

## 22-C — G-1.0501

### MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

#### G-1.0501 MEETINGS (ROD-06 2)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall a new G-1.0501 be inserted into the Form of Government and the current G-1.0501 and subsequent sections be renumbered accordingly, as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

**“G-1.0501      *Meetings***

*“Meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer. Unless the congregation shall designate another parliamentary authority in its bylaws, meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, except when it is in contradiction to this constitution.*

*“In accordance with the requirement of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, congregations and their committees may meet electronically at the discretion of their sessions, provided that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in-person meeting. Congregations should adopt special rules of order and standing rules to govern such meetings.*

**“G-1.0502      Annual and Special Meetings**

**The congregation shall hold an annual meeting ...”**

#### Background and Rationale

Rationale for Recommendation 3 (Note: No additional rationale was included for Recommendation 2.)

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity states that in our church “decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). At the core of our understanding of church governance is the notion that the Holy Spirit is present “where two of three are gathered” and guides us in discerning the will of God in our decision making.

The absence of constitutional language authorizing electronic meetings has proved problematic at all levels of the PC(USA) since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, including in disciplinary processes. The proposed language would remedy that by authorizing electronic meetings in congregations and councils of the church, while still requiring that for proper discernment and decision making to occur, participants must be able to “hear and be heard simultaneously,” or as it is stated in our parliamentary authority, provide for the “opportunity for simultaneous aural communication” (RONR 12th ed. 9:31).

It is not the intent of these additions to require electronic meetings or to mandate any specific processes or procedures. Congregations and councils may make those determinations themselves.

Additionally, the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline sometimes explicitly states that meeting face to face is preferable. But as we all learned in 2020 and 2021, sometimes that is simply not possible. These additions provide the authorization required by our parliamentary authority to use electronic meetings whenever a congregation, council, or entity of a council determines that it should do so, in accordance with whatever rules that congregation or council so adopts.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to approve ROD-06. The adoption of these amendments assumes the adoption of the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order* (Part II of the Constitution) and references the language of those amendments.

The amendments proposed in Recommendation 2 and 3 regarding electronic meetings enshrines the option in the constitution; thus, congregations and councils of the church have the ecclesiastical authority to meet by electronic means.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline approved Item ROD-06 2, 24/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-06 2, 378/1.

For the full report on ROD-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-D — G-1.0503

### MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

#### G-1.0503 BUSINESS PROPER TO CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS (ROD-06 1)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-1.0503 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

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

**“G-1.0503 Business Proper to Congregational Meetings**

**Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall be limited to matters related to the following: ...**

**... f. approving a plan for the creation of a joint congregational witness, or amending or dissolving the joint congregational witness (G-5.05);**

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

#### Background and Rationale

##### Rationale for Recommendation 1

Adoption of these amendments is assumed in the proposed revision, which references the language of the amendments.

The proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline, to become Church Discipline, includes a new requirement for decisions with a finding of guilt in disciplinary processes against church members to be reported to the congregation of membership. This is to ensure that such findings are known to the body of membership as part of the overall goal of the restoration of trust in the community. It is a parallel to the requirement that disciplinary decisions against ministers of the Word and Sacrament be read to the entire presbytery of membership (current D-11.0700, and proposed D-9.0102b).

This provision is referenced in both proposed D-9.0102a (dealing with disciplinary decisions of sessions) and proposed D-9.0102c (dealing with disciplinary decisions of presbyteries against members of congregations). It should be noted that this meeting is also required when an alternative resolution is adopted, because of the requirement that such a resolution must be transmitted “to the clerk of session or the stated clerk, who shall report it according to the provisions of D-9.0102.”

The amendment is necessary because business at congregational meetings is limited to those matters specifically listed in G-1.0503.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to approve ROD-06. The adoption of these amendments assumes the adoption of the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline of the *Book of Order* (Part II of the Constitution) and references the language of those amendments.

The amendment proposed in Recommendation 1 will synchronize the Form of Government with the Rules of Discipline.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline approved Item ROD-06 1, 24/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-06 1, 378/1.

