

## WORKSHEET A

The session's examination is to cover three concerns noted in G-2.0402.

This worksheet deals with personal faith. Each member of the Presbyterian Church has made some form of public confession of faith upon joining the church. The congregation as a community of faith elects persons from their number to be ruling elders, who, with the teaching elders of the church

exercise leadership, government and discipline for the life of the congregation.

Candidates for ordination should reflect on their life experiences that have informed their personal faith. This worksheet is to be used to help in that reflection. Personal faith is informed by people, events, and experiences.

Most of us have known people who have been important in shaping the personal faith of others including our own. These may be relatives, teachers, etc. Identify in your mind such people in your life and select three to note here:

### PEOPLE

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Events such as church camps, communion services, a baptism service, *kī* 'ivai, etc., can play an important role in shaping our personal faith. Recall events that influenced your faith and note three here.

### EVENTS

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Other human experiences such as family life, Sunday worship, Bible study, youth group, community service programs, job, etc., can play an important role in shaping our personal faith. Reflect on such experiences in your life and select three to note here:

### EXPERIENCES

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Reflect on your responses and note any connections between the people, events and experiences that have helped to shape your personal faith.

## The Acts of the Apostles 6: 1- 7

Now during those days, when the disciples were increasing in number, the Hellenists complained against the Hebrews because their widows were being neglected in the daily distribution of food. 2And the twelve called together the whole community of the disciples and said, 'It is not right that we should neglect the word of God in order to wait at tables. 3Therefore, friends, select from among yourselves seven men of good standing, full of the Spirit and of wisdom, whom we may appoint to this task, "while we, for our part, will devote ourselves to prayer and to serving the word.' 5What they said pleased the whole community, and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and the Holy Spirit, together with Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolaus, a proselyte of Antioch. 6They had these men stand before the apostles, who prayed and laid their hands on them. 7 The word of God continued to spread; the number of the disciples increased greatly in Jerusalem, and a great many of the priests became obedient to the faith.

- Read aloud first time; reflect on what you **HEAR** as the passage is read
- Silence
- Share what you **heard**
- Read aloud 2nd time; reflect on what you **SAW** as the passage was read
- Silence
- Share what you **saw**
- Read aloud 3rd time; reflect on what you **FELT** as the passage was read
- Silence
- Share what you **felt**
- Share what you experience the passage calling you **to be or do.**

## THE PRESBYTERIAN REFORMED TRADITION

### Reformed Tradition in Historical Context

- Children of God
- Children of Abraham (the Jews)
- Christians
- Roman Catholic Christians
- Protestant Christian
- Reformed Christians
- Presbyterians PC(USA)

### The Protestant Reformation

- Reforming the Roman Catholic Church
- Martin Luther challenged the abuses of the church system
- Indulgences-salvation by works
- Scriptures interpreted only by clergy
- Church authority vs. Scriptural
- Return to Grace alone, Faith alone,
- Scripture alone

### The Reformed Reformation

- Developed by Swiss reformers in the sixteenth century Ulrich Zwingli
- John Calvin (Frenchman who made his home in Geneva)
- Became alternative to Lutherans and Anabaptists

### Major Beliefs of the Catholic Tradition

- One holy, catholic, and apostolic Church
- Recognition of canonical Scriptures
- Formation and adoption of the ecumenical creeds
- Nicene Creed-personhood of Jesus Christ and the reality of the Holy Spirit
- Apostles' Creed-One God in three persons (Trinity) and God as creator of heaven and earth

### Major Beliefs of the Protestant Tradition

- God's grace in Jesus Christ is revealed in Scripture
- Grace alone-God's gift
- Faith alone-not our works
- Scripture alone-no other authority

### Five Major Affirmations of the Reformed Faith

1. Election of God's people not only for salvation but also for service
2. Life together marked by disciplined concern for order in the church according to God's Word
3. Faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation
4. Recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny
5. The people of God are called to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God

