

AUGUST 2007

**EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY
OPEN BOOK
MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination is intended to “assess the candidate’s working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined” [G-14.0310d(5)].

The intent of this examination is to test readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates will utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy of either the 2005-2007 *Book of Order*, or the 2007-2009 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the *Form of Government*, the *Directory for Worship*, and the *Rules of Discipline*.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

THREE HOURS

OPEN BOOK

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AUGUST 2007
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION

PAGE 2 OF 6

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- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

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AUGUST 2007
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION

PAGE 3 OF 6

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

	ONE HOUR	OPEN BOOK	REQUIRED
G-4.0300	Principles of Presbyterian Government		
G-4.0301	Presbyterian Polity		
	The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms, within the context of its commitment to the Church universal, a special commitment to basic principles of Presbyterian polity: ...		
	b. This church shall be governed by presbyters (elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, traditionally called ruling and teaching elders);		

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Using chapters other than 1-4 of the *Form of Government*, cite and briefly Discuss at least four (4) *Book of Order* references (e.g. X-0.0000) that Demonstrate how this principle is lived out in the church.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an essay on this “basic principle of Presbyterian polity” for use as an introduction in a church officer handbook.

AUGUST 2007
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION

PAGE 4 OF 6

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

As pastor, you are leading a training retreat for session. The following discussion occurs:

Terry: I just visited my mother's church, and they have a board of deacons. Mom Said that they visit the sick. What else do deacons do?

Ricky: Our session members are too busy to visit the sick. Let's ask some people To help and call them deacons.

Jorge: Why do some Presbyterian churches have deacons while we don't?

Pat: I think we need deacons; what do we need to do to have them?

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least four (4) issues raised in the situation. For each issue cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a Presentation to respond to the session.

AUGUST 2007
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION

PAGE 5 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

A.

As pastor, you are attending your first meeting of the congregation's nominating committee. The committee is charged with nominating church officers. The following comments are made:

Beth: Our community and our church are changing, and of course we're aware of more racial ethnic persons in our congregation. By accepting them as members, are we not obligated to ask some to be officers?

Bob: It seems to me we ought to be color-blind and nominate people whose gifts match what we need.

Mary: If we did nominate one of the racial ethnic members, shouldn't that person feel obligated to represent the other racial ethnic people and vote accordingly?

Tad: The congregation elected us to this nominating committee, but as I look around the table, we're not really very representative of the congregation.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least one issue raised by each committee member. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, explain to the nominating committee your understanding of the church's commitment to representation and how it should be practiced in the local congregation.

--OR--

**AUGUST 2007
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 6 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

B.

You are a minister member of the presbytery serving in a specialized ministry and have agreed to preach at a church whose pastor has recently left to accept another call. The clerk of session asks you to moderate the annual meeting of the congregation at which officers are to be elected. The meeting is scheduled immediately after the worship service at which you are preaching. The clerk then informs you that the previous pastor always ordained and/or installed newly elected elders and deacons at the close of the same congregational meeting. She wants to know if you will please do that as well.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by these requests. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each of the issues identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the clerk.

JANUARY 2008

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**JANUARY 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 3 OF 6

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

G-4.0302 Presbyterian Unity

The nature of Presbyterian order is such that it shares power and responsibility. The system of governing bodies, whether they have authority over one or many church, sustains such mutual relationships within the structures as to express the unity of the church.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) that is a direct expression of this principle, from each of the following:
 - the *Form of Government* (except chapters 1 – 4),
 - the *Directory for Worship*, and
 - the *Rules of Discipline*,Each citation must provide a different example of how governing bodies share power and responsibility in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article for a congregational newsletter explaining this principle of shared governance.

**JANUARY 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 4 OF 6

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

The longtime clerk of session died while in office. As pastor, you are moderating a meeting of session one week later. The following comments are made.

Lorene: How do we go about getting a new clerk of session? Pastor, can't you just appoint someone?

Harry: The clerk doesn't do anything but take the minutes. Why can't we just have our church secretary do that?

Vivian: How long does a clerk serve? Do we really have to have one?

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify four (4) issues raised in the situation. Cite one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, instruct session regarding the office of clerk of session.

**JANUARY 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 5 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

A.

You, as pastor, are teaching a class for prospective members. Several participants ask “who runs this church?”

Lewis: In my last church the minister made most of the decisions because he was ordained. Isn't it the same here?

Ilva: What officers are there? Who appoints them?

Rafael: What do officers do, and how long do officers serve?

Maria: I was in a church where all the elders were men over 65 years old.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least five (5) issues raised in the class. Cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article about the leadership of the church for a prospective member information packet.

--OR--

**JANUARY 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 6 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

B.

One weekday morning two members invite you to see a change in the sanctuary. They unveil the old communion table to reveal a newly etched and gilded engraving on the front, visible even from the last pew. The engraving reads: “In loving memory of **Betty B. Worker**, wife, mother, friend and sister in Christ.” Easter lilies have been painted on both sides of the inscription.

“Don’t you think it’s lovely, Pastor? Betty worked so hard and faithfully all these years to make our sanctuary beautiful. She always loved lilies!”

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) problems raised in this situation. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each problem.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, outline a presentation for session on both memorial gifts and sanctuary furnishings.

CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION

1. Do *not* include your name in this examination.
2. Do *not* include in this examination the name of the congregation or presbytery where you are a member.
3. Do *not* include in this examination the name of the seminary you attend or have attended.
4. Do *not* include in this examination the names of professors with whom you have studied, except in a footnote or bibliographical reference.
5. If you have taken the examinations before, do *not* include any reference to that in this examination.
6. Do *not* use a pencil to write your responses.
7. Clearly identify at the beginning of each of your responses the number of the section and/or required response which you are answering.

If these instructions are not followed, the examination will be returned ungraded.

If you type or print your examination, staple your responses to the first few pages of this booklet. Placing page numbers on your responses will assure that the readers see your response(s) as you intended.

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**AUGUST 2008
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PAGE 3 OF 6

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

G-4.0104 A Particular Presbyterian Church

Each particular church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be governed by this Constitution. Its officers are ministers of the Word and Sacrament, elders, and deacons. Its government and guidance are the responsibility of the session. *It shall fulfill its responsibilities as the local unit of mission for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.* (Emphasis added)

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that describe how a particular congregation seeks to “*fulfill its responsibilities as the local unit of mission for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.*”
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a proposal for discussion at a church officer retreat suggesting how the congregation can fulfill its responsibilities as a local unit of mission.