For the full report on ROD-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-N — G-3.0105

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

#### G-3.0105 MEETINGS (ROD-06 3)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0105 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

**“G-3.0105 Meetings**

**“Meetings of councils shall be opened and closed with prayer. Meetings shall be conducted in accordance with the most recent edition of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, except when it is in contradiction to this Constitution. Councils may also make use of processes of discernment in their deliberations prior to a vote as agreed upon by the body.**

*“In accordance with the requirement of Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised, councils and their commissions and committees may meet electronically, provided that the technology employed allows for all members present to hear and be heard simultaneously. This includes joining one or more persons electronically to an otherwise in-person meeting. Councils should adopt special rules of order and standing rules to govern such meetings.”*

#### Background and Rationale

##### Rationale for Recommendation 3

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity states that in our church, “decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern” (F-3.0205). At the core of our understanding of church governance is the notion that the Holy Spirit is present “where two of three are gathered,” and guides us in discerning the will of God in our decision making.

The absence of constitutional language authorizing electronic meetings has proved problematic at all levels of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) since the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic, including in disciplinary processes. The proposed language would remedy that by authorizing electronic meetings in congregations and councils of the church, while still requiring that for proper discernment and decision making to occur, participants must be able to “hear and be heard simultaneously,” or as it is stated in our parliamentary authority, provide for the “opportunity for simultaneous aural communication” (RONR 12th ed. 9:31).

It is not the intent of these additions to require electronic meetings or to mandate any specific processes or procedures. Congregations and councils may make those determinations themselves. Additionally, the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline sometimes explicitly states that meeting face to face is preferable. But as we all learned in 2020 and 2021, sometimes that is simply not possible. These additions provide the authorization required by our parliamentary authority to utilize electronic

meetings whenever a congregation, council, or entity of a council, determines that it should do so, and in accordance with whatever rules that congregation or council so adopts.

**Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to approve ROD-06. The adoption of these amendments assumes the adoption of the proposed revision of the Rules of Discipline of the Book of Order (Part II of the Constitution) and references the language of those amendments.

The amendments proposed in Recommendation 2 and 3 regarding electronic meetings enshrines the option in the Constitution; thus, congregations and councils of the church have the ecclesiastical authority to meet by electronic means.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline approved Item ROD-06 3, 24/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-06 3, 378/1.

For the full report on ROD-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-O — G-3.0106

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

#### G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (HSB-05 9)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0106 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“G-3.0106 Administration of Mission**

**Mission determines the forms and structures needed for the church to do its work. Administration is the process by which a council implements its decisions. Administration enables the church to give effective witness in the world to God’s new creation in Jesus Christ and strengthens the church’s witness to the mission of the triune God.**

**Councils higher than the session may provide examples of policies and procedures that may be gathered into advisory handbooks. These examples illumine practices required by the Constitution but left to councils for specific implementation. Such handbooks may also offer information that enhances or secures the ministry of the particular council.**

**Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council.**

**All councils shall adopt and implement a sexual misconduct policy and a child and youth protection policy. *Each council’s policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.*”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

This proposed amendment originated as a recommendation from the GA Health Safety and Benefits Committee as Recommendation 9 attached to the Survivors of Sexual Misconduct Task Force recommendations. The HSB committee concluded that the denomination needs to mandate boundary training and child protection training for all members of councils including sessions of congregations, presbyteries, synods and the general assembly.

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The Assembly Committee on Health Safety and Benefits amended the original Recommendation 4 and then approved Item HSB-05 9, 36/2. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item HSB-05 9, 351/24.

For the full report on HSB-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000084/business>.

## 22-V — W-3.0414

### SACRAMENT

#### W-3.0414 COMMUNION (TWE-05 4)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the second paragraph of W-3.0414 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strikethrough~~; added text is in *italics*.)

**“W-3.0414    Communion ...**

**“... When all have received the bread and cup, the remaining elements are placed on the table. ~~The minister of Word and Sacrament then leads the people in prayer.~~ *A prayer follows, thanking God for the gift of the Sacrament and asking for grace to live and serve faithfully until the coming of Christ’s realm in fullness.*”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

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

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve Recommendation 4 of Item TWE-05. Recommendation 4 in this overture would eliminate the requirement that the prayer after communion be led only by a minister of the Word and Sacrament or ruling elder authorized by the presbytery to administer communion. The ACC finds that the language of W-3.0414 is unnecessarily restrictive and amendment is advisable.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 4, 31/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) then approved Item TWE-05 4, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.



