers of their membership to other congregations; warning and bearing witness against error in doctrine and immorality in practice within its bounds; and serving in judicial matters in accordance with Church Discipline; ***and nurturing our inclusive diversity witness by providing for the membership and baptismal rolls of those desiring to be members of the PC(U.S.A.).***

G-3.0306 MEMBERSHIP OF THE PRESBYTERY (CON-09) | THE PRESBYTERY

(pp. 98-100)

MOTION 26-Y: Shall G-3.0306 Membership of the Presbytery be amended as follows:

G-3.0306 Membership of the Presbytery

Each presbytery determines the ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are its members and validates the ministries in which they are to be engaged. It shall be guided in this determination by written criteria developed by the presbytery for validating ministries within its bounds (G2.0503a).

The presbytery shall examine each minister of the Word and Sacrament or candidate who seeks membership in it on his or her Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this church.

The presbytery may designate ministers of the Word and Sacrament to work as teachers, evangelists, administrators, chaplains, and in other forms of ministry recognized as appropriate by the presbytery. Those so designated may administer the Sacraments at times and places authorized by the presbytery.

Every minister of the Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily be a member of the presbytery where his or her work is situated or of the presbytery where she or he resides. The presbytery may grant a minister permission to engage in work validated ministry that is outside its geographic bounds or which is not under its jurisdiction, but no presbytery shall permit a minister to engage in work that is within the geographic bounds of another presbytery and which is properly within the responsibility of another presbytery without consent of that presbytery. Such permission shall be obtained from both presbyteries and shall be reviewed and renewed annually.

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Minister members of the presbytery shall complete boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct; shall complete training in the prevention of abuse of children and youth; and shall provide the presbytery with certificates of completion of these trainings, with recertification every thirty-six months. The presbytery shall determine which trainings are approved to meet the criteria of these two requirements, and may offer exemptions to these requirements at its discretion.

A minister of the Word and Sacrament who is serving in a church outside the United States may, with the approval of the presbytery, accept membership in that church for the period of such service without affecting his or her membership in a presbytery of this church.