### Six Central Beliefs of the Reformed Tradition

*see next page for more detail*

1. The Sovereignty of God
2. The Authority of Scripture
3. The Lordship of Jesus Christ
4. Justification by Faith
5. The Priesthood of All Believers
6. The Fellowship of the Church

## ***The Presbyterian/Reformed Tradition (Continued)***

### **Sovereignty of God**

- There is no part of life that is separate from God
- Every human being at every moment has to do with the living God
- Human life is rooted in the will and intention of God
- The Glory of God and God's purposes in the world are more important than the salvation of one's own soul

### **The Authority of Scripture**

- The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the only rule of faith and practice
- The Bible is to be interpreted in light of its witness to God's work of reconciliation in Christ (*BoC* 9.29)

### **The Lordship of Jesus Christ**

- Christ alone is deserving of our allegiance and devotion
- The presence of God in Jesus Christ makes more sense out of life, and gives more meaning to life than any other revelation

### **Justification by Faith**

- We are put right with God by grace through faith alone and not by any thing we are, believe, or do
- Note: the opposite of justification by faith takes two forms: *works righteousness* (where we earn our salvation by being good) and *beliefs righteousness* (where we earn our salvation by believing the right things)-both of which put the responsibility for salvation in humans, not God

### **The Priesthood of All Believers**

- All persons have equal access to God
- No priest (minister) can answer for any human being
- Believers have a right and responsibility to answer for themselves and for their neighbors before God
- There is no qualitative distinction between clergy and lay, sacred and secular, Sunday Christianity and work-week life

### **The Fellowship of the Church**

- You can't be a Christian by yourself; Christianity is corporate as well as personal
- Love of neighbor is the truest test of orthodoxy and doctrine

### **The Reformed Motto**

*Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda*

- The Church reformed and always reforming
- Or, the Church reformed and always to be reformed

### **Comparison to Other Traditions**

- Polity
  - Reformed: governance by clergy and elders in representative democracy
  - Episcopalian: hierarchical authority through bishops
  - Congregational: authority vested individual congregations
- Lord's Supper
  - Reformed: bread and wine are unchanged, but Christ is truly present
  - Catholic: bread and wine are transformed into the body and blood of Jesus

## ***CREEDS AND CONFESSIONS OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)***

<b>Name</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Purpose</b>
Nicene Creed	325	to settle controversy about the nature and meaning of Jesus Christ
Apostles' Creed	evolved by 500	to unify the early church with one statement of faith all could accept
Scots Confession	1560	to proclaim Protestant faith in Scotland and England
Heidelberg Catechism	1563	to explain the differences between the Presbyterians and the Lutherans and Catholics
Second Helvetic Confession	1566	to describe the experience of the Christian life
Westminster Confession of Faith	1646	to state Protestant beliefs in a way that would help Protestant groups in England get along
Shorter Catechism	1647	to teach Protestant children the Westminster Confession of Faith
Larger Catechism	1647	to provide a longer, more detailed version of the Shorter Catechism
Declaration of Barmen	1934	to protest the rise of Hitler and Nazism
Confession of 1967	1967    "	. to state the faith in today's words; a call for reconciliation
Brief Statement of Faith	1991	to provide a short modern statement of faith to use in worship and at other times





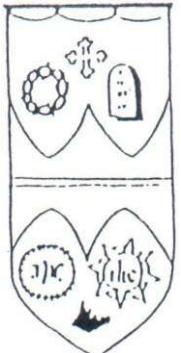
Athene Creed  
4th Century



Apostles' Creed  
8th Century



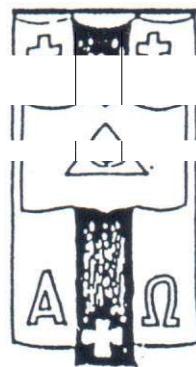
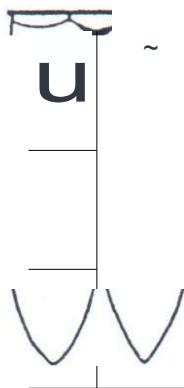
Scots Confession  
of 1560