## 22-W — W-4.0403

### ORDINATION, INSTALLATION, AND COMMISSIONING

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

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-4.0403 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-4.0403     Order of Worship**

**“A service of ordination, installation, or commissioning focuses on Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving him through the mission and ministry of the church. Following the sermon, the moderator (or designee) of the appropriate council briefly states the nature of the ministry to which persons are being ordained, installed, or commissioned. Those who are being ordained, installed, or commissioned gather at the baptismal font. The moderator (or designee) asks them the constitutional questions (see W-4.0404). A ruling elder asks the corresponding questions of the congregation. When all questions have been answered in the affirmative, those to be ordained will kneel, if able, for the laying on of hands and the prayer of ordination. (The presbytery commission lays on hands at the ordination of minister of the Word and Sacrament; its moderator may invite other ministers of the Word and Sacrament and ruling elders to participate. Members of the session lay on hands at the ordination of ruling elders and deacons; the session may invite other ruling elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament to participate. Because ordination only takes place once for each office, the laying on of hands is not repeated.) Those previously ordained will stand, if able, along with the congregation, for the prayer of installation. *Signs and symbols of blessing may be conferred on the newly installed or commissioned person.* After this, the moderator makes the declaration of ordination, installation, or commissioning. Members of the session or presbytery welcome the newly ordained, installed, or commissioned person(s). In the case of the installation of a minister of the Word and Sacrament, persons may be invited to charge the minister of the Word and Sacrament and congregation to faithfulness in ministry and mutuality in relationship. When a minister of the Word and Sacrament is ordained or installed, it is appropriate for that person to preside at the Lord’s Supper in the same service; she or he may also give the blessing at the conclusion of the service. When ruling elders or deacons are ordained or installed, it is appropriate for one or more of them to give the charge to the congregation at the conclusion of the service.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s note: The TWE Committee amended the overture following the advice of the Advisory Committee on the Constitution and the Presbyterian Mission Agency. This edited background and rationale is for the original overture’s proposed amendment. For the full rationale and original overture, see the PC-Biz link below.]

The laying on of hands is not a sacrament but an act of diverse meanings as witnessed in scripture and the Reformed tradition. It is affirmed by the *Book of Order* and Directory for Worship as an act that is appropriate to various situations in the worship of life of Presbyterians, an act that conveys the “gracious action of God and communicate[s] our grateful response” (W-1.0303, see also W-2.0202, W-3.0407, W-4.0401–.0403, W-5.0204).

The Confession of 1967 includes these words in 9.39–9.40: “... In recognition of special gifts of the Spirit and for the ordering of its life as a community, the church calls, trains, and authorizes certain members for leadership and oversight. The persons qualified for these duties in accordance with the polity of the church are set apart by ordination or other appropriate act and thus made responsible for their special ministries. The church thus orders its life as an institution with a constitution, government, officers, finances, and administrative rules. These are instruments of mission, not ends in themselves. ...”

Ordination is an act of the institution, one of the ways we order our life for mission. Candidates are ordained to a particular service, a call, emphasizing the pragmatic, functional nature of ordained ministry. As the *Book of Order* says, “In baptism, each Christian is called to ministry in Christ’s name. God calls some persons from the midst of congregations to *fulfill particular functions*, so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. ...” (W-4.0401, emphasis added). And, “... The gifts of the Spirit are for building up the Church. Every action in worship is to glorify God and contribute to the good of the people. Worshipers and worship leaders must avoid actions that only call attention to themselves and fail to serve the needs of the whole congregation. ...” (W-2.0202)

The proposed change to the Directory of Worship is from restrictive language to permissive language: the laying on of hands would not be required at installations as there may be occasions when, because of ecumenical considerations or a candidate’s preferences regarding physical contact, it would not be appropriate or edifying. In such a change we reaffirm Calvin’s own guide for worship practices: “But love will best judge what may hurt or edify; and if we let love be our guide, all will be safe” (*Institutes*, IV.x.30).

### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

This advice applies to the original overture.

