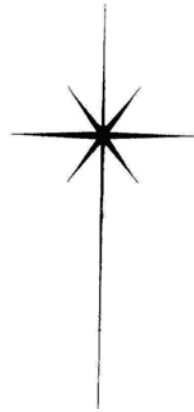


PRESBYTERY OF NORTHUMBERLAND



CLERK OF SESSION
MANUAL

2015



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SESSION & CONGREGATIONAL POLICY DECISIONS

Rolls & Registers

Rolls & Registers:

The Session shall keep a membership roll for Active, Baptized, and Affiliate members, and registers for the baptisms of infants and adults authorized by the session, of ruling elders and deacons elected by the congregation, and such other registers as the session may deem necessary. [G-1.0402 and G-3.0204a & b] The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that sessions keep the following additional registers:

- marriage register
- death register
- ruling elders and deacons ordained to service from other congregations
- persons deemed inactive (Other Participants)

The session might wish to consider a “friends of the congregation” register of folks associated with the congregation who have not joined but are active in the life of the church.

To assist future clerks and those who read session minutes, the Clerk should place a loose page at the beginning of the roll book listing the session’s policy and the date on which it was adopted.

Notice and quorum for congregational meetings:

Notice and quorum for congregational meetings:

The congregational bylaws shall state the requirement for notification and quorum of a congregational meeting. The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that session require at a minimum 10% of the Active Membership. *For the benefit of future clerks, the Clerk should place a loose page at the beginning of the session minutes books listing the congregation’s required notice and the date on which it was adopted.*

Notice:

Notice:

The congregation may set its own requirements for notice, but presbytery suggests that a notice requirement of public notice be given on two successive Sundays prior to the meeting is an appropriate notice, with it being permissible to convene the meeting following the notice given on the second Sunday.

In addition, the congregation may permit notice to be given by means other than announcement during worship, so long as it considers ways to include members without the particular means.

Quorum:

Quorum:

The congregation may set its own requirement for quorum, but presbytery suggests that the quorum of a meeting of the congregation should not be less than one tenth of the Active Membership or three members, whichever is greater.

Congregational Nominating Committee

Congregational Nominating Committee:

The congregational bylaws shall specify the composition of the congregational nominating committee. [G-2.0401] The nominating committee shall be members of the congregation and representative of it. The committee shall include at least three members, including at least one currently serving ruling elder, and the pastor shall serve ex officio without vote. The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that congregations adopt a process that specifies that the congregational nominating committee be elected by the congregation and that its process shall guarantee participation and inclusiveness.

Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons:

Election of Ruling Elders and Deacons: The congregational bylaws and elections shall always give full opportunity 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.

Notice and quorum for session meetings

Notice and quorum for session meetings:

Either by session policy or in the congregational bylaws, there shall be a policy stating the requirement for notification and quorum of a session meeting.

Notice:

Notice: The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that notice be made practical and reasonable for the local community, but that the policy ensure that all session members have access to means of notification.

Quorum:

Quorum:

The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that a quorum of the session shall be the moderator and one third of the elders, but no fewer than two. The session may set its own quorum at any higher number. *To assist future clerks and those who read session minutes, the Clerk should place a page at the beginning of the roll book listing the session’s policy and the date on which it was adopted.*

Terms of office and number of session members:

Terms of office and number of session members:

The congregational bylaws shall state the terms of office and the number of active elders to serve on the session. The Presbytery recommends that the bylaws use permissive language such as no less than three and no more than what ever upper number the session determines is appropriate. *To assist future clerks and those who read session minutes, the Clerk should place a copy of the bylaws at the beginning of the current session minutes book.*

Membership retention policy

Membership retention policy: [G-1.0402]

The session should adopt a policy of guidelines for determining active membership, and how and when individuals may be released from membership. The session should discuss this with the congregation. “An active member is a person who has made a profession of faith in Christ, has been baptized, has been received into membership of the church, has voluntarily submitted to the government of this church, and participates in the church’s work and worship. [G-1.0303]. ...Other conditions of active membership that meet the needs of the congregation and are consistent with the order and confessions of the PCUSA may be adopted by the session after careful study and discussion with the congregation.”