**AUGUST 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 4 OF 6

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

Dave, a young elder at the church where you are pastor, says, “As I listened to your recent sermon series, ‘The Gifts of the Spirit,’ I felt called to use my gifts to develop a recreational sports program for the community around our church. I want it to be a ministry of our congregation. We have that large space out back that could easily be made into sports fields. Here is a fifteen-page plan that I have prepared as a starting point. I feel God wants me to do this. What are the next steps?”

The two of you agree to meet in one week to discuss the “next steps.”

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify and briefly discuss three (3) significant considerations raised by this situation and cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, describe what you will say to Dave about next steps when you meet with him.

**AUGUST 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 5 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

A.

You are pastor of a church in the center of a growing suburban area. The traffic light at the corner of the church property controls a central intersection and has been under review by local government leaders. You attended a public hearing some time ago but have heard nothing recently about the plans for the intersection.

One day an engineer from the Department of Transportation comes into your office. She explains that improvements are about to be made and asks you to sign a paper agreeing to sell to the local government nearly a thousand square feet of the church front lawn in order to add a turning lane. She indicates that your signature is all that is needed for the project to begin in two weeks.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues for the church in this situation. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the engineer, and outline what next steps you would take and with whom you would take them.

--OR--

**AUGUST 2008
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

PAGE 6 OF 6

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY
(Continued)**

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

B.

During a heated discussion with the chair of the session Personnel Committee, the pastor says, "I guess my ministry at this church is done. It is time for me to leave!" After returning home, the pastor emails the Personnel Committee chair, reiterating his intention to leave. The chair forwards the email to all session members. She also notifies the moderator of the Committee on Ministry (COM) that their pastor has resigned, and she asks how to proceed.

The moderator of COM contacts the pastor, who states that he never intended to resign. He does agree to meet with a representative from COM and the rest of session at a special meeting. As a member of COM, you have been asked to be that representative.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify three (3) issues in the situation. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write the opening statement that you will use to frame the discussion and provide the information needed by all parties for this special meeting.

**JANUARY 2009
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

OPEN BOOK

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**JANUARY 2009
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

PAGE 3 OF 6

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

The Historic Principles of Church Order, in G-1.0301, quote the *Westminster Confession of Faith*: “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men¹ which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.”

The *Form of Government* states in G-6.0108b, “in becoming a(n) ... officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds.”

¹ The word “men” in this quotation from the eighteenth century should be understood as applying to all persons.

REQUIRED RESPONSE:

Write an essay of describing how a pastor or elder might live with the tension between these two affirmations. Include at least three (3) additional citations from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) that offer guidance in these considerations.

JANUARY 2009
CHURCH POLITY EXAM

PAGE 4 OF 6

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

A new church school curriculum was approved by session with an 8-1 vote after a protracted and heated discussion. After adjournment, you and a few elders are gathered in the parking lot where the following comments are made:

Elder Alphonse: Pastor, why couldn't we get Elder Bently to change her vote and support the new curriculum proposed by the Christian Education Committee? I don't think we can proceed to change the curriculum without a unanimous action of session. This is too important an issue to implement with a divided vote. I think we should reconsider it at our next meeting.

Elder Daniels: Pastor, isn't there some formal way that elders like Elder Bently can register their opposition to a decision without us having to revisit the entire debate?

Elder Engel: Elder Bently always finds reasons to object to new ideas. I think it is time for us to vote her off the session. Clearly she is not interested in the future of the congregation.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised in the parking lot discussion. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, describe what you would say, and in what setting or circumstance, you would address each of the elders named above, exercising appropriate pastoral sensitivity.

**JANUARY 2009
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

PAGE 5 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

A.

You are the pastor of a Presbyterian church. Late one Thursday afternoon you receive a telephone call from the leader of a neighborhood group of Muslims requesting to use a room in the church the next day for Friday prayers. The meeting space that they have been renting has just been destroyed by a fire. The Muslim leader indicates that the Islamic Society might also be interested in a long-term rental of space in the church building.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least two (2) issues raised by this request. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the Muslim leader, explaining the reasons for your reply.

OR

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PAGE 6 OF 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

B.

You have been certified ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call. Last Sunday, on the recommendation of its Pastor Nominating Committee, the congregation of a Presbyterian church voted to call you as pastor. You begin to think about what additional steps need to be taken in order for you to become the installed pastor.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) constitutionally required steps between the congregational election of a pastor and hearing the words “you are now a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation.” (W-4.4006d(1)) Provide one (1) or more citations from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) for each step you have identified.
2. Briefly describe each step identified in your answer in Required Response 1, stating who (including yourself) needs to be involved and the particular role or responsibility of each person or entity.

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

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

AUGUST 2009
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 2 of 6

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

The readers, in grading the examination, will use the following criteria to assess readiness for ministry:

- Recognition and knowledge of the polity issues applicable to the question, and ability to cite relevant sections of the *Book of Order*;
- Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution;
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole;
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church
 - are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION

BEFORE BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.

AUGUST 2009
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 3 of 6

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

One of the great themes of the Reformed tradition is

the recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by *seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God*. (emphasis added)

(G-2.0500a [4])

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Excluding Chapters G-1 through G-4, cite and explain the significance of at least three (3) references from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) that are expressions of “*seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God*.”
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article for a church newsletter about the call for “*seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God*.”

AUGUST 2009
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 4 of 6

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

During your first year in a new pastorate, the treasurer for a neighboring PC(U.S.A.) church, who serves on its session, schedules time to meet with you. In your office she says,

While our pastor was away on vacation, I received in my box two credit card account statements that I had never seen before. They both had names of mission projects we support as well as the church's name. When I opened the statements, I telephoned the bank and discovered that the pastor was the only person authorized to sign. I could find no record of the accounts in any session document for the last two years. When I asked our pastor about them, I found her to be defensive, vague, and evasive. I am frustrated and confused about what to do. Can you help me?

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by the scenario. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, suggest a course of action for the elder. What action, if any, would you, as the new pastor, take?

AUGUST 2009
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 5 of 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

A.

While serving as pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, you are visited by a woman who says,

Pastor, I have been attending Sunday services for the last few months and have found the worship very meaningful. I would like to know if I can become a member. Is that possible? What would I have to do? Please explain membership to me.