Should the 225th General Assembly (2022) desire to authorize some act of the congregation to signify its blessing upon the newly installed or commissioned person, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that W-4.0403 be amended as follows (suggestions appear in ~~strike through~~ and *italics*): “... [Because ordination only takes place once for each office, the laying on of hands is not repeated.] ~~The moderator may invite the commission and all members of the congregation to participate in the laying on of hands for commissioning and blessing the newly installed minister of Word and Sacrament, ruling elders, or deacons.~~ Those previously ordained will stand, if able, along with the congregation, for the prayer of installation. [*Signs and symbols of blessing may be conferred on the newly installed or commissioned person.*] After this, the moderator makes the declaration of ordination, installation, or commissioning. Members of the session or presbytery welcome the newly ordained, installed, or commissioned person(s).” (The remainder of the paragraph remains unchanged.)

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education amended and approved Item TWE-06, 27/3. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-06, 371/23.

For the full report on TWE-06, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-X — W-5.0104

### WORSHIP AND PERSONAL LIFE

#### W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 5)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-5.0104 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?**

(Added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-5.0104 Household Worship**

**“We respond to God’s grace in the context of personal relationships, particularly when Christians who live together worship together. *Household worship is a central and important practice within the Reformed tradition, an important means of faith formation.* Opportunities for household or family worship include: sabbath-keeping and rhythms of daily prayer; Bible reading, study, or memorization; prayers before meals; singing hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs; and expressions of giving, sharing, and service to others. Congregations are encouraged to nurture and equip households and families for these practices.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

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

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) that this item does not present issues of polity. Recommendation 5 of Item TWE-05 would add a sentence emphasizing the role of household worship. If the 225th General Assembly (2022) believes that the intent of Item TWE-05 Recommendation 5 is appropriate, the ACC advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 5, 31/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 5, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-Y — W-5.0104

### WORSHIP AND PERSONAL LIFE

#### W-5.0104 HOUSEHOLD WORSHIP (TWE-05 6)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall W-5.0104 in the Directory of Worship be amended to add a third paragraph as follows?** (Added text is in *italics*.)

**“W-5.0104 Household Worship ...**

*“... Prayers of thanks and blessing, and lament at the household table draw upon ancient Jewish practice and the examples of Jesus, his disciples, and the early Christian community. Mealtimes provide opportunities to give thanks to God’s works of creation and redemption by which we are sustained for Christ’s service. We respond with heartfelt thanks and praise in the sharing of our daily bread.”*

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

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

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) that this item does not present issues of polity. Recommendation 6 in TWE-05 would add a paragraph emphasizing the role of mealtimes prayers to the section on household worship. If the 225th General Assembly (2022) finds Recommendation 6 is appropriate, the ACC advises that the proposed language is clear and consistent with that intent.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 6, 30/1. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 6, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-AA — W-5.0204

### WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

#### W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 7)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the third paragraph of W-5.0204 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?** (Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-5.0204 Pastoral Care ...**

**“... All members are called to take part in the ministry of pastoral care, visiting the sick, supporting the weak, and comforting those who mourn. Ruling elders, deacons, and ministers of the Word and Sacrament have particular responsibility for the exercise of pastoral care within the community of faith. Those with special gifts and appropriate training may be called to *the particular specialized pastoral care ministries of pastoral counseling, or chaplaincy*. In certain circumstances, persons may need to be referred to other qualified and credentialed professionals to receive appropriate counseling and care.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

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

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) that Recommendation 7 of Item TWE-05 presents issues that the assembly should consider. This recommendation would add “spiritual direction” to the already named ministries of pastoral care. It has added “particular specialized” and “such as” so that the list created by the addition of “spiritual direction” would not be presumed to be exhaustive. However, the addition of more language is counter to recent constitutional changes that give various councils parameters and responsibility to define their own practices. Decisions about appropriate validated ministries are properly left to the individual presbyteries. In addition, the creation of a list invites more items to be added to it.

The ACC finds that if the assembly believes it is appropriate to expand the understanding of pastoral care ministries, it can be better accomplished, while addressing the issues presented above, by striking “the ministries of pastoral counseling or chaplaincy” in W-5.0204 and inserting “particular specialized pastoral care ministries” so that it would read “Those with special gifts and appropriate

training may be called to ~~the ministries of pastoral counseling or chaplaincy~~ [*particular specialized pastoral care ministries*].”

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education amended and approved Item TWE-05 7, 32/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 7, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.