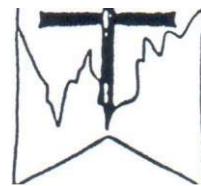
Heidelberg  
Catechism of 1563

## Pretest

This is only for our own awareness and not an examination. It is not designed to find out who is "right" or "wrong" but rather to clarify where we are in relation to our Constitution. This pretest will not be "corrected," but we will share our various perceptions. (Check one after each statement.)



of 1646



Theological  
Declaration of



Confession of 1967

Agree  
Disagree  
Question

1. The membership of a particular church of the Presbyterian

Church (U.S.A.) Includes baptized members, active members, inactive members, and affiliate members.

2. A Presbyterian minister is not a member of the local congregation but is a member of presbytery.

3. A presbytery is made up of equal representation from each congregation within its boundaries.

4. The presbytery does not exercise power over any congregation but acts only by making recommendations or suggestions .

5. In his or  
the session  
6. The co  
they have  
7. The bo  
under the  
S. The sy  
record of i  
session an  
9. The Ge  
trative bod  
10. The se  
to say abo  
11. The bu  
other grou  
session.



## *Making Disciples, Making Leaders*

"[T]he session shall examine them [officers-elect] 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" [G-2.0402].

In addition to your other assignments, these questions will help you prepare for the examination by the session at the end of your training process.

[Note: Most of these questions can be answered by judicious use of the indices in the *Book of Order* and the *Book of Confessions* and your readings in *Called to Serve.*]

### 1. Personal Faith

- 1.1 What is the story of how you came to be a person of faith?
- 1.2 What people have been influential in the development of your faith? In what ways?
- 1.3 Over the course of your life, what are some of the things that have increased your faith? Which have challenged your faith?
- 1.4 What are some of the factors that went into your decision to accept the call to be a church officer?
- 1.5 Which ordination question is the most challenging for you?
- 1.6 Are there any of the ordination questions that you cannot, in good conscience, answer in the affirmative?

### 2. Knowledge of Doctrine

- 2.1 Who is the head of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?
- 2.2 What does it mean to say "God alone is Lord of the conscience"?
- 2.3 Which of the Great Ends of the Church has the highest priority for you?
- 2.4 What is a confession?
- 2.5 Why are confessions important in our tradition?
- 2.6 Why do we have more than one confession?
- 2.7 How many confessions are in the *Book of Confessions*?
- 2.8 What is the purpose of the *Book of Confessions*?
- 2.9 Which two confessions are shared by all Christians worldwide (the Church catholic)?
- 2.10 Which confessions were formed in the twentieth century, and what were their particular historical contexts?
- 2.11 What are the watchwords of the Protestant Reformation?
- 2.12 What is the central affirmation of the Reformed tradition?
- 2.13 Name one other affirmation of the Reformed tradition.

## *Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons*

2.14 What is one element of the mission the church is called to as the body of Christ?

2.15 Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have such a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusiveness?

### 3.Knowledge of Government

3.1 What documents make up the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

3.2 What are the three parts of the *Book of Order*, and what is each part's special focus?

3.3 Name one of the principles of Presbyterian government.

3.4 What are the three ordained offices in the Presbyterian Church?

3.5 What are the duties and responsibilities of elders and sessions?

3.6 What are the duties and responsibilities of deacons and the board of deacons?

3.7 Name the four governing bodies in the Presbyterian system, and briefly describe their function(s).

3.8 How do you understand this statement from the *Book of Order*: "Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ"? (F-3.0204)

### 4.Knowledge of Worship and Sacraments

4.1 Name the six elements of Christian worship.

4.2 What is the typical order of service (major sections) in Presbyterian worship?

4.3 What part does Scripture play in our worship and life together?

4.4 What is the primary role of music and musicians in worship?

4.5 How many sacraments are celebrated in the Presbyterian Church?

4.6 What are the biblical roots of each of the sacraments?

4.7 What is the significance (meaning) of each of the sacraments?

4.8 What are some of the ways our worship service integrates Scripture, proclamation, prayer, and praise?

### 5.Knowledge of Discipline

5.1 What is the purpose of church discipline?

5.2 What are the two types of judicial cases?

5.3 What is the difference between a dissent and a protest?

*Making Disciples, Making Leaders*

**6.Knowledge of the Local Church**

(Answers to these questions are specific to a particular congregation.)