REQUIRED RESPONSE:

Citing at least one (1) relevant *Book of Order* passage (e.g., X-0.0000) for each of the following, explain to the woman

- (a) the requirements for membership;
- (b) the responsibilities of membership; and
- (c) the steps to become a member.

OR

AUGUST 2009
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 6 of 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY
(continued)

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

B.

You are pastor of The Stained Glass Church in the City, where you have served for two years. One Friday afternoon, you receive a call from the previous pastor of the church asking if the sanctuary will be open that evening for the wedding rehearsal. You are not aware of a wedding scheduled for this weekend. After further inquiry, you are told that he had been asked by a couple who are members of your church to officiate at their wedding. He had agreed.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by this scenario. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) reference for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, outline the correct procedures that should have been followed by all involved.

**JANUARY 2010
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK
MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination is intended to “assess the candidate's working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined.”

The intent of this examination is to test readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates will utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy of the 2009–2011 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines, or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

THREE HOURS

OPEN BOOK

The examination consists of three sections. Sections I and II are required. Section III has two options. Select one option. Each section is designed to be completed in one hour.

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JANUARY 2010
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 2 of 6

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The readers, in grading the examination, will use the following criteria to assess readiness for ministry:

- Recognition and knowledge of the polity issues applicable to the question, and ability to cite relevant sections of the *Book of Order*; Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution;
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole;
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION
BEFORE BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

One of the Historic Principles of Church Order addresses mutual forbearance. *The Book of Order* states,

we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.

(G-1.0305)

Note: The words “men” and “man’s” throughout this quotation from the eighteenth century should be understood as applying to all persons.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Cite and briefly discuss direct expressions of this principle for individuals or for entities of the church. Use at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from each of the following:
 - Form of Government (except chapters G-1 through G-4)
 - Directory for Worship
 - Rules of Discipline.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article for a congregation’s newsletter explaining this practice of Presbyterian governance.

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

A fellow Presbyterian minister seeks your advice. She is the chaplain at a pediatric hospital. She tells you one of the patients confided in her that the pastor of a nearby Presbyterian church touched the patient inappropriately during a recent youth group retreat. The patient expressed concern that others may have had a similar experience.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that address the situation above. Include at least one (1) reference from each of the following:
 - Form of Government
 - Directory for Worship
 - Rules of Discipline.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, advise the chaplain.

JANUARY 2010
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 5 of 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

A.

At a regular meeting of session, it is reported that the next meeting of presbytery will include proposed actions pertaining to the state's regulation of homeless shelters. Elder Lin suggests that JB be elected as a commissioner to that presbytery meeting. "She is the leading public advocate in the state on this social justice issue and a well-respected member of our church."

Elder Pat, the clerk of session, says,

"JB is not an elder. We have to elect elders as commissioners to presbytery."

Elder Kim adds,

"Maybe we could have her brief us on the details before the meeting and tell commissioners how to vote on the proposals."

Elder Lou comments,

"I don't think anyone who has a well-known public position on such matters should be allowed to participate in a presbytery meeting. Couldn't our tax-exempt status be threatened for practicing politics at presbytery?"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least three (3) polity issues expressed in the comments of the elders. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a presentation for the session that explains how its commissioners to presbytery are chosen, and how they serve.

OR

JANUARY 2010
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 6 of 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY
(continued)

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

B.

As pastor, you are meeting with the nominating committee that is considering Lucy Snowbird to serve as deacon. She is a part-year resident in this community and actively participates in the life of the congregation. She is a member of a Presbyterian church in another state.

The chair of the committee says, "Lots of our members are not as regular in attending as she is, so it's OK for us to nominate her, isn't it?"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that relate to this situation.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a presentation to the nominating committee about the rights and privileges of membership in a particular church, and the qualifications for election and service as deacon.

**AUGUST 2010
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

OPEN BOOK

MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination is intended to "assess the candidate's working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined."

The intent of this examination is to test readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates shall utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy of the 2009-2011 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

THREE HOURS

OPEN BOOK

The examination consists of three Sections. All three sections are required. Section III has two options. Select one option. Each Section is designed to be completed in one hour. In order to receive a Final Evaluation of "Satisfactory" on this exam, two of the three sections must receive a "Satisfactory."

The readers, in evaluating the examination, will use the following criteria to assess readiness for ministry:

- Recognition and knowledge of the polity issues applicable to the question, and ability to cite relevant sections of the *Book of Order*;
- Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution;
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole;
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 2 of 6

You may write your answers in ink in your own handwriting, type them, or use a computer. Do not use a pencil to write your responses; **papers written in pencil will be returned without being evaluated.** If you handwrite your examination, do not skip lines in the examination book. You may make corrections, deletions, or additions without rewriting or erasing. Identify every answer by the number and letter assigned to it (e.g., III. B). **Illegible papers shall be returned without being evaluated.**

You are encouraged to use a computer. You may bring your own equipment or, at some exam sites, you may use equipment provided by the proctor. You must confirm with the proctor in advance of the testing date what equipment (power strips, computers, printers, etc.) is available at the testing site.

If you use a computer:

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

Syntax or grammar will not be evaluated. However, the evaluation of papers may be affected if they cannot be understood because of poor syntax or grammar.

Maintaining the candidate's anonymity is of fundamental importance to assure fair evaluation of examination papers. Failure to comply with any of the following instructions will result in the paper being found as unsatisfactory:

- **Do not include your name**
- **Do not include the name of your congregation or presbytery**
- **Do not identify the seminary you attend or have attended**
- **Do not identify professors with whom you have studied**
- **Do not indicate whether you have taken this or other senior ordination exams before**
- All three sections must be answered. The paper must receive a "Satisfactory" evaluation on at least two of the three sections to be considered "Satisfactory."

**IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION BEFORE
BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.**

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE
ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

In **G-3.0401** we are told that

The Church is called:

d. to a new openness to God's continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be a more effective instrument of mission in the world.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Cite & briefly discuss at least three (3) *Book of Order* references (e.g., X-0.0000) that illustrate how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks to respond to this call. Include at least one citation each from the *Form of Government* and the *Directory for Worship*.
2. Informed by your answer to Required Response 1, write a presentation for your session that explains how “*God’s continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical*” enables your congregation to be “*a more effective instrument of mission in the world.*”

SECTION II CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

You are a member of the presbytery's administrative commission overseeing a growing Korean Presbyterian New Church Development (NCD). The organizing pastor calls and asks to talk to you. When you get together, he says, "As you know we are nesting in Memorial Presbyterian Church. This last week, the Memorial session informed me that, because they are down to fifteen active members, they are going to sell their building to a Montessori school. They said we have one month to find a new place to worship. We have been there for over four years and are committed to continuing the mission of the PCUSA in this neighborhood. We don't want to leave this building, but we can't afford to buy it. Is there anything we can do about this?"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised in this scenario. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) relevant *Book of Order* references (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Based on your work in Required Response 1, prepare a presentation for your presbytery administrative commission identifying a course of action and the implications for both Memorial Presbyterian Church and the NCD.