## 22-BB — W-5.0204

### WORSHIP AND THE CHURCH'S MINISTRY WITHIN THE COMMUNITY OF FAITH

#### W-5.0204 PASTORAL CARE (TWE-05 8)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the fourth paragraph of W-5.0204 in the Directory of Worship be amended as follows?** (Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“W-5.0204 Pastoral Care...**

**“Services of wholeness and healing are one way of enacting the church’s ministry of pastoral care. The central element in these services is prayer, calling upon God’s saving grace or giving thanks for healing received, *in life and in death, in body, mind, or spirit*. A service of wholeness includes the proclamation of the Word, focusing on the promise of *peace and abundant life in Christ*. Prayer may be enacted through the laying on of hands and anointing with oil, provided that these actions are carefully introduced and interpreted: healing ~~always~~ *in its many forms* comes as a gift from God, not as a product *an accomplishment* of human prayer. The Lord’s Supper is a fitting way to seal the promise of wholeness proclaimed in the Word. Services of wholeness are to be authorized by the session and are under the direction of the minister of Word and Sacrament, but may involve leadership from ruling elders, deacons, and others with gifts for prayer. They may take place on a regular basis, as an occasional event, or as a part of the Service for the Lord’s Day.”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The recommendations in TWE-05 are in response to the following referral: 2018 Referral: Item 14-02. On Amending Portions of the Directory for Worship. Recommendation 1.–10. The Assembly Referred Recommendations 1.–10. To the Presbyterian Mission Agency, Office of Theology and Worship—From the Presbytery of Santa Fe (*Minutes*, 2018, Part I, pp. 14, 17, 355–58 of the print copy, pp. 1198–1205 of the electronic copy).

This amendment offers theological and pastoral perspective on the nature of healing and wholeness: that healing happens in a variety of ways and wholeness is not necessarily synonymous with physical recovery.

#### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly (2022) to approve Recommendation 8 of Item TWE-05. This recommendation would amend the paragraph describing services of wholeness and healing. The ACC finds that the first proposed amendment, the insertion of the words “in life and in death, in body, mind, or spirit;” the deletion of “abundant” and insertion of “ultimate well-being through” are unnecessary stylistic changes that do not present issues of polity. The ACC finds that a) deletion of the word “always” and insertion of “in its many forms” and b)

deletion of “a product” and insertion of “not an accomplishment of human prayer” are helpful clarifications.

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The Assembly Committee on Theology, Worship, and Education approved Item TWE-05 8, 31/0. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item TWE-05 8, 395/4.

For the full report on TWE-05, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000081/business>.



## 22-EE — D-10.0303

### COMMUNICATE DETERMINATION

#### D-10.0303 PETITION FOR REVIEW (ROD-04 1)

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall the first paragraph of D-10.0303 in the current Rules of Discipline be amended as follows?**

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

#### **“D-10.0303    Petition for Review**

**“If no charges are filed, the investigating committee shall file a written report of that fact alone with the clerk of session or stated clerk of the presbytery, and notify ~~the person who submitted the written statement~~, *in writing, both the person who has been accused and the person making the accusation.*”**

#### **Background and Rationale**

[Editor’s note: The assembly approved these proposed amendments to the current Rules of Discipline in the event that the Rules of Discipline will not be replaced by Church Discipline. If Church Discipline is approved by majority vote of presbyteries, it will replace the entire current Rules of Discipline, including any amendments to the current Rules of Discipline.]

Accusations are extremely easy to make, whether made by an individual or by a person doing so on behalf of another. When the credibility of those accusations has been substantiated, the Constitution clearly and unambiguously states that an investigative committee “shall promptly inform the accused” if charges are to be made. However, it is silent about the accused’s right to be notified when no charges are to be filed, even though written notice of this outcome is provided to the accuser. When individuals in positions of trust have gone through the protracted ordeal of being forced to defend themselves against charges and accusations that can neither be substantiated by objective facts and/or are deemed to be completely untrue, equity requires they be expeditiously notified of this conclusion as well. This omission constitutes a procedural error and undermines the justice process.

The Constitution’s current language also conveys an impression of bias and partiality, in that it describes one member (the “accused”) by way of labeling but uses supportive and affirming language to describe the other (“the person who submitted the written statement”). Labeling one and not the other is harmful because, consciously or subliminally, it fosters a presumption of guilt on the accused and freedom from guilt on the person making the accusation. Reframing the Constitution’s language removes these false assumptions and more faithfully takes into consideration the purpose of church discipline (D-1.01011).