- 6.1 In what year was this church founded? How old is it now?
- 6.2 How many pastors have served this congregation?
- 6.3 How many ruling elders and deacons and trustees does this church have?

6.4 Who is the current clerk of session?

6.5 Who is the current moderator of the board of deacons?

6.6 What are the major committees (councils, ministries, work groups, etc.) of the session?

6.7 What are the major committees (or councils, or ministries, etc.) of the diaconate?

6.8 Does this church have a mission statement? If so, what is it?

## *Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons*

### *Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons: Answer Key*

"The session shall examine them [officers-elect] 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." [G-2.0402]

In addition to your other assignments, these questions will help you prepare for the examination by the session at the end of your training process.

[Note: Most of these questions can be answered by judicious use of the indices in the *Book of Order* and the *Book of Confessions* and your readings in *Called to Serve.*]

#### 1. Personal Faith

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- 1.2 What people have been influential in the development of your faith? In what ways?
- 1.3 Over the course of your life, what are some of the things that have challenged and increased your faith?
- 1.4 What are some of the factors that went into your decision to accept the call to be a church officer?
- 1.5 Which ordination question is the most challenging for you?
- 1.6 Are there any of the ordination questions that you cannot, in good conscience, answer in the affirmative?

#### 2 Knowledge of Doctrine

- 2.1 Who is the head of the Presbyterian Church (U.S .A.)?

F-1.0201. All power in heaven and earth is given to Jesus Christ by Almighty God, who raised Christ from the dead and set him above all rule and authority, all power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. God has put all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ and has made Christ Head of the Church, which is his body.

- 2.2 What does it mean to say "God alone is Lord of the conscience"?

F-3.0101(a) That "God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship."

F-3.0101(b) Therefore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable ....

## *Making Disciples, Making Leaders*

2.3 Which of the Great Ends of the Church has the highest priority for you?

F-1.0304 The great ends of the church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind; the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship of the children of God; the maintenance of divine worship; the preservation of the truth; the promotion of social righteousness; and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

2.4 What is a confession?

A statement of what we believe; an expression of the doctrines of the faith.

2.5 Why are confessions important in our tradition?

F-2.01. These statements identify the church as a community of people known by its convictions as well as by its actions. They guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures; they summarize the essence of Christian tradition; they direct the church in maintaining sound doctrines; they equip the church for its work of proclamation.

2.6 Why do we have more than one confession?

[Because the Church acknowledges the dynamic nature of belief arising out of particular circumstances and contexts. We cannot, in anyone moment of time, express a statement of faith for all of time.]

F-2.01. Thus the creeds and confessions of this church reflect a particular stance within the history of God's people. They are the result of prayer, thought, and experience within a living tradition.

2.7 How many confessions are in the *Book of Confessions*?

There are eleven.

2.8 What is the purpose of the *Book of Confessions*?

F-2.01. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) states its faith and bears Witness to God's grace in Jesus Christ in the creeds and confessions in *The Book of Confessions*. In these confessional statements the church declares to its members and to the world who and what it is, what it believes, what it resolves to do.

F-2.01.... They serve to strengthen personal commitment and the life and Witness of the community of believers.

2.9 Which two confessions are shared by all Christians worldwide (the Church catholic)?

The Apostles' Creed and the Nicene Creed

2.10 Which confessions were formed in the twentieth century, and what were their particular historical contexts?

## Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons

*The Theological Declaration of Barmen* (1934)-the rise of Nazi Germany-focus on the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*The Confession of 1967*-the civil rights movement-focus on reconciliation.

*The Brief Statement of Faith* (1983)-the reunion of the northern and southern Presbyterian churches.