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

A.

You, as pastor, are leading a confirmation class and a question is asked about what happens to all of the money that the church receives in the offering each week. Before you answer the question, you ask what they think.

Lucia: I heard that all of the money goes to the Presbytery Office and they give each church what they need.

Nicole: I thought that the pastor took all of the money, paid the bills, and got to keep what was left over.

Tim: Aren't the Elders somehow involved in what happens to the money?

Kim: I thought it all went to feed the hungry.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least one (1) issue raised by each person above, a different issue for each person. Cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer to Required Response 1, respond to each young person.

- OR -

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

CHOOSE ONE: A or B

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

B.

During a staff meeting, the music director of the congregation you pastor announces proudly, “I’ve just ordered the set of bells that I’ve been wanting so we could start a hand bell choir. I got tired of waiting for approval, so when the bell company’s annual sale came around, I just ordered them! They were a real good buy!”

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by this situation; cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer to Required Response 1, address the staff, responding to the situation created by the music director’s action.

JANUARY 2011
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

OPEN BOOK

MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination is intended to "assess the candidate's working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined."

The intent of this examination is to test readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates shall utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy of the 2009-2011 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

THREE HOURS

OPEN BOOK

The examination consists of three Sections. All three sections are required. Section III has two options. Select one option. Each Section is designed to be completed in one hour. In order to receive a Final Evaluation of Satisfactory on this exam, two of the three sections must receive a Satisfactory.

You are required to use a computer. You may bring your own equipment or, at some exam sites, you may use equipment provided by the proctor

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

Page 2 of 6

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- Recognition and knowledge of the polity issues applicable to the question, and ability to cite relevant sections of the *Book of Order*;
- Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution;
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole;
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION BEFORE
BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

G-1.0307 states:

(7) That all Church power, whether exercised by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative; that is to say, that the Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners; that no Church governing body ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Excluding chapters G-1 through G-4, cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) using three different chapters of the *Book of Order* that illustrate how the exercise of church power in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is “*only ministerial and declarative.*”
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write a presentation for an elder training class that explains how power is exercised in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

SECTION II CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

You are the new pastor at the Crabtree Presbyterian Church. Elder Susan, the moderator of the nominating committee, invites you to their meeting. At the meeting the following comments are made.

- Susan: Our previous pastor picked the nominees each year after checking the giving and attendance records.
- Pat: Last year we had a hard time finding people willing to be nominated. Do we really need to elect members from the congregation to serve on the nominating committee?
- Barbara: I want to nominate my husband Mike for one of the elder slots. He really wants to serve and it would give us something to do together.
- Eriberto: Let's nominate Herb and his wife since they are the biggest givers in the church.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify four (4) issues raised by this scenario, citing one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue raised.
2. Respond to the committee, clarifying your role as pastor and the responsibilities of the nominating committee.

III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

A.

You have been called to be the first ever Associate Pastor at the Covenant Presbyterian Church. At the church picnic, you sit at a table of some of the newest members. You are asked the following questions:

- Sean: What exactly is an associate pastor? Are you a pastor in training like the assistant manager at my job?
- Aretha: How long do you get to stay here?
- Cindy: Are there things that you are not allowed to do until you become a “real” pastor?
- Juan: How did Pastor Jean find you?
- Ian: I hear that Pastor Jean is going to retire in five years. Will you take her place?
- Marsha: Who decides what you will do around here?

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least one (1) issue raised by each of four (4) people, a different issue for each person. Cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your work in Required Response 1, respond pastorally to each of the four people.

III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

B.

A wealthy member of your congregation, who recently lost a spouse, comes into your office. “Pastor, I’ve been bothered by that plain glass window toward the rear of our sanctuary. So I’ve commissioned a stained glass window portraying our dog and cat to be installed in its place. Here’s the artist drawing of the window. The glass factory has been making the pieces and will begin the installation next week. You’re going to love it!”

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least four (4) issues raised by this situation; cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified. Include at least one (1) citation each from the *Form of Government* and the *Directory for Worship*.
2. Informed by your answer to Required Response 1, respond to the member about the issues identified.

AUGUST 2011

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

OPEN BOOK

MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination is intended to “assess the candidate’s working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined.”

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ESSAY QUESTIONS

THREE HOURS

OPEN BOOK

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In evaluating the examination, the readers will use the following criteria to assess readiness for ministry:

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- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts

AUGUST 2011

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 2 of 6

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When writing this exam:

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- Number the pages.
- Include your candidate number on each page of the exam, **but not your name**.
- Double-space your responses and use a 12-point font.
- Staple the printed copy inside the exam cover on the right-hand side when finished.
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- **Do *not* include the name of your congregation or presbytery.**
- **Do *not* identify the seminary you attend or have attended.**
- **Do *not* identify professors with whom you have studied.**
- **Do *not* indicate whether you have taken this or other ordination exams before.**

**IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION BEFORE
BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.**

AUGUST 2011

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 3 of 6

SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

A Historic Principle of church order in G-1.0303 is:

(3) That our blessed Savior, for the edification of the visible Church, which is his body, hath appointed officers, not only to preach the gospel and administer the Sacraments, *but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation of both truth and duty*; and that it is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole Church, in whose name they act, to censure or cast out the erroneous and scandalous, observing, in all cases, the rules contained in the Word of God. (*emphasis added*)

REQUIRED RESPONSE

Citing at least four (4) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order*, write a summary for an officers handbook that will explain how officers are expected “*to exercise discipline, for the preservation of truth and duty*” in both their personal life and in their role as officers in the PC(USA).

AUGUST 2011

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 4 of 6

SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

You are pastor of Covenant Presbyterian Church. A member of the youth group asks to speak to you confidentially and says that on a recent retreat the Associate Pastor for Youth was showing images on the laptop computer that were sexually suggestive and inappropriate.

