

**PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
223rd General Assembly**

18-A Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons (G-2.0401d)

Shall G-2.0401 of the Form of Government be amended as follows? [Text to be deleted is shown with strike through; text to be added or inserted is shown in italic.]

“Ruling elders and deacons are men and women elected by the congregation from among its members. The nomination and election of ruling elders and deacons shall express the rich diversity of the congregation’s membership and shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness (F-1.0403). Ruling elders and deacons shall be nominated by a committee elected by the congregation, drawn from and representative of its membership. ~~Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee, provided that the committee shall consist of at least three active members of the congregation, and shall include at least one ruling elder who is currently serving on the session.~~ *Congregations may provide by their own rule for a congregational nominating committee. The rule shall meet the following criteria: (1) the minimum size of the committee as specified in the rule shall be at least three persons; (2) at least one member of the committee shall be an elder currently serving on session; and (3) a majority of those persons on the committee who are eligible to vote shall consist of persons not currently serving on session.* The pastor shall serve ex officio and without vote. When elections are held, full opportunity shall always be given to the congregation for nomination from the floor of the congregational meeting by any active member of the congregation. A majority of all the active members present and voting shall be required to elect.”

18-B.1 Renunciation of Jurisdiction (G-2.0509)

Shall G-2.0509 be amended by striking the fourth paragraph and adding two new paragraphs to read as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added is shown as italic.]

~~“Whenever a former minister of the Word and Sacrament has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a disciplinary proceeding as the accused, that former minister of the Word and Sacrament shall not be permitted to perform any work, paid or volunteer, in any congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) unless and until the person rejoins the church, comes forward and resubmits to the disciplinary process.~~

“No congregation or entity under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be permitted to employ, for pay or as a volunteer, a former minister of the Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) who has renounced jurisdiction in the midst of a disciplinary proceeding as the accused.

“Any former minister of the Word and Sacrament (teaching elder) who has renounced jurisdiction and later wants to be restored to office can be restored only through application to the presbytery in which he or she renounced jurisdiction for restoration to office, in which case the provisions of D- 10.0401d and D-12.0200 shall apply.”

18-B.2 Renunciation of Jurisdiction (D-10.0401d)

Shall D-10.0401d be amended to read as follows? [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

~~“For instances where a former minister of the Word and Sacrament comes forward in self-accusation to undergo a disciplinary process to regain permission to perform work under the jurisdiction of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) (G-2.0509) who renounced jurisdiction while being accused in a disciplinary case rejoins the church, no time limit from the time of the commission of the alleged offense to the filing of charges shall apply. Charges based on all accusations that had been made by the time that the former minister of the Word and Sacrament had renounced jurisdiction may be brought regardless of the date on which any such offense is alleged to have occurred.”~~

18-C Officers (G-3.0104)

Shall G-3.0104 of the Form of Government be amended by adding the following statement as the last paragraph to read as follows? [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“No congregation, session, presbytery, synod, or national office of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), nor any individual acting on behalf of or in an official capacity for the above institutions, shall publicly endorse or oppose, or otherwise encourage or discourage others to vote for or against an individual running for public office.”

18-D Membership of Presbytery (G-3.0306)

Shall the fourth paragraph of G-3.0306 of the Form of Government be amended by adding the following statement as follows? [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“Every minister of the Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily be a member of the presbytery where his or her work is situated or of the presbytery where she or he resides. *The presbytery may grant a minister permission to engage in work validated ministry that is outside its geographic bounds or which is not under its jurisdiction, but no presbytery shall permit a minister to engage in work that is within the geographic bounds of another presbytery and which is properly within the responsibility of another presbytery without consent of that presbytery. Such permission shall be obtained from both presbyteries and shall be reviewed and renewed annually.*”

18-E Pastor, Counselor, and Advisor (G-3.0307)

Shall G-3.0307 of the Form of Government be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“Presbyteries shall be open at all times to communication regarding the life and ministry of their congregations.

“Each presbytery shall develop and maintain mechanisms and processes to serve as pastor and counselor to its pastors, both ministers of the Word and Sacrament, ~~and ruling elders commissioned to pastoral service (also called~~ commissioned pastors (also known as commissioned ruling elders]), as well as the ~~and~~ certified Christian educators of the presbytery; to facilitate the relations between the presbytery and its congregations, ~~pastors~~ *ministers of the Word and Sacrament, commissioned pastors*, and certified Christian educators; and to settle difficulties on behalf of the presbytery where possible and expedient.”

18-F Welcoming to the Table (W-4.0202)

Shall W-4.0202 be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with a strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“In cases where baptized children who have not yet begun to participate in the Lord’s Supper express a desire to receive the Sacrament, ~~the session should provide an occasion to welcome them—they shall be welcomed~~ to the table ~~in public worship. Their introduction to the Lord’s Supper should include~~ *and the session should ensure they receive* ongoing instruction or formation in the meaning and mystery of the Sacraments.”

18-G Disciplinary Offense (D-2.0203b)

Shall D-2.0203b of the Form of Government be amended as follows? [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. An offense is any act or omission by a member or a person in an ordered ministry of the church that is contrary to the Scriptures or the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). *Sexual abuse as defined in Section D-10.0401c shall be considered contrary to the Scriptures or Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and therefore an offense for purposes of these rules.*”

18-H.1 Time Limit (D-10.0401b)

Shall D-10.0401b of the Form of Government be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“b. For instances of sexual abuse of another person, the five-year time limit shall not apply.

There is also no time limit for charging that a person who knew or reasonably should have known of the reasonable risk of sexual abuse of another as defined in D-10.0401c(1) or (2) failed to take reasonable steps to minimize the risk. Both charges may be brought regardless of the date on which an offense is alleged to have occurred.”

10-H.2 Time Limit (D-10.0401c(1))

Shall D-10.0401c(1) of the Form of Government be amended as follows: [Text to be deleted is shown with strike-through; text to be added or inserted is shown as italic.]

“(1) any person under the age of eighteen years or anyone ~~over the age of eighteen years~~ without the ~~mental~~ capacity to consent; or”