2.11 What are the watchwords of the Protestant Reformation?

F-2.04 Faith of the Protestant Reformation

In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) identifies with the affirmations of the Protestant Reformation. The focus of these affirmations is the rediscovery of God's grace in Jesus Christ as revealed in the Scriptures. The Protestant watchwords-grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone-embody principles of understanding which continue to guide and motivate the people of God in the life of faith.

2.12 What is the central affirmation of the Reformed tradition?

F-2.05. In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love.

2.13 Name one other affirmation of the Reformed tradition .

. . . Related to this central affirmation of God's sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

F-2.05. (1) The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;

(2) Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;

(3) A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation;

(4) The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.

2.14 What is one element of the mission the church is called to as the body of Christ?

F-1.0303. In our own time, we affirm that, in the power of the Spirit, the Church is faithful to the mission of Christ as it:

*Proclaims and hears the Word of God,*

responding to the promise of God's new creation in Christ, and inviting all people to participate in that new creation;

*Administers and receives the Sacraments,*

welcoming those who are being engrafted into Christ, bearing witness to Christ's saving death and resurrection, anticipating the heavenly banquet that is to come, and committing itself in the present to solidarity with the marginalized and the hungry;

*Nurtures a covenant community of disciples of Christ,*

living in the strength of God's promise and giving itself in service to God's mission.

F-1.0301. The Church is the body of Christ. Christ gives to the Church all the gifts necessary to be his body. The Church strives to demonstrate these gifts in its life as a community in the world (1 Cor. 12:27–28):

### *Making Disciples, Making Leaders*

The Church is to be a community of faith, entrusting itself to God alone, even at the risk of losing its life.

The Church is to be a community of hope, rejoicing in the sure and certain knowledge that, in Christ, God is making a new creation. This new creation is a new beginning for human life and for all things. The Church lives in the present on the strength of that promised new creation.

The Church is to be a community of love, where sin is forgiven, reconciliation is accomplished, and the dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

The Church is to be a community of witness, pointing beyond itself through word and work to the good news of God's transforming grace in Christ Jesus its Lord.

F-1.0302d. The Church is called to be Christ's faithful evangelist ...

### *F-1.0404 Openness*

In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church seeks a new openness to God's mission in the world. In Christ, the triune God tends the least among us, suffers the curse of human sinfulness, raises up a new humanity, and promises a new future for all creation. In Christ, Church members share with all humanity the realities of creatureliness, sinfulness, brokenness, and suffering, as well as the future toward which God is drawing them. The mission of God pertains not only to the Church but also to people everywhere and to all creation. As it participates in God's mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) seeks:

a new openness to the sovereign activity of God in the Church and in the world, to a more radical obedience to Christ, and to a more joyous celebration in worship and work;

a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity;

a new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God's activity in the world; and

a new openness to God's continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be more effective in its mission.

2.15 Why does the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have such a strong emphasis on diversity and inclusiveness?

### *F-1.0403. Unity in Diversity*

"As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to the promise" (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church's membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

## Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons

### **3.Knowledge of Government**

- 3.1 What documents make up the constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)?

F-3.04. The Constitution Defined-The *Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)* consists of the *Book of Confessions* and the *Book of Order*.

- 3.2 What are the three parts of the *Book of Order*, and what is each part's special focus?

F-3.04 The *Book of Order* includes:

The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity

Form of Government[-how we are organized to do our work]

Directory for Worship[-how we, both corporately and privately, offer our lives in worship]

Rules of Discipline[-how we are to deal with times of dissention and conflict].

- 3.3 Name one of the principles of Presbyterian government.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms, within the context of its commitment to the Church universal, a special commitment to basic principles of Presbyterian polity:

#### *F-3.0201 One Church*

The particular congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) wherever they are, taken collectively, constitute one church, called the church.

#### *F-3.0202 Governed by Presbyters*

This church shall be governed by presbyters, that is, ruling elders and teaching elders. Ruling elders are so named not because they “lord it over” the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Teaching elders shall be committed in all their work to equipping the people of God for their ministry and witness.