The additional word revisions would, respectively, promote language consistency throughout the document and provide grammatical clarity.

### **Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to disapprove ROD-04.

ROD-03 requests the amendment of the current Rules of Discipline. The proposed Church Discipline revision is before the same assembly which would, if approved, replace the current Rules of Discipline section of the *Book of Order*. Should the General Assembly affirmatively adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC would recommend that this overture be answered by the assembly's action on Church Discipline (ROD-03).

Should the General Assembly not adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC advises the General Assembly as follows:

The overture proposes three changes to the current Rules of Discipline.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the 225th General Assembly that Recommendation 1 be approved. Recommendation 1 changes the requirement that, if no charges are filed, the clerk or stated clerk notifies in writing both the person who has been accused and the person making the accusation. Equity requires that both parties be advised of the investigating committee's decision not to file charges and is an appropriate change to the Rules of Discipline.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline amended and approved Item ROD-04 1, 18/4. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-04 1, 326/19.

For the full report on ROD-04, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.

## 22-FF — AMENDING “THE ACCUSED”

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

The 225th General Assembly (2022) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Further, that all other sections referring to “the accused” in the current Rules of Discipline be modified to read *the person accused*.**

#### Background and Rationale

[Editor’s note: The assembly approved the above proposed amendments to the current Rules of Discipline in the event that the Rules of Discipline are not be replaced by Church Discipline. If Church Discipline is approved by a majority vote of presbyteries, it will replace the entire current Rules of Discipline, including any amendments to the current Rules of Discipline.]

Accusations are extremely easy to make, whether made by an individual or by a person doing so on behalf of another. When the credibility of those accusations has been substantiated, the Constitution clearly and unambiguously states that an investigative committee “shall promptly inform the accused” if charges are to be made. However, it is silent about the accused’s right to be notified when no charges are to be filed, even though written notice of this outcome is provided to the accuser. When individuals in positions of trust have gone through the protracted ordeal of being forced to defend themselves against charges and accusations that can neither be substantiated by objective facts and/or are deemed to be completely untrue, equity requires they be expeditiously notified of this conclusion as well. This omission constitutes a procedural error and undermines the justice process.

The Constitution’s current language also conveys an impression of bias and partiality, in that it describes one member (the “accused”) by way of labeling but uses supportive and affirming language to describe the other (“the person who submitted the written statement”). Labeling one and not the other is harmful because, consciously or subliminally, it fosters a presumption of guilt on the accused and freedom from guilt on the person making the accusation. Reframing the Constitution’s language removes these false assumptions and more faithfully takes into consideration the purpose of church discipline (D-1.01011).

The additional word revisions would, respectively, promote language consistency throughout the document and provide grammatical clarity.

#### Advice—From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 225th General Assembly to disapprove ROD-04.

ROD-03 requests the amendment of the current Rules of Discipline. The proposed Church Discipline revision is before the same assembly which would, if approved, replace the current Rules of Discipline section of the *Book of Order*. Should the General Assembly affirmatively adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the ACC would recommend that this overture be answered by the assembly’s action on Church Discipline (ROD-03).

Should the General Assembly not adopt Church Discipline as proposed by the Rules of Discipline Task Force, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the General Assembly as follows:

The overture proposes three changes to the current Rules of Discipline.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution recommends to the 225th General Assembly that Recommendation 2 presents issues that should be considered.

Recommendation 2 would amend “the accused” to “the person accused,” in order to neutralize what appears to be bias against one who is accused of an offense as opposed to the person who submits the written statement. However, the identification of “the person who submits the written statement,” is appropriate within the context of the Rules of Discipline in that a person may be filing a statement from their own personal knowledge; or, may be filing a written statement based upon their knowledge of information from any source that an offense has occurred (See D-10.0101(b)). The term “the accused” accurately reflects the position one is in when an accusation has been made. It should also be noted that within the Rules of Discipline, being accused of an offense does not imply in any way that the person is guilty of the offense. Should the General Assembly believe that this language should be adopted, there is no constitutional impediment in making such a change.

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The Assembly Committee on Rules of Discipline amended and approved Item ROD-04 2, 18/4. The 225th General Assembly (2022) approved Item ROD-04 2, 326/19.

For the full report on ROD-04, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/committee/3000083/business>.