Removal from membership for nonparticipation

Removal from membership for nonparticipation:

The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that no member shall be removed from the active membership of the church until that member shall have failed intentionally to participate in the work and worship of the church for a period of not less than two years and until the session shall have made diligent effort to discover the cause of the member’s

non participation and to restore the member to activity in the church's work and worship, including provision of written notice. Any member whose name is so removed shall be notified of this action. The presbytery recommends that the session never remove persons from active membership who are prevented from fulfilling the privileges and responsibilities of membership outlined in G-1.0303a by age or disability, military service, incarceration, or enrollment in an educational institution, who might otherwise fulfill these responsibilities.

Removal by death:

Removal by death: The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that when a member is removed from the rolls on account of death that the clerk record the date of death where known in the session minutes, as well as entering the appropriate facts in the church rolls and registers.

Inactive persons

Inactive persons: The denomination no longer includes the option of inactive members. The session may optionally create an inactive affiliate category of persons who are no longer active members but whom, because of their previous active member relationship with the congregation, the session wishes to continue to provide pastoral care and nurture. Such persons are not considered members of the PCUSA, are not eligible to vote or hold office, but may receive the sacraments. Or the session may optionally flag persons on the active member roll for particular attention to encourage increased participation in the life and ministry of the church; such persons remain eligible to vote and hold office, and the session will be assessed any per capita assessments on them.

Safekeeping of records

Safekeeping of records: The clerk of session has the responsibility [G-3.0108] to recommend to the session appropriate actions for the permanent safekeeping of the body's records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or other similarly equipped records storage facility. These records include, at a minimum, the minutes and other official records of the session, which shall include minutes of congregational meetings and records of the board of deacons and the board of trustees of the particular church. They shall be available to the presbytery upon request. The Presbytery of Northumberland recommends that the clerk record on a page at the beginning of the current session record book the location of the

records, especially non-current records no longer needed for frequent reference, in order that the permanent safekeeping and continued ownership of the records by the session be ensured.

MODEL (sample)

Docket for Meetings of The Session

The clerk and moderator should prepare the docket for a session meeting. The following form is a suggestion.

1. Opening prayer
2. Calling of the roll.
3. Reading and approval of the minutes.
4. Communications from presbytery, synod, and General Assembly.
5. Report of pastor/moderator.
6. Report of clerk.
7. Report of treasurer.
8. Report of permanent committees.
9. Report of special committees.
10. Examination and reception of members.
11. Transfer of members.
12. Arrangements for the sacraments of baptism and communion.
13. Report to presbytery when in order.
14. Election and report of commissioner to presbytery.
15. Unfinished business.
16. New business.
17. Miscellaneous business. (Such as date and time of next meeting)
18. Prayer and benediction.
19. Adjournment.

MODEL SESSION MEETING MINUTES

(Include in the minutes of every session meeting) See Appendix A

- A. The name of the body that is meeting and the kind of meeting
 - 1. Stated or Special Meeting
 - 2. Joint Meeting of Session and Board of Deacons

- B. Date, time and place of meeting

- C. Name of the moderator and elders present
 - 1. In the absence of the pastor or regular moderator, report how moderator was chosen (pastor requested, presbytery appointed, session elected, etc.)
 - 2. List elders absent
 - 3. Include names of deacons present for joint meetings of session and board of deacons
 - 4. Include names of guests or observers

- D. Opening and closing of the meeting with prayer

- E. Reading and approval of minutes of the previous meeting and disposition

- F. All main motions, substantial secondary motions, points of order, and appeals.
 - 1. Include the wording as approved, name of the maker of the motion. Name of the person seconding need not be recorded.
 - 2. It is good practice to summarize the substance of the discussion, but without editorial comment (NO emotion-laden adjectives or adverbs!)
 - 3. Clerks are expected to record the action of the body regardless of their opinion on matters discussed.
 - 4. Include the decision made: whether the motion was amended, and final action on the motion (approved, failed, referred, tabled, or postponed).

- G. Significant reports received should be entered and spread upon the minutes. Other reports received may be summarized. Examples of reports to be fully entered include: the annual budget, pastor's terms of call, overtures sent to presbytery, policies adopted by the session or congregation, supply contracts, and loans.

- H. Time meeting is adjourned.

- I. Signature of clerk of session
 - 1. Clerk shall sign the minutes of all meetings.
 - 2. Leave space for the moderator to sign as well. For congregational meetings, the moderator shall sign the minutes.