After arranging to counsel further with the youth, you begin to put together a plan of action to deal with what the youth has told you.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by this scenario. Cite and discuss at least one (1) relevant *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, describe your plan of action in detail.

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

A.

You are conducting a training class for ruling elders in your presbytery. Someone in the class says, “Our pastor is about to retire. Presbytery has told our congregation it will need a temporary pastor until a permanent pastor is called. What is the difference between a temporary pastor and a permanent pastor?” You ask the members of the class how they would respond.

Emily: Both are members of presbytery. Both preach and celebrate the sacraments. Both moderate the session. I think the only difference is how long they stay.

Shin: A few years ago we had a temporary supply. One time our session had a tie vote and our supply told us that only a permanent pastor can vote at a session meeting.

José: Maybe that pastor hadn’t been installed yet. I think there are things a minister can’t do before being installed, but once your temporary pastor is installed you’ll have a real pastor.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least one (1) issue raised by each of the three (3) ruling elders, Emily, Shin, and José, concerning the differences between teaching elders in temporary and permanent relationships. Provide and briefly discuss one (1) citation (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified.
- 2 Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Emily, Shin, and José.

- OR -

AUGUST 2011

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

Page 6 of 6

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

B.

After worship on Sunday morning, one of the college students who has attended regularly since the beginning of the fall semester approaches you. She says, “Pastor, I’d love to become more active in this church. I’ve heard that it’s possible to become an associate member without giving up my home church membership. Is that true?”

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify and discuss three (3) citations (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* relevant to the conversation.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, explain to the college student the requirements of membership, and whether it is possible for her request to be granted.

JANUARY 2012
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY

OPEN BOOK

MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination is intended to "assess the candidate's working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined."

The intent of this examination is to assess readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates shall utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy/or a PDF of the 2011-2013 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.

ESSAY QUESTIONS

THREE HOURS

OPEN BOOK

The examination consists of three sections. All three sections are required. Section III has two options. Select one option. Each section is designed to be completed in one hour.

In order to receive a final evaluation of "satisfactory" on this exam, two of the three sections must receive a "satisfactory."

In evaluating the examination, the readers will use the following criteria to assess readiness for ministry:

- Recognition and knowledge of the polity issues applicable to the question, and ability to cite relevant sections of the *Book of Order*
- Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts

Page 2 of 6

You are required to use a computer to write this exam. You may bring your own equipment or, at some exam sites, you may use equipment provided by the proctor. You must confirm with the proctor in advance of the testing date what equipment (power strips, computers, printers, etc.) is available at the testing site. You are strongly urged to make sure that all the necessary equipment and software are properly working and coordinated.

When writing this exam:

- Identify every answer by the number and letter assigned to it (e.g., III. B.).
- Do not consult or copy from personal notes or any other resource on the computer or a network during the exam.
- Number the pages.
- Include your candidate number on each page of the exam, **but not your name**.
- Double-space your responses and use a 12-point font.
- Staple the printed copy inside the exam cover on the right-hand side when finished.
- **The completed exam packet must be turned in before you leave the testing area or it will not be accepted.**
- **Papers that cannot be read for any reason shall be returned without being evaluated.**

Syntax or grammar will not be evaluated. However, the evaluation of papers may be affected if they cannot be understood because of poor syntax or grammar.

Maintaining the candidate's anonymity is of fundamental importance to assure fair evaluation of examination papers. Failure to comply with any of the following instructions will result in an unsatisfactory exam:

- **Do not include your name.**
- **Do not include the name of your congregation or presbytery.**
- **Do not identify the seminary you attend or have attended.**
- **Do not identify professors with whom you have studied.**
- **Do not indicate whether you have taken this or other ordination exams before.**

IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION BEFORE
BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.

SECTION I CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

A principle of Presbyterian government, expressed in F-3.0204, is that:

Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ

REQUIRED RESPONSE:

Excluding “The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity” section, identify at least three (3) structures or practices described in the *Book of Order* that are based on this principle. For each structure or practice identified, cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) and explain how it supports the principle of “*seek[ing] together to find and represent the will of Christ.*”

SECTION II CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

Early on Monday morning, Marsha, a ruling elder who teaches the confirmation class, knocks on your study door and comes in.

Pastor, I need to talk with you! After our class yesterday, one of the middle school girls in the class asked to talk with me. She said that last week's youth retreat was very upsetting. One of the ruling elders leading the retreat paid too much attention to her, always trying to get her alone and asking questions that were too personal. Before leaving, the ruling elder even put an arm around her and stroked her hair. What do we do?

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that address the situation above. Include at least one (1) reference from three (3) of the following:
 - The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity
 - The Form of Government
 - Directory for Worship
 - Rules of Discipline
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Marsha.

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE A or B)

A.

You are a teaching elder serving as the solo pastor of a 200-member church in a rural community. You are driving back from a presbytery meeting at which a ruling elder was commissioned to serve a small church in a neighboring town. One of the ruling elders, riding with you in the car, asks, “What is the difference between you and the ruling elder commissioned today?”

REQUIRED RESPONSE:

Citing at least three (3) references from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000), explain what is similar and different between a teaching elder serving as an installed pastor and a ruling elder commissioned to serve a church.

— OR —

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR

OPEN BOOK

REQUIRED

B.

You are having a conversation with a young couple that expressed interest in attending a class for prospective members. During the conversation Patrick asks, “Pastor, does someone need to be a member of a church in order to be a good Christian?” Christine asks, “What will be expected of us if we become members?”

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Drawing on the *Book of Order*, identify at least two (2) issues raised by Patrick and at least two (2) issues raised by Christine. Cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, explain to Patrick and Christine the reasons for becoming members, and the privileges and responsibilities of membership.

SECTION I CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity F-1.0404 states “In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church seeks a new openness to God’s mission in the world.... As it participates in God’s mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seeks:...

a new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God's activity in the world,"

REQUIRED RESPONSE

Drawing on this foundational principle, cite at least four (4) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order*, excluding *The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity*, and write an essay demonstrating how this “new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms” may be manifested within the PC(USA).

SECTION II CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

You have recently been installed as pastor and are conducting a training session for newly elected members of session. When you begin to instruct the class about “teaching elders” and “ruling elders” several members of the class begin to raise issues and ask questions:

Joshua: I feel uncomfortable calling you an “elder.” To me it belittles the call to ministry to say “elder,” rather than “pastor” or “minister.”