#### *F-3.0203 Gathered in Councils*

These presbyters shall come together in councils in regular gradation. These councils are sessions, presbyteries, synods, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate council. The larger part of the church, or a representation thereof, shall govern the smaller.

#### *F-3.0204 Seek and Represent the Will of Christ*

Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ.

#### *F-3.0205 Decision by Majority Vote*

Decisions shall be reached in councils by vote, following opportunity for discussion and discernment, and a majority shall govern.

#### *F-3.0206 Review and Control*

A higher council shall have the right of review and control over a lower one and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal.

#### *F-3.0207 Ordination by Council*

Presbyters (ruling elders and teaching elders) and deacons are ordained only by the authority of a council.

*F-3.0208 Shared Power, Exercised Jointly*

Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is a shared power, to be exercised jointly by presbyters gathered in councils.

*F-3.0209 General Authority of Councils*

Councils possess whatever administrative authority is necessary to give effect to duties and powers assigned by the Constitution of the church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with powers not mentioned being reserved to the presbyteries.

3.4 What are the three ordained offices in the Presbyterian Church?

*G-2.0102 Ordered Ministries*

The Church's ordered ministries described in the New Testament and maintained by this church are deacons and presbyters (teaching elders and ruling elders). Ordered ministries are gifts to the church to order its life so that the ministry of the whole people of God may flourish. The existence of these ordered ministries in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church.

3.5 What are the duties and responsibilities of elders and sessions?

*G-2.0301 Ruling Elder Defined*

As there were in Old Testament times elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in discernment of God's Spirit and governance of God's people. Accordingly, congregations should elect persons of wisdom and maturity of faith, having demonstrated skills in leadership and being compassionate in spirit. Ruling elders are so named not because they "lord it over" the congregation (Matt. 20:25), but because they are chosen by the congregation to discern and measure its fidelity to the Word of God, and to strengthen and nurture its faith and life. Ruling elders, together with teaching elders, exercise leadership, government, spiritual discernment, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a congregation as well as the whole church, including ecumenical relationships. When elected by the congregation, they shall serve faithfully as members of the session. When elected as commissioners to higher councils, ruling elders participate and vote with the same authority as teaching elders, and they are eligible for any office.

See also G- 3.0201 for a list of detailed responsibilities.

3.6       What are the duties and responsibilities of deacons and the board of deacons?

*G-2.0201 Deacon Defined*

The ministry of deacon as set forth in Scripture is one of compassion, witness, and service, sharing in the redeeming love of Jesus Christ for the poor, the hungry, the sick, the lost, the friendless, the oppressed, those burdened by unjust policies or structures, or anyone in distress. Persons of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly and sisterly love, sincere compassion, and sound judgment should be chosen for this ministry. (See W- 3.3416.)

3.7       Name the four governing bodies in the Presbyterian system, and briefly describe their function(s).

G-3.0101 The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is governed by councils composed of presbyters elected by the people (F-3.0202). These councils are called the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. All councils of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in this Constitution. The councils are distinct, but have such mutual relations

that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church. The jurisdiction of each council is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with the acts of each subject to review by the next higher council. Powers not mentioned in this Constitution are reserved to the presbyteries.

3.8 How do you understand this statement from the *Book of Order*:

"Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ"?

Commissioners to governing bodies are not sent with instructions from their constituency, but are expected to seek to discern God's will together in the midst of the governing body's deliberations. No governing body can "bind the conscience" of its commissioner—that is, compel them to vote in a certain way.

#### 4.

### 5.Knowledge of Worship and Sacraments

4.1 Name the six elements of Christian worship.

W-2.1000 Prayer

W-2.2000 Scripture Read and Proclaimed

W-2.3000 Baptism

W-2.4000 The Lord's Supper

W-2.5000 Self-Offering

W-2.6000 Relating to Each Other and the World

4.2 What is the typical order of service (major sections) in Presbyterian worship?

W-3.3202:

- (1) gathering around the Word;
- (2) proclaiming the Word;
- (3) responding to the Word;
- (4) the sealing of the Word;
- (S) bearing and following the Word into the world.