MODEL (Sample)

DOCKET FOR AN ANNUAL MEETING

The clerk and the moderator should prepare the Annual Congregational meeting docket. The following is a suggestion:

Opening with prayer
Affirmation that proper public notice was given for the meeting
Certification of a quorum

Ecclesiastical Business

Review of reports
Reception of reports
Report of the Nominating Committee
Nomination and election of officers
Nomination and election of Congregational Nominating Committee [Note: This is to be done following the requirements of G-14.0201b and your bylaws]
New business concerning church program and outreach (topics for discussion, not action, by Book of Order)

Corporate Business

Treasurer's report
 Annual report
 Report of any indebtedness
Presentation of the budget (Note: This is to be done in accordance with G-3.0205, which states that the Session approves the budget)
Approval of pastor's terms of call.
New Corporate Business
Approval of any request to presbytery for permission to seek loans or renegotiation of loans, or sale of property

Ecclesiastical Business Resumed

Reading and approval of the minutes (Congregations may have an alternate method of approving the minutes)
Adjournment
Prayer and benediction

MODEL (Sample) CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES FOR [ANNUAL/SPECIAL/STATED/CALLED] CONGREGATIONAL MEETING HOMETOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH Today's date

The [annual/special/stated called] meeting of Hometown Presbyterian Church was called to order by the moderator [name], at [time] on [today's date.] Notice having been given [means and number of sundays], a quorum was determined to be present and the meeting was opened with prayer by [name].

1. [If a called or special meeting, state the purpose of the meeting]
2. If the Clerk of Session will not act as clerk of the meeting, then elect a clerk here.
3. Business
 - If this is an annual meeting, the business will normally include
 - a. Necrology report
 - b. Annual reports from staff, officers, and organizations of the church
 - c. Review of the adequacy of the compensation of the pastor, and approval of any changes in terms of call
 - d. Any other items which may legitimately come before the congregation. These might include
 - (1) Election of Congregational Nominating Committee
 - (2) Election of officers, including incomplete terms
 - (3) Approval of minutes of last Congregational Meeting, if not done by Session
 - (4) Approval of any sales of, mortgages on or leases of any church property (which must also be approved by presbytery)
 - (5) Election of Pastoral Nominating Committee
4. Conclusion of meeting with prayer by [name] at [time of adjournment].
5. Signatures of clerk and moderator of meeting

THINGS THAT A SESSION NEEDS TO BE HEARING & ACTING ON WHEN THEY OCCUR . . .(AND THEY OUGHT TO HAPPEN AT LEAST ANNUALLY)

CLERK'S REPORT (every session meeting)

1. Significant correspondence received and disposition
 - a. Requests for letters (CERTIFICATES) of transfer
 - b. Letters from OGA, synod, presbytery, other churches.
 - c. Letters addressed to the session in care of the Clerk of Session
2. Report of baptisms performed, including full name of persons receiving the sacrament, date and place of birth, and parents' names, if a minor child, date of sacrament and person officiating at the sacrament. Record in register
3. Report of celebration of the Lord's Supper.
 - a. It is to be celebrated at least quarterly
 - b. Report celebration at special events, such as retreats, women's or men's association meetings, etc.
 - c. Name of the person officiating.
4. Report of ordination and/or installation of officers and pastors
 - a. Include date
 - b. Include that they have been examined and given instruction.
 - c. Record in register
5. Annual reports
 - a. Include either the whole annual statistical report or a summary thereof
 - b. Report the results of the annual examination of the minutes of session and the congregation and the church register. Northumberland Presbytery also requires submission of bylaws.
6. Deaths in congregation. Take action to remove from rolls on account of death. Record in register.
7. Marriages by pastor or on church property, or of church members, if not reported by the pastor. Record in register.

TREASURER (at least quarterly)

- a. Income and expense, receipt and disbursement of memorial funds, loan status
- b. Election by session required annually

PASTOR

- a. Pastoral care provided (visits, home communions, funerals, counseling, etc.)
- b. Weddings performed (whether of members or not, and whether performed on church's grounds or elsewhere). Record in register
- c. Request for study leave (Northumberland Presbytery requires that pastors submit a plan for study leave which sessions shall approve) and report of study leave .
- d. Anything else the pastor reports of significance

PRESBYTERY COMMISSIONER(S)

- a. Election of commissioners to presbytery meeting by the session
- b. Reports of commissioner(s) from Presbytery to the session and congregation

DEACONS & TRUSTEES (if you have them)

- a. If separate from session, review minutes of these boards
- b. Leases and contracts
- c. Annual review of insurance coverage
- d. Annual maintenance of property review

NEW MEMBERS

- a. Examination and receipt by session
- b. Method of transfer (confession of faith, reaffirmation, reactivation from inactive roll, letter of transfer) and whether baptized or not
- c. Record names of baptized minor children
- d. If previously ordained as an elder or deacon in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), record that information. In register, record the date and place of ordination and the terms of service.

