

JOHN KNOX PRESBYTERY GUIDELINES FOR REVIEW OF SESSION RECORDS AND MINUTES

The John Knox Presbytery will provide for the annual examination of the session records as required by the Book of Order G-3.0108, G-3.0204 and G-3.0301.

The Stated Clerk will conduct reviews of the records of the sessions in the churches of the Presbytery. (MOP, PERS-23) The Stated Clerk may name other persons to supervise any particular Records Review meeting and sign Session Record books on behalf of the Presbytery, provided that such action be reported to the Presbytery at its next stated meeting.

All exceptions shall be recorded in the session's minutes and the current year review process shall verify that prior year's exception(s) has(ve) not been repeated.

The Stated Clerk may refer any significant exception(s) to Presbytery Council *or Committee on Ministry* for follow-through.

After the annual Report to Presbytery of Session Records Review, any session's unreviewed records shall be referred to a minister serving on Presbytery Council. That minister will be responsible for the review of those records and submission of the report to the Stated Clerk. The reviewer will arrange for any such book(s) to be stamped and signed by the Stated Clerk.

GUIDELINES FOR WRITING AND REVIEW OF SESSION MINUTES AND ROLL BOOK

I. FORMAT FOR A REGULAR OR STATED MEETING

1. Meeting held at least once a quarter Book of Order (G-3.0203)
2. State name of session, regular or stated meeting, date, place. (*The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Any town, Iowa met in regular meeting on December 1, 1988, at the Church.*)
3. Record call to order by whom and time, and that it was convened with prayer. (*The Session was called to order by the moderator, the Reverend Jane Doe, at 7:00 p.m. who convened the meeting with prayer.*)
4. Record Elders present; absent with notice (excused); absent. [*It was moved, seconded and carried (or: Upon motion, the Session voted) to list as absent with notice Elder 4 and Elder 9 and as absent Elder 2. Present: Elder 1, Elder 3, Elder 5, Elder 6, Elder 7, Elder 8. Absent with notice: Elder 4, Elder 9. Absent: Elder 2.*]
5. State presence of quorum Book of Order (G-3.0203)
(*A quorum was present.*)
6. Approval of minutes of last regular meeting and any special meetings since last regular meeting.
7. Record election of clerk Book of Order, (G-3.0104) and treasurer Book of Order (G-3.0205) when it occurs.
8. Record any action taken concerning persons on any rolls or registers.

9. Record permission given before it takes place and record that it took place for communion, weddings, baptisms.
10. Record all motions made and passed. (*Do not record the names of the maker and seconder of motions.* Not necessary to record motions defeated unless Session wants it noted for the record.)
11. Record motion to adjourn, time and closing prayer.
12. Record date of next meeting (desirable but not required).
13. Signed by Clerk of Session.

II. FORMAT FOR A SPECIAL MEETING

1. State name of session, special meeting, date, place. (*The Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Any town, Iowa met in special meeting on April 1, 1988, at the Church.*)
2. Record call to order by whom and time, and that it was convened with prayer.
3. Record Elders present; absent with notice (excused); absent.
4. State presence of quorum Book of Order (G-3.0203)
5. Record call of meeting, that is, the reason why it is being held. (*This special meeting was called to consider and act upon the request of Some One to join this church.*)
6. Record all actions relating to call. (No actions on any other matters are in order.)
7. Record motion to adjourn, time and closing prayer.
8. Signed by Clerk of Session.

III. FORMAT FOR ANNUAL MEETING OF CONGREGATION

1. Minutes are included within the minutes of the Session. (G-3.0204)
2. State name of congregation, annual meeting, date and place.
3. Record call to order by whom and time, and that it was convened by prayer.
4. Record number of members present and presence of quorum. (G-1.0502)
5. Record approval of minutes of previous annual meeting and of any special meetings since last annual meeting, by Session, including date of approval; or by the congregation before the adjournment of the meeting for which the minutes are taken. (*Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised, 11th Edition*, p. 474-475)
6. Record receipt of all reports made at meeting.
7. Record election of officers. Book of Order (G-1.0503a, G-2.0401)
8. Record election of nominating committee. Book of Order (G-2.0401)
9. Record review of adequacy of compensation of pastor(s). Book of Order (G-1.0503c)
10. Record all motions passed. (Do not record the names of the maker and seconder of motions. Not necessary to record motions defeated unless congregation wants it noted for the record.)
11. Record motion to adjourn, time and closing prayer.
12. Minutes signed by Clerk of Session, (or secretary elected by the congregation, if Clerk wasn't present). Book of Order (G-1.0503)

IV. FORMAT FOR SPECIAL MEETING OF CONGREGATION

1. Minutes are included within the minutes of the Session. Book of Order (G-3.0204)
2. State name of congregation, special meeting, date and place.
3. Record call to order by whom and time, and that it was convened with prayer.
4. Record number of members present and presence of quorum. Book of Order (G-1.0502)
5. Record call of meeting.
6. Record all actions taken in relation to call of meeting. (No actions on any other matters are in order.) Book of Order (G-1.0501)
7. Record motion to adjourn, time and closing prayer.
8. Minutes signed by Clerk of Session.