Esther: Pastor, why do they call you a “teaching” elder? Wouldn’t it make more sense to call you a “preaching” elder?

Matthew: I’ve been an elder in this church for thirty years. I used to think that “ruling elder” was what you called an elder in active service on session. You’re saying something very different. I don’t understand.

Ruth: Since we’re changing our terminology and using more inclusive language, shouldn’t we get rid of the word “elder” altogether? Aren’t we supposed to have session members of all ages?

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Drawing on the *Book of Order*, identify at least one (1) issue raised by each of the four elders and cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write a page for an officer instruction manual that succinctly describes the roles of a ruling elder and a teaching elder in a particular church and what the two roles have in common.

SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE A or B)

A.

Jeff, a ruling elder at First Presbyterian Church, expresses concern to you, his pastor, about whether he should accept a nomination to the presbytery committee responsible “to guide, nurture, and oversee the process of preparing to become a teaching elder.” (G-3.0307) Jeff asks, “How is a person who isn’t a pastor supposed to know how to help inquirers and candidates through the preparation process? They would be better served under the guidance of experienced pastors. Why are ruling elders required to be on this committee?”

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Drawing on the *Book of Order*, identify at least three (3) issues raised by Jeff. Cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Jeff.

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE A or B)

B.

You are the associate pastor teaching a confirmation class. One of the confirmands asks you the following question: “I was in worship last week when the pastor announced that there would be a meeting of the congregation following the service next week to talk about how to finance a new roof on the sanctuary. You told the class that the session makes the decisions for the church. Why do we need to have this congregational meeting?”

REQUIRED RESPONSE

Using at least four (4) different citations from **more than one chapter** of the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000), explain to the class why congregational meetings may be called and under what circumstances next Sunday’s meeting would or would not be appropriate.

SECTION I CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

F-1.0202 states “Christ calls the Church into being, giving it all that is necessary for its mission in the world, for its sanctification, and for its service to God. Christ is present with the Church in both Spirit and Word. Christ alone *rules, calls, teaches*, and *uses the Church* as he wills.”
[*emphasis added*]

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. “Christ alone *rules, calls, teaches* and *uses the Church* as he wills.” Drawing from more than one of the four parts of the *Book of Order*, cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each of these four areas of Christ’s authority. Four different references are required for this response.
2. Drawing on the citations in Required Response 1, write a reflection for a session retreat on how “Christ alone *rules, calls, teaches* and *uses the Church* as he wills.”

SECTION II CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

You are teaching a new member class on the topic “Deacons: Who They Are and What They Do.” You begin by asking what the class thinks about deacons. You get the following responses:

- Bob: In the denomination that I grew up in, the deacons ran the church.
- Roberta: I read in the book of Acts that the first deacons were all men and had to provide meals for widows.
- Frieda: Don’t they take the flowers to shut-ins and collect food for the food bank?
- Anita: I know they report to the pastor.
- Bruce: I think they serve communion, don’t they?

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least four (4) issues raised about the work of deacons in the PC(USA), citing a different *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, write a brief essay explaining who deacons are and what they do, addressing each of the issues identified in Required Response 1.

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE A or B)

A.

The nominating committee is considering potential candidates for service as ruling elders. A member of the committee reports “I heard that one of our nominees pleaded guilty to shoplifting a few months ago.”

Joseph: But we know this person has served this church well and faithfully for many years. I think that is what matters, not what happened outside the church.

Hannah: If a person can’t be trusted in the world, I believe we can’t trust them with a position of authority in the church.

Mary: Shouldn’t we be about grace and forgiveness? Don’t we demonstrate that best by showing that we trust this person even if others do not?

Elkanah: If this is true, doesn’t the Bible say “By their fruits you will know them”?

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Drawing on the *Book of Order*, identify at least one (1) issue raised by each of the four named members of the nominating committee and cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified. This response requires at least four (4) different citations.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to each of the four named members of the nominating committee.

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED

(CHOOSE ONE A or B)

B.

The church treasurer has suggested reviewing the membership rolls in order to reduce the per capita apportionment in the future. Several session members respond:

Suzanna: We could save a lot of money if we only report the members who pledge.

Samuel: I can name several members of the church who have moved in the last three years and have not transferred their membership. Let's just remove them from the rolls.

Judith: We all know members who live right here in town who haven't attended services for years, yet we still pay per capita for them. I think we should vote tonight to delete them from membership.

Hosea: I move we instruct the pastor to call on our members in town who are not participating in the life of the church and invite them to come back to worship. If the members don't come back, I move we authorize the pastor to delete their names from the roll book.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Drawing on the *Book of Order*, identify at least three (3) issues raised by the ruling elders about the care of church members and/or the management of the church rolls. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the ruling elder(s) who raised the issues identified.

Presbyterian Church (USA) Standard Ordination Exam
Church Polity
August 2013

Section I

OPEN BOOK REQUIRED
BOOK OF ORDER ONLY

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity F-1.0302b states:

Holiness is God's gift to the Church in Jesus Christ. Through the love of Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God takes away the sin of the world. The holiness of the Church comes from Christ who sets it apart to bear witness to his love, and not from the purity of its doctrine or the righteousness of its actions.

Because in Christ the Church is holy, the Church, its members, and those in its ordered ministries strive to lead lives worthy of the Gospel we proclaim.

REQUIRED RESPONSE

Drawing on this foundational principle, write an essay, citing at least three (3) different references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order*, excluding Section I (The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity), for a training manual that explains the expectation that those in ordered ministry "lead lives worthy of the Gospel we proclaim."

Section II

OPEN BOOK REQUIRED
BOOK OF ORDER ONLY

You are a member of the presbytery's commission responsible for the oversight of its congregations and teaching elders. The clerk of session of First Presbyterian Church calls and says, "Three of our largest givers passed away last year. The treasurer has informed the session that we no longer have the income to continue paying our current full-time pastor the same salary and benefits. As the session discusses this, what are our options?"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Citing at least three (3) different references from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000), discuss the responsibilities of the session, the congregation, and the presbytery. At least one (1) citation each for the session, the congregation, and the presbytery is required.
2. Informed by your work in Required Response 1, respond to the clerk.

Section III, A

OPEN BOOK REQUIRED
BOOK OF ORDER ONLY
(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

A.