AUDIT OR FINANCIAL REVIEW

- a. Election of committee or selection of auditor. Record names.
- b. Report of completion of annual full financial review of all books and records relation to finances. (see sample on page 25)
- c. Disposition of any recommendations made by financial review committee or auditors.

OTHER COMMITTEE OR TASK GROUP REPORTS

- a. Changes in date, time or place of worship
- b. Approval of observance of sacraments
- c. Annual review of rolls (transfers to the inactive roll, removal from roll, re-activation)

THINKING SEASONALLY

A CLERK'S JOURNEY AROUND THE CALENDAR YEAR

Seasonal Tasks of Session organized by date
(Dates may be adjusted to congregation's needs)

January

1. Train elders and deacons elect, set date for ordination & installation (if you change officers in January).
2. Approve the annual statistical report and submit on line.
3. Send to the Stated Clerk the necrology report of church officers who died during the previous year, the updated presbytery directory listing form, the property report and the pastor's terms of call form.
4. Elect Treasurer and Clerk of Session [if term is annual], commissioner(s) to presbytery as needed appoint Financial Review Committee or outside agency to review the church books. Must be recorded in the session minutes that a review has been conducted.
5. Set date for joint meeting with deacons if applicable. G-3.0204
6. Approve the minutes of congregational meeting and, if a separate corporation exists, the minutes of the corporate meeting.
7. Finance Committee reports to session and congregation the status of any indebtedness, and the plan to pay all debts.
8. Plan for training, ordination and installation of officers, as needed. Assemble packets of appropriate information for new officers, such as Books of Order, copy of the congregational bylaws, lists of scheduled meeting dates, etc.. These all should be in the **Manual of Operations** which is a required document for every church.
9. Consider and approve special offerings for the year (Peacemaking, Christmas, One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Joy and other special offering as needed.
10. Return Mission & Program pledge to Mission Treasurer at Presbytery Office
11. Encourage Session to approve the calendar of activities and special services for the coming year.

March-April

1. Submit session & congregational records for presbytery review

June-August

1. Christian education
 - a. Approve members to lead Sunday School classes for new Church School year usually Sept-June [This is an insurance liability issue].
 - b. Make sure background checks have been run on all employees and volunteers three background checks are required by Law in Pennsylvania.
 - c. Review current Safe church Policy and sexual conduct policy prior to the church school year.
 - d. Approve curriculum for the church school year.
2. Begin planning your Stewardship program in order to challenge the membership to

exercise responsible Christian stewardship of money and talents. Stewardship month usually begins in September and goes through November.

September

1. Representation and Nominating Committee:
 - a. Review composition of session, board of deacons, and trustees regarding ethnicity, age, sex, and disabilities with regard to the makeup of the congregation.
 - b. Prepare the Ballot for church officers for the annual meeting to elect church officers
2. Session or Finance committee prepares budget for next fiscal year, to be approved by the Session

October

1. Annual review of staff compensation and evaluation of job performance.
2. Do a preventative maintenance check on your building for winter.
3. Review the adequacy of your property insurance and record that it has been reviewed in the session minutes.

November

1. Review the status of the work of the Congregational Nominating Committee
2. Set date for annual congregational meeting
3. Review the active member roll.
 - a. Any active member who does not meet the session's definition of participating in the work and worship of the congregation should be contacted and encouraged to resume active participation. If such persons do not resume active participation, they may be removed from membership with written notification.
 - b. Take action on any proposed removals from the roll. **Record in register.**
 - c. Under no conditions should persons unable to attend because of infirmity, incarceration, service in the military or attending college elsewhere be moved to the inactive roll while these circumstances apply.
4. Approve and set time and place for any special advent services.