V. ITEMS TO APPEAR AT LEAST ANNUALLY IN THE MINUTES

1. Record action of Presbytery regarding review of minutes and rolls. Book of Order (G-3.0204) Note exceptions made, if any, and record them. Example: *On November 15, 1988 The John Knox Presbytery approved the minutes of the Session of the First Presbyterian Church of Any town, Iowa from December 1, 1987 to October 1, 1988, with exceptions noted.*
2. Record submission of Annual Statistical Report to General Assembly. Book of Order (G-3.0202f)
3. Statement of the composition of the session with regard to racial ethnic members, women, men, and age groups, and how this corresponds to the composition of the congregation. Book of Order (F-1.0403) Example: *The congregation is composed of 50 males, 75 females, e Hispanics. The Session is composed of 4 males, 5 females. The composition of the Session (does or) does not correspond to the composition of the congregation.*
4. Review of Baptized, Active, ~~Inactive~~, Affiliate (this only if there are any) membership rolls. There should be record of contact by letter or in person of those neglecting the responsibilities of membership. Book of Order (G-3.0204)
5. If congregation has Board of Deacons, or Board of Trustees, record review of their minutes; and record at least one joint meeting a year. Book of Order (G-2.0202, G-4.0401)
6. Record annual budget established Book of Order (G-3.0205) and display it.
7. Review of adequacy of compensation of pastor(s) and all church staff. Book of Order (G-2.0804)
8. Review of adequacy of property and liability insurance coverage to protect facilities, programs, and officers. Book of Order (G-3.0112)
9. Report by treasurer of receipts and expenditures and balances of all funds and display full report. Book of Order (G-3.0205)
10. Receipt of audit of financial records Book of Order (G-3.0113).
11. Record that procedure for election, instruction, examination, ordination and/or installation has been followed (applies to all, even those re-elected for second term). Book of Order (G-3.0201c. and G-2.0401-403)

Election of individuals by congregation to be elders or deacons. Book of Order (G-2.0401)

A period of study and preparation takes place. Book of Order (G-2.0402)

The minutes of the Session shall record the completion of the period of study and preparation. Book of Order (G-2.0402)

Then the Session shall examine each as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the office. Book of Order (G-2.0402)

Session confers with each person as to their willingness to serve in the office to which they have been elected. Book of Order (G-2.0402)

Then, if the examination is approved, and if the candidate agrees, the Session shall proceed to ordination and installation. Book of Order (G-2.0402)

After ordination and/or installation takes place, record that it did happen.

12. Record election of commissioner(s) to presbytery, their terms of service and their report to session. Book of Order (G-3.0202a.)
13. Record election of treasurer Book of Order (G-3.0205)

VI. ROLLS AND REGISTERS

1. Baptized Members' Roll (Note: This is not the same as the Baptism Register.) Book of Order (G-3.0204)
 - a) Persons baptized in particular church who have not made profession of faith
 - b) Active members' children who were baptized elsewhere
2. Active Members' Roll Book of Order (G-3.0204)
Chronological roll in which is recorded all actions taken concerning each individual
Alphabetical roll as index
3. Affiliate Members' Roll Book of Order (G-3.0204)
Persons who hold active membership in another church, but are active in this church
4. Baptisms Register Book of Order (G-3.0204b)
 - a) Infant: name, parents' name, date of birth of person being baptized, names of person presenting the child for baptism
 - b) Adult: name, parents' name, date of birth of baptized person
5. Ruling Elders and Deacons (if applicable) Register Book of Order (G-3.0204)
 - a) Name of church where ordained
 - b) Date of ordination
 - c) Terms of service
 - d) Record of removals
6. Pastors, co-pastors, associate pastors, designated pastors Register Book of Order (G-3.0204b)
 - a) May also include interim pastors, interim associate pastors, ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service
 - b) Dates of service

Registers that are recommended, but not required:

1. Marriage Register
 - a. Marriages of all members of church
 - b. All marriages conducted by ministerial staff
 - c. Marriages performed on church property
2. Deaths
 - a. All members of church
 - b. Date of death, place of interment
 - c. Record removal from other rolls, as appropriate
3. “Such other registers as the session may deem necessary.” Book of Order (G-3.0204b.)

VII. PHYSICAL FORMAT

1. All pages numbered consecutively.
2. No erasures, footnotes, or insertions of papers.
3. No blank pages or blank portions of pages between minutes, unless crossed out.

VIII. MANUAL OF OPERATIONS

Items to be included in the session Manual of Operations Book of Order (G-3.0106)

1. Standing rules of the Congregation (may also be called the Bylaws, or the Articles of Incorporation) shall include:
 - a. Provision establishing minimum notification requirements for a congregational meeting Book of Order (G-1.0502)
 - b. Provision establishing quorum necessary to conduct business Book of Order (G-1.0501)
 - c. Provisions establishing the number of ruling elders on the session; the number of deacons on the board, if applicable; and the number of trustees on the board, if applicable.
 - d. Provision for the establishment of a parliamentary authority.
 - e. Provision for the congregational nominating committee, if applicable Book of Order (G-2.0401)
2. Standing Rules/Policies for the Session shall include
 - a. Provision establishing quorum Book of Order (G-3.0203)
 - b. Provision establishing any registers deemed necessary, in addition to those required Book of Order (G-3.0204b.)
 - c. Provision establishing the length of term of the clerk Book of Order (G-3.0104)
 - d. Provision establishing the length of term of the treasurer Book of Order (G-3.0205)
 - e. Provision establishing a sexual misconduct policy Book of Order (G-3.0106)