4.3 What part does Scripture play in our worship and life together?

W-2.200 I Centrality of Scripture-The church confesses the Scriptures to be the Word of God written, witnessing to God's self-revelation. Where that Word is read and proclaimed, Jesus Christ the Living Word is present by the inward witness of the Holy Spirit. For this reason the reading, hearing, preaching, and confessing of the Word are central to Christian worship. The session shall ensure that in public worship the Scripture is read and proclaimed regularly in the common language(s) of the particular church.

4.4 What is the primary role of music and musicians in worship?

W-2.1004 Music as Prayer: Choir and Instrumental Music-To lead the congregation in the singing of prayer is a primary role of the choir and

## *Making Disciples, Making Leaders*

other musicians. They also may pray on behalf of the congregation with introits, responses, and other musical forms. Instrumental music may be a form of prayer since words are not essential to prayer. In worship, music is not to be for entertainment or artistic display. Care should be taken that it not be used merely as a cover for silence. Music as prayer is to be a worthy offering to God on behalf of the people. (See also W-2.2008; W-3.3101)

4.5 How many sacraments are celebrated in the Presbyterian Church?

Only two.

W-1.3033(2) The Reformed tradition understands Baptism and the Lord's Supper to be Sacraments, instituted by God and commended by Christ.

4.6 What are the biblical roots of each of the sacraments?

See annotations for W-2.3000 and 2.4000 in the *Book of Order* for specific scriptural references.

W-2.300 1 Jesus and Baptism-Baptism is the sign and seal of incorporation into Christ. Jesus through his own baptism identified himself with sinners in order to fulfill all righteousness. Jesus in his own baptism was attested Son by the Father and was anointed with the Holy Spirit to undertake the way of the servant manifested in his sufferings, death, and resurrection. Jesus the risen Lord assured his followers of his continuing presence and power and commissioned them "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matt. 28: 19, NRSV).

W-2.4001 Jesus and the Supper

*Jesus Shared Meals*

W-2.400 1a. The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of eating and drinking in communion with the crucified and risen Lord. During his earthly ministry Jesus shared meals with his followers as a sign of community and acceptance and as an occasion for his own ministry. He celebrated Israel's feasts of covenant commemoration.

Last Supper

W-2.4001b. In his last meal before his death Jesus took and shared with his disciples the bread and wine, speaking of them as his body and blood, signs of the new covenant. He commended breaking bread and sharing a cup to remember and proclaim his death.

## *Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons*

### Resurrection

W-2.4001c. On the day of his resurrection, the risen Jesus made himself known to his followers in the breaking of bread. He continued to show himself to believers, by blessing and breaking' bread, by preparing, serving, and sharing common meals. (W-1.3033)

4.7 What is the significance (meaning) of each of the sacraments?

### Baptism

W-2.3001 Jesus and Baptism-Baptism is the sign and seal of incorporation into Christ. ...

W-2.3002 Dying and Rising in Baptism-In Baptism, we participate in Jesus' death and resurrection. In Baptism, we die to what separates us from God and are raised to newness of life in Christ. Baptism points us back to the grace of God expressed in Jesus Christ, who died for us and who was raised for us. Baptism points us forward to that same Christ who will fulfill God's purpose in God's promised future.

### The Lord's Supper

W-2.400 I a. The Lord's Supper is the sign and seal of eating and drinking in communion with the crucified and risen Lord ....

W-2.4004 Remembering-At the Lord's Table, the Church is

- a.renewed and empowered by the memory of Christ's life, death, resurrection, and promise to return;
- b.sustained by Christ's pledge of undying love and continuing presence with God's people;
- c.sealed in God's covenant of grace through partaking of Christ's self-offering.