December

1. Approve the annual budget (except for pastor's terms of call, which must be approved by the congregation—but session may act to recommend the terms to the congregation)
2. Remind folks to prepare annual reports of their work and submit to church secretary to be collated for annual report to the congregation
3. Set dates for observance of communion in coming year
4. Approve and send remaining Mission & Program funds and per capita funds to Presbytery Administrative Treasurer
5. If pastor has a housing allowance as part of his/her terms of call, session should approve the portion of his/her cash salary to be set aside as housing allowance and record it in full in the minutes. This is not the same as the Congregation's approval of the terms of call. This is for the I.R.S. Some congregations prefer to

- have a special congregational meeting at this time to approve terms of call.
6. Supply Pastors and Commissioned Ruling Elders in Pastoral Service: If you have such an individual who has served you well, consider giving them a raise or additional paid vacation or study leave. Make sure that their contracts are approved for the next calendar year and sent to the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery for COM approval.
 7. Approve call(s) for congregational meeting (special to set pastor's terms of call for following year, and annual meeting to receive reports and terms of call, if not done earlier)

Late winter and early spring:

1. Approve any special Lenten services
2. Consider holding communicants' class. If done, act on reception of new members
3. Receive and act on the report of the financial review committee. Assign any recommendations to the appropriate committee for discussion and implementation.
4. Approve and send per capita funds to Presbytery Treasurer
5. Encourage youth to think about attending Krislund camps.
6. If the church has a different time for worship in the summer, approve the shift.
7. Consider and make plans for Two-Cents-A-Meal Offering.

Summer:

1. Plan for facility maintenance
2. Do a property review with pastor (if any) of repair needs of manse

PRESERVING YOUR PERMANENT RECORDS.

The records of your church are an important testimony to the work of the Holy Spirit in your community and an important record to the lives of its members. As such, you will want to take care of these records. The congregation, in trust for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), not the clerk or the pastor, owns the records.

WHAT IS A PERMANENT RECORD?

At the very least, retain permanently all session minutes, all congregational meeting minutes, all registers, all deacon and trustee minutes, minutes of any organization of the church

KEEP ORIGINALS OR COPIES OF THESE DOCUMENTS:

1. Minutes
2. Registers
3. Articles of Incorporation
4. Bylaws
5. Deeds to Church Property
6. Church histories
7. Loan agreements
8. Cemetery plot map

VALUABLE DOCUMENTS

In addition, copies of newspaper articles about your church or its members, photographs (black & white preferred), church newsletters, annual reports, maintenance/instruction booklets about church appliances, memorabilia of your church.

Preparing the Permanent Copy

A heavy weight, acid-free paper with high cotton or linen rag content should be used for important permanent records such as minutes and annual reports. For specifics, please check the Department of History website at www.history.pcusa.org or call the Stated Clerk of presbytery.

1. Reports or other insertions should be photocopied onto the acid free paper for inclusion in the permanent record, as the acids in other papers will eat into and destroy the acid free paper as they deteriorate. ***Do not print directly onto the paper from an inkjet printer, as inkjet ink is not permanent. A black laser printer may be used to print directly onto your page.*** Photocopy is appropriate and long-lasting. Never use colored ink, either laser, inkjet or photocopy, as colored inks are not permanent.
2. Do not use glue, tape, post-it notes, etc on your permanent records. The glue will accelerate the deterioration of your records. Photocopy the information onto acid free paper.
3. Do not use metal staples, paper clips or other paper fasteners on stored records. Plastic fasteners can be used.
4. Draw a line or two through any large unused portions of pages, such as at the end of reports photocopied into the minutes, to thwart improper additions.

5. Mistakes & corrections: Do not put your minutes into your permanent record until they have been approved. This will minimize errors. If, at a later meeting, you find that an error was made in a previous set of minutes, make the notation in the minutes of the later meeting, with a notation to the date and page number of the error and correct the originals. If you make a mistake in your church register. Draw a single line through the erroneous entry (so that the mistake can be seen), copy the correct information neatly in the space and initial it, so that it can be seen that the correction was intentional.

Computers are not permanent!:

Electronic media (computer hard drives, floppy disks, CD-Roms, etc) are not an acceptable form of records. Their shelf life is extremely short and subject to damage. The glue holding CD's together molds after 10-15 years. Furthermore, the software and hardware used to create electronic media are swiftly outdated and may not be available to read records in the future.

Microfilming, which has a shelf life of 300 to 500 years, is acceptable and encouraged. Check with the Presbyterian Historical Society for quotes on costs.

