

Winter 2023 Polity Exam

Section I: Constitutional Heritage

In the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, F-1.01 states in part:

In Christ, the Church participates in God's mission for the transformation of creation and humanity by proclaiming to **all people** the good news of God's love, offering to **all people** the grace of God at font and table, and calling **all people** to discipleship in Christ (emphasis added)

REQUIRED RESPONSES: *(Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.)*

1. Provide two (2) citations from the Rules of Discipline (e.g., D-0.0000), quoting the most relevant portions, showing how the PC(USA) is committed to "proclaiming to **all people** the good news of God's love."

Provide two (2) citations from the Directory for Worship (e.g., W-0.0000), quoting the most relevant portions, showing how the PC(USA) is committed to "offering to **all people** the grace of God at font and table."

Provide two (2) citations from the Form of Government (e.g., G-0.0000), quoting the most relevant portions, showing how the PC(USA) is committed to "calling **all people** to discipleship in Christ"

2. Building on your work in Required Response 1, write a presbytery newsletter article reflecting on this portion of F-1.01. Discuss what a commitment to "**all people**" might mean in the life and mission of the presbytery and its congregations, and how fulfilling the three (3) mandates (proclaiming, offering, calling) can contribute to "the transformation of creation and humanity." Do not sign any name to the article.

Section II: Constitutional Order for the Particular Church

As pastor, you are meeting with members newly elected to be ruling elders or deacons for an overview of the plans for ordination and installation. Elder/deacon training is scheduled for a later date before the service of ordination and installation. During the initial planning discussion, the following comments are made:

- Tunde: My arthritis would make kneeling difficult; can I sit or stand for the laying on of hands? If I can, then maybe everyone should--so I don't stand out as different.
- Fran: I think laying on of hands is a bit creepy, and besides it's flu season. Is it OK if I just answer the constitutional questions?
- Lillian: I've already been ordained; why do I have to answer the ordination questions again?
- Jorge: I'll be out of town the weekend we're doing the training. Can I make it up sometime after the ordination service?
- Dana: What does it mean to be examined by session? Is this like a quiz or more of a meet-and-greet?

REQUIRED RESPONSES: *(Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.)*

1. Identify five (5) points of polity raised by the comments in the scenario, one (1) from each person's comment. Clearly link the particular comment to its related point of polity. For each point of polity, provide and discuss briefly one (1) citation from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000), quoting the relevant portion. A citation may be used more than once as long as a different relevant portion of the citation is quoted.
2. Building on your work in Required Response 1, respond directly during the meeting to each of the speakers, addressing their comments. The response should be verbatim, not a description of how you would respond.

Section III: Application to Ministry

You are pastor of Lakeview Presbyterian Church. You place a discussion of stewardship on the session agenda. At the meeting the following comments are made:

Gail: Why do we receive an offering during our weekly service?

Pedro: The most important function of stewardship is to ensure that we raise enough money to support our programs.

Yunn Yi: I think we need to start a new committee that focuses on stewardship of our earth. We can start with cleaning up the lake.

John: In addition to talent and treasure, we should have a special service to celebrate the time that our members give to the church.

Anna: That's a great idea! We can use that service as an opportunity to kick off our special campaign for the new roof we need.

REQUIRED RESPONSES: (Total responses in this Section not to exceed 1,200 words.)

1. Identify four (4) points of polity raised by the scenario. Quoting the most relevant portion, provide one (1) citation from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) for each point. The citations must come from at least two (2) different parts (F, G, W, D) of the *Book of Order*. Match each citation with its corresponding point of polity. No discussion is required. A citation may be used more than once if a different relevant portion of the citation is quoted.
2. Focusing on the polity and building on your work in Required Response 1, prepare an article for the congregation's newsletter about the practice of stewardship as an expression of Christian life, individually and congregationally. Do not sign any name to the article.