In remembering, believers receive and trust the love of Christ present to them and to the world; they manifest the reality of the covenant of grace in reconciling and being reconciled; and they proclaim the power of Christ's reign for the renewal of the world in justice and in peace.

W-2.4006 Communion of the Faithful- ... Each time they gather at the Table the believing community

- a.are united with the Church in every place, and the whole Church is present;
- b.join with all the faithful in heaven and on earth in offering thanks-giving to the triune God;
- c.renew the vows taken at Baptism;

and they commit themselves afresh to love and serve God, one another, and their neighbors in the world.

## *Making Disciples, Making Leaders*

- 4.8 What are some of the ways our worship service integrates Scripture, proclamation, prayer, and praise?

Specific to each local congregation's practice and setting.

### **5.Knowledge of Discipline**

- 5.1 What is the purpose of church discipline?

D-1.0101 Church discipline is the church's exercise of authority given by Christ, both in the direction of guidance, control, and nurture of its members and in the direction of constructive criticism of offenders. The church's disciplinary process exists not as a substitute for the secular judicial system, but to do what the secular judicial system cannot do. The purpose of discipline is to honor God by making clear the significance of membership in the body of Christ; to preserve the purity of the church by nourishing the individual within the life of the believing community; to achieve justice and compassion for all participants involved; to correct or restrain wrongdoing in order to bring members to repentance and restoration; to uphold the dignity of those who have been harmed by disciplinary offenses; to restore the unity of the church by removing the causes of discord and division; and to secure the just, speedy, and economical determination of proceedings. In all respects, all participants are to be accorded procedural safeguards and due process, and it is the intention of these rules so to provide.

- 5.2 What are the two types of judicial cases?

D-2.0201 Remedial or Disciplinary-Judicial process consists of two types of cases: remedial and disciplinary.

D-2.0202 A remedial case is one in which an irregularity or a delinquency of a lower council, the Presbyterian Mission Agency, or

an entity of the General Assembly may be corrected by a higher council.

D-2.0203 Disciplinary- A disciplinary case is one in which a church member or a person in an ordered ministry may be censured for an offense.

- 5.3 What is the difference between a dissent and a protest?

G-3.0105a Dissent - A dissent is a declaration expressing disagreement with a decision of a council. It shall be made at the particular session during which the decision is made. The names of members dissenting shall be recorded.

G-3.0105b Protest- A protest is a written declaration, supported by reasons, alleging that a decision of a council is or contains an irregularity or a delinquency. Written notice of the protest shall be given at the particular session of the council during which it arose and shall be filed with the clerk before adjournment. If the protest is expressed in decorous and respectful language, it shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting, and may be accompanied by an answer prepared by the council. No further action is required.

### **6.Knowledge of the Local Church**

(Answers to these questions are specific to a particular congregation.)

- 6.1 In what year was this church founded?

*Study Guide for New Elders and Deacons*

- 6.2 How many pastors have served this congregation?
- 6.3 How many elders and deacons and trustees does this church have?
- 6.4 Who is the current clerk of session?
- 6.5 Who is the current moderator of the board of deacons?
- 6.6 What are the major committees (councils, ministries, work groups, etc.) of the session?
- 6.7 What are the major committees (or councils, or ministries, etc.) of the diaconate?
- 6.8 Does this church have a mission statement? If so, what is it?

# The Devil's Advocate

According to church order, are elders authorized to baptize?



According to church order, who is responsible for the content of church teaching?



Who has the authority to choose the music for worship according to church order?

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What does church order say about the qualifications for being an elder? Can the session refuse to accept a woman?

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According to church order, who has the authority for deciding when and where the service of worship will be held?



According to church order, who is accountable for the use-of-church property? -



What does church order say about ordination vows? Note the difference between one's Immediate preference and the dictates of conscience.



According to church order, can the minister receive and dismiss members? Who does have this power?



What does church order say about the congregation's responsibilities to baptized children?



"If you don't like what the minister preaches, do something about it. After all, you are the governing body. You can choose which passages of Scripture should be read and decide what is preached from your pulpit."