Storage:

1. Keep the minutes and registers in sturdy binders or acid free archival folders and storage boxes with the name of the church and records contained on the outside, so that they will not be accidentally lost or mislaid.
2. When sufficient pages have been accumulated, have them permanently bound.
3. Minutes, registers, and other official records (Trustees, women's association, missionary societies, deeds, architectural plans, histories of the congregation, etc.) for which the session no longer has a current need shall be deposited with the Presbyterian Historical Society, 425 Lombard Street, Philadelphia, PA, 19147. Phone (215) 627-1852.
4. If possible, keep the records in a metal filing cabinet under climate-controlled conditions. Do not store old records in basements or attics, as the seasonal changes in humidity and temperature will accelerate deterioration.
5. When changing clerks or treasurers, retrieve all records from the former officer.
6. Place note on location of seldom-used records in front of current session book.

Backup:

Keep a backup up copy of your minutes in a separate location. This could be the Presbyterian Historical Society, a microfilm copy in a safe deposit box, or a photocopy in the home of the clerk of session (or a photocopy in the church, if the clerk keeps the official copies at home.) This copy could be on electronic media, if the clerk is willing to type in the previous 200 years.... But the copy should not just be of the current minutes, but of the entire length of session minutes.

PERMANENT RECORD MATERIAL SUPPLIERS

1. **Gaylord** Call 1-800-448-6160. www.gaylord.com
Gaylord Document cases, flip top
Gaylord File Folders—acid free, lignin free
Permalife Bond & Text paper. Letter size. A ream costs about \$30.00
2. **Light Impressions** Call 1-800-828-6216
Flip top document cases (Letter-sized, 3 or 5 inches deep)
TrueCore acid free, lignin free file folders www.lightimpressionsdirect.com
3. **Metal Edge, Inc.** Call 1-800-862-2228 www.metaledgeinc.com
4. **Lineco Inc.** Call 800-322-7775 www.lineco.com
5. **Amazon.com.** Amazon has several papers billed as acid-free. Choose only the archival ones
Southworth Fine Business paper (25% cotton rag fiber) or
Southworth Exceptional Thesis paper (100% cotton rag fiber)
6. **Cokesbury Publishing House—1-800-672-1789**
 - Westminster Church Register—9 ¾ x11 sheets or 8 ½ x11 *note the difference
 - Alphabetical Index to roll of active members: ISBN-13 X537866
 - Roll of Baptized—ISBN-13 X537977
 - Blank sheets for Session Minutes 8 ½ x11 ISBN13-X239217
 - Blank sheets for Session Minutes 9 ¾ x11 ISBN13-X001950

The Presbyterian Historical Society recommends the following requirements for the paper for your minutes:

- ◇ Made from any cellulose fiber, as long as the active acid pulp is eliminated during processing (i.e. not a plastic “paper”)
- ◇ pH minimum of 8.5 (anything over 7 is alkaline)
- ◇ A buffer of calcium carbonate of about 3% to supply alkaline reserves
- ◇ Lignin and sulfur free
- ◇ 25% cotton or rag for strength (100% is even better)

CHECK LIST FOR SESSION MINUTES AND REGISTERS

CHURCH NAME: _____

Name of Clerk of Session: _____

The session records of _____ were reviewed by the Clerks of Session and the Stated Clerk of Northumberland Presbytery.

Meeting at: _____ ON: _____

Review Covered Pages: _____ Through: _____ Dates from: _____ Through: _____

The following recommendation will be presented to the Presbytery (CHECK ONE)

The Minutes and Register were reviewed and found to be in order with no exceptions

The Minutes and Register were reviewed and approved with **EXCEPTIONS** indicated by the following numbers listed below: (Items required but not found by the Reader)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

The Minutes and Register were reviewed and approved with **DELINQUENCIES** indicated by the following numbers listed below: (Incomplete Recordings of Actions)

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

The Minutes and Register were reviewed and not approved. The Session and Clerk are instructed to rectify those items indicated by the exceptions or delinquencies listed and present the minutes for reexamination by calling the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery no later than August 1.

The Minutes and Register were not submitted. The clerk is requested to submit the minutes for review by calling the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery no later than August 1.

SIGNATURE OF PERSON REVIEWING _____ Date: _____

SIGNATURE OF THE STATED CLERK: _____ Date: _____

This form has two purposes—to remind you what is required in the Minute Book and Register. Items not relevant to your church will be identified by circling N/A (not applicable). Every item needs to be identified with a page number in your Minute book. **Those items not identified will be counted as an exception when the minutes are being reviewed.**

As the clerk prepares the official minutes for review please go through this check list and indicate the pages prior to the meeting in which the minutes are to be reviewed. You do not need to identify all pages requested just a sample of the pages will do. **Please bring two copies of this check list to the meeting. One is for your records and the other is for the Stated Clerk' records.**

1. Page number of the last previous minutes reviewed							
	Go to the page last stamped by the Presbytery Review Committee						
2. Sample Page numbers indicating the DATE, TIME, AND PLACE OF EACH STATED MEETING							
3. Sample Page numbers indicating the DATE, TIME, PLACE & PURPOSE OF EACH CALLED MEETING							
4. Sample Page numbers indicating WHERE MEETINGS WERE OPENED AND CLOSED WITH PRAYER							
5. Sample Page numbers indicating NAMES OF MODERATOR & ELDERS PRESENT /ABSENT /EXCUSED							
6. Page numbers indicating any JOINT MEETINGS OF ELDERS, DEACONS OR TRUSTEES (G-3.0204)							
N/A							
7. Sample Page numbers indicating A QUORUM PRESENT (quorum set by session (G-3.0203)							
8. Sample Page numbers indicating PREVIOUS MINUTES WERE READ & APPROVED OR CORRECTED							
9. Sample Page numbers indicating WHERE ACTIONS OF THE SESSION WERE VOTED AND RECORDED							
10. Page numbers indicating THE DATES APPROVED TO CELEBRATE THE LORD'S SUPPER (minimum 4)							
11. Page numbers indicating THE DATES AND NAMES OF INDIVIDUALS APPROVED FOR BAPTISM							
N/A							
12. Page numbers indicating ADDITIONS OR REMOVAL OF ACTIVE/AFFILIATE OR BAPTIZED MEMBERS							
N/A							
13. Page numbers indicating THE NAMES OF ELDERS SELECTED AS COMMISSIONERS TO PRESBYTERY							
14. Sample Page numbers indicating THAT THE MINUTES OF EACH MEETING ARE SIGNED BY THE CLERK							
15. Page numbers indicating THAT CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS ARE SIGNED BY CLERK AND MODERATOR							
16. Page number indicating THAT A YEARLY FINANCIAL REVIEW WAS SUBMITTED TO SESSION							
		Remarks: G-3.0113					
17. Page number indicating THE ORDINATION/INSTALLATION OF ELDERS & DEACON							
		Remarks: Were Candidates prepared and examined Yes No (G-2.0402)					
18. Page number indicating SESSION REVIEWED THE CHURCH ROLLS (Active, Baptized, Affiliate)							
		Remarks: G-3.0204a					
19. Page number indicating THAT THE ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORT WAS RECEIVED BY THE SESSION							
		Remarks:					
20. Page number indicating THAT THE SESSION HAS REVIEWED THE STAFF AND TERMS OF CALL							
N/A		Remarks:G-2.0804					
21. Page number indicating THAT THE SESSION HAS REVIEWED INSURANCE POLICES							
		Remarks: G-3.0112					
22. Page number indicating THE ELECTION OF CLERK OF SESSION AND CHURCH TREASURER							
N/A		Remarks: G-3.0104 & G-3.0205					
23. Page numbers indicating THAT THE SESSION HAS APPROVED A BUDGET FOR THE YEAR							
		Remarks: G-3.0205					

REVIEW OF THE ROLLS AND REGISTERS:

Circle YES OR NO or state N/A in remarks (Not applicable)

Name of Church: _____ Date: _____

24. IS THE ROLL FOR ACTIVE MEMBERS UP TO DATE? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204a
25. IS THE ROLL FOR BAPTIZED MEMBERS UP TO DATE? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204a
26. IS THE ROLL FOR AFFILIATE MEMBERS UP TO DATE? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204a
27. IS THE REGISTERS FOR ADULT AND INFANT BAPTISMS UP TO DATE? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204b
28. IS THE REGISTER OF RULING ELDERS UP TO DATE? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204b
29. IS THE REGISTER FOR DEACONS UP TO DATE? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204b
30. IS THE REGISTER OF PASTORS (TEACHING ELDERS) up to date? (Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0204b
31. IS THE REGISTER FOR TRUSTEES UP TO DATE? (Not Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS:
32. IS THE REGISTER FOR MARRIAGES