You are a minister member of presbytery, moderating a special session meeting of a neighboring congregation at the request of the installed pastor. Mrs. Kay, a ruling elder not currently serving on session, has sent the session a letter alleging voting misconduct in a recent congregational meeting. The letter accuses the pastor and clerk of deliberately allowing ineligible people to vote. In the letter Mrs. Kay demands that the pastor and clerk be reprimanded. As the session discusses the matter, various questions and assertions are put forward:

Emily:	Elder Kay should have challenged the vote at the meeting. Now that the meeting is over it's too late to do anything.
Ricardo:	Does anyone remember if Elder Kay was present at the meeting? She can't make accusations about the voting if she wasn't there, can she?
Roseanne:	I think we should ignore the whole thing. We don't really know if any ineligible people voted or not. Even if they did, we don't know that their participation affected the outcome.
Yuri:	It seems to me we should delegate some ruling elders to try to resolve this with Elder Kay. We trust our pastor and our clerk. I believe the voting was in order. We need to tell her to stop this nonsense and stop harassing them.
Michelle:	If Elder Kay is determined to see that someone is rebuked, shouldn't she write a letter asking the presbytery clerk to file charges?

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify at least three (3) issues in the dialogue at the session meeting, being sure to choose issues raised by at least three (3) different ruling elders. Identify and briefly discuss at least one (1) citation (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the session, addressing the issues you have identified.

-- OR PROCEED TO NEXT PAGE FOR OPTION B --

Section III, B

OPEN BOOK REQUIRED BOOK OF ORDER ONLY (CHOOSE ONE: A or B)

B.

You are a pastor of Springfield Presbyterian Church. The session of the congregation has a policy that members of staff cannot be members of the congregation. The choir director of five years asks to speak with you. When you meet, he says, "Pastor, I know that my wife and I are members elsewhere, but we feel like this is our church home. We would like to have our new baby baptized here. What steps need to be taken to make this happen?"

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify the steps necessary if this child were to be baptized at Springfield Presbyterian Church, citing at least three (3) *Book of Order* references (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Informed by your work in Required Response 1, respond to the choir director's question.

-- OR RETURN TO PREVIOUS PAGE FOR OPTION A --

Polity
January 2014

Section I

OPEN BOOK REQUIRED
BOOK OF ORDER ONLY

The *Book of Order* declares that after time for discernment and discussion, the vote of “a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205).

Yet the *Book of Order* repeatedly upholds the principle of *freedom of conscience*.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Discuss at least three (3) different ways in which the *Book of Order* provides for a presbyter’s exercise of *freedom of conscience* even when a majority vote in a council has prevailed against the conscience of that presbyter. Include at least one (1) different citation (e.g., X-0.0000) for each way identified.
2. Discuss at least one (1) limitation in the *Book of Order* on a presbyter’s exercise of *freedom of conscience* when a majority vote in a council has prevailed against the conscience of that presbyter.

Section II

OPEN BOOK REQUIRED BOOK OF ORDER ONLY

You have been called to a congregation that recently merged with a smaller neighboring congregation with Congregationalist polity. You have been asked to host a retreat to explain the Presbyterian system of government led by ruling and teaching elders working together.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Cite four (4) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that illustrate the principles of shared governance by ruling elders and teaching elders. Choose the citations as follows:
 - one from The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity that illustrates the *heritage* of shared governance,
 - one from The Form of Government that illustrates the *practice* of shared governance,
 - one from The Directory for Worship that illustrates how shared governance affects *worship*, and
 - one from The Rules of Discipline that illustrates how shared governance affects Presbyterian *discipline*.
2. For each citation identified in Required Response 1, describe how that reference illustrates the theme of shared governance.

Section III, A

**OPEN BOOK REQUIRED
BOOK OF ORDER ONLY
(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)**

A.

You are a member of the presbytery's commission responsible for the oversight of its teaching elders. You receive a phone call from a teaching elder in your presbytery who has been seeking a call for over a year. He has been in conversation with a local Missionary Baptist congregation that has asked him to be their Interim Pastor. He is asking you what steps need to be taken for him to receive permission to serve in this role.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Cite (e.g., X-0.0000) and discuss four (4) different references in the *Book of Order* that address his request.
2. Explain to the teaching elder why this request may or may not be granted.

-- OR PROCEED TO NEXT PAGE FOR OPTION B --

Section III, B

**OPEN BOOK REQUIRED
BOOK OF ORDER ONLY
(CHOOSE ONE A or B)**

B.

You have been called as pastor of Mid-State Presbyterian Church, a young, growing congregation. The members believe they need to expand the congregation's boards. At the next session meeting, one of the ruling elders says that when he was growing up the congregations he attended had a session and a board of trustees. That begins a discussion:

Megan:	What's a trustee, and would they affect the way our church functions?
Rudolpho:	That sounds archaic. Do churches even have trustees anymore?
Samuel:	My former church had deacons. What difference does it make if you have deacons or trustees?
Sean:	In the church I grew up in, the session and trustees were always fighting about which board was really responsible for the building and budget.
Marisha:	What steps would we need to take to establish a board of trustees here?

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Describe the responsibilities appropriate to a board of trustees.
2. Respond to at least three (3) different questions raised by the ruling elders, citing at least one (1) different reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each question answered.

-- OR RETURN TO PREVIOUS PAGE FOR OPTION A --

Church Polity, Summer 2014

Section I

In F-1.0302 the *Book of Order* states:

With all Christians of the Church catholic, we affirm that the Church is “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.”

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Excluding section one, The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, cite and briefly discuss at least four (4) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order*, one (1) for each of the four (4) marks of F-1.0302. These citations should show how the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) gives witness to the oneness, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity of the Church of Jesus Christ.
2. At an upcoming retreat you plan to challenge the congregation to put the four marks of the Church into practice in the year ahead. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, identify specific activities in which the congregation can engage to demonstrate each of the four (4) marks of the Church, and briefly explain how each activity gives witness to the respective mark of the Church.

Section II

As pastor of Mizpah Presbyterian Church, you have been notified that a member of the congregation is making a donation to the church of forty acres of farmland near the intersection of two major roads in a rapidly developing part of your town. At the next meeting of session, after agreeing that this is a wonderful gift that provides many opportunities for the church, the following discussion takes place:

Luke: The only course of action for us is to sell the land and use the money to create an endowment fund. It will provide income for future generations to use here at Mizpah.

Leigh: Since it is farmland already, we can create a ministry that grows fresh food for the underprivileged in our community.

Amy: I think we should sell this building and move out there. We would have room for sports fields that we could use for ministry.

