

Winter 2024 Polity Exam

Section I: Constitutional Heritage

F-1.0205 Christ Is the Foundation of the Church states:

In Christ all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell, and through Christ God reconciles all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of the cross (Col. 1:19–20). In Christ’s name, therefore, **the Church is sent out to bear witness to the good news of reconciliation with God, with others, and with all creation.** In Christ the Church receives its truth and appeal, its holiness, and its unity. (emphasis added)

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

1. Identify and quote the relevant portion(s) of three (3) citations from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000), one (1) each from parts G, W, and D, that relate to the bolded portion in the citation above. No discussion is required.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, write an essay explaining how “the Church is sent out to bear witness to the good news of reconciliation with God, with others, and with all creation.”

Section II: Constitutional Order for the Particular Church

As pastor of a Presbyterian church, you are leading a series of classes for those seeking to learn more about church membership. The following comments are made.

Pablo: I live here for 6 months but 1000 miles away for the rest of the year. Should I join a church in both locations?

Kyrie: Since I am not a member, I always feel uneasy about participating in communion.

John: I grew up in the Roman Catholic church. Do I need to be baptized again?]

Dana: I want to join the mission committee so I can help others.

Christine: I want to join the church, but I can't contribute any money to the church.

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

1. Identify five (5) points of polity in the scenario, one (1) from the comment of each speaker. For each point, identify at least one (1) citation (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order*, quoting the most relevant portion(s) of the citation used. Discuss briefly the citations and link them to their respective points of polity. A citation may be used more than once if a different relevant portion of the citation is quoted.
2. Drawing on your work in Required Response 1, prepare an annotated outline for your next class addressing at least three (3) of the comments in the scenario. An annotated outline is an outline with explanatory notes.

Section III: Application to Ministry

You moderate the Committee on Ministry (COM) of Deep Springs Presbytery. Diaz is a Minister of the Word and Sacrament who was previously an installed associate pastor. That pastoral relationship was dissolved by Deep Springs Presbytery due to the financial situation of the congregation. Because of family responsibilities, Diaz is not able to move and has been working in a retail job for income. Diaz is interested in an open position as a community organizer and has asked you whether this particular work could be confirmed by the presbytery as a call.

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

Draft a letter to Diaz that explains what information Diaz should present to COM for it to consider whether this work can be confirmed as a call. In addition, the letter should describe how Diaz would be accountable to the presbytery in such work as well as the rights and responsibilities Diaz would have in the life of the presbytery. Finally, the letter should discuss the relationship of Diaz to the presbytery if the proposed work is not confirmed as a call. If citations from the *Book of Order* are used, they should be in standard format (e.g., X-0.0000) but do not need to be quoted. Do not sign a name to the letter or include any geographical details.