J J: A number of our new members live in that area. We could start a satellite church and really broaden our ministry. We could get one of those big tents and hold services this summer to get it started.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify three (3) issues raised in the dialogue, citing one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified. Be sure to choose three (3) distinct issues, one (1) each from three (3) different ruling elders.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, pick one (1) of the suggestions for the use of the gift and respond to the ruling elder, outlining the steps necessary to make it happen.

Section III

The session of the congregation you serve as pastor has been studying the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) constitution and finds itself in disagreement with several parts of *The Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*. The session asks you to help them understand how the constitution can be changed. They raise a variety of issues:

Roland: Everything in *The Book of Confession* is doctrine; it's been the teaching of the church for hundreds of years. We can't do anything about it.

Juanita: Doesn't the *Book of Order* say that the majority rules? It doesn't matter how long something has been in the constitution; if a majority of the members of the PC(USA) is ready to change something it can be changed.

Hiroko: I don't believe it's that simple. I think there has to be a difference between revising church rules and redefining church beliefs.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least three (3) issues raised in the conversation, citing at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue raised. Be sure to choose three (3) distinct issues, one (1) each from the three (3) different ruling elders.
2. Drawing on the relevant material in your answer to Required Response 1, outline a training class for the session that briefly describes the two parts of the constitution and how each part can be amended.

Fall 2014
Church Polity

Section I: Constitutional Heritage

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity F-2.05 states:

In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who in Christ and by the power of the Spirit creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to this central affirmation of God's sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;

Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;

A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation; and

The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Drawing from more than one (1) section of the *Book of Order* and excluding section one, The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, cite at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each of these four (4) great themes of the Reformed tradition related to the sovereignty of God.
2. Drawing on Required Response 1, prepare a page for your Session Training Manual discussing these four (4) great themes of the Reformed tradition.

Fall 2014
Church Polity

Section II: Constitutional Order for the Particular Church

You serve on the committee that is responsible for the oversight of the teaching elders and the congregations of the presbytery. The pastor emeritus of Bountiful Harvest Presbyterian Church comes to you with a proposal. A regional planning commission is promoting a new urban center in an undeveloped area. Three ruling elders from Bountiful Harvest have decided to donate a banquet hall that they own in that area in order to form a new church. These ruling elders along with three other families from Bountiful Harvest would be part of this new congregation. The pastor emeritus has agreed to serve as the organizing pastor of this new congregation.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least three (3) issues raised by this scenario, citing at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order*, using a different citation for each issue raised.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, outline the steps that would be required to establish a new church in this facility.

Fall 2014
Church Polity

Section III: Constitutional Order as a Tool for Ministry

You have just begun to serve as pastor of a congregation whose pastor recently retired. You have been looking at the church's financial practices and are concerned about what you have seen. You are now meeting with the Leadership Team: the clerk of session, the moderator of deacons, the president of the trustees, and the treasurer. In response to your questions they give you the following information:

Lena: The trustees are responsible for counting the weekly receipts. This month it's my turn. For as long as I can remember, our twelve trustees take turns, one trustee every month, for counting and depositing the money.

Keanu: I've been treasurer for two years. To be truthful, Pastor, I don't even know how many accounts the church has; nobody knows. Each organization has its own treasurer and its own funds. Sometimes the funds are divided into several accounts.

Carl: Pastor, you asked about funds for people who come to the church seeking help. You will have a bank card for that purpose. Next week we'll finish transferring it to you. As clerk, I've already handled most of the paperwork. The bank just needs your signature. I can't give you many details because the statements will come to you as pastor. We expect you to keep such personal information secret.

Whitney: You need to sit down with me and the rest of the deacons. We're responsible for the church's benevolence budget, and I'd like to begin thinking about next year's budget soon. You'll be doing the same thing with the clerk, and the treasurer, and the session for the operational budget.

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify at least three (3) issues, each issue raised by a different member of the Leadership Team, citing the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) and **quoting the most relevant portion(s) of the citation** for each issue. (A citation may be used more than once as long as a different relevant portion of the citation is quoted.)
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, respond to each of the three (3) people you identified.

Section I, Constitutional Heritage

D-1.0102 states:

The power that Jesus Christ has vested in his Church, a power manifested in the exercise of church discipline, is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing. It should be exercised as a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath so that the great ends of the Church may be achieved, that all children of God may be presented faultless in the day of Christ.

REQUIRED RESPONSE:

Using only The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity section of the *Book of Order*, cite four (4) references (e.g., F-0.0000) and prepare a presentation for a session retreat that demonstrates how this statement grows out of the foundational principles of Presbyterian polity.

Church Polity, Winter 2015

Section II, Constitutional Order for the Particular Church

Ruling elder Christine asks to speak to you and says, “Pastor, we recently found out that one of our members was in the hospital. Carrie Binks visited her Tuesday afternoon and decided to administer communion to her. Since we already have a ministry that takes communion to nursing homes after worship, she assumed this was okay. Was it?”

REQUIRED RESPONSES:

1. Identify three (3) issues in the scenario. Cite and discuss one (1) reference (e.g., X 0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, write a lesson plan to train elders and deacons on the proper administration of the Lord’s Supper for those isolated from the community’s worship.

SECTION III CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY

Commissions

Dustin, a ruling elder in the congregation you serve as pastor, is also a lawyer. He has been asked to serve on the presbytery's permanent judicial commission. The news of his nomination begins a conversation among the elders about commissions:

Gerry: That's quite a responsibility, isn't it? Doesn't a commission have the same power that the whole presbytery has?

Jacqueline: Before I moved here I was a session member in a church that had a huge fight. The presbytery appointed a commission that came in and basically took over the church, the session, and everything. That commission sure had a lot of power. For a while I thought they were going to kick out our pastor!

Carlos: When I was elected to session my work schedule kept me from coming to the session meeting where new officers were examined and approved for office. The church commissioned session members to conduct my examination so I could be ordained. That was all the power they had.

Minerva: Are you sure it's about power? It sounds as if it's about particular responsibilities. You don't need to be a lawyer to do that kind of work. I thought Dustin was nominated for the judicial commission because of his experience as a lawyer.

REQUIRED RESPONSES

1. Identify and briefly discuss three (3) different issues, each issue raised by a different ruling elder, citing at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue raised. (A citation may be used more than once as long as a different relevant portion of the citation is quoted.)
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, respond to each of the three (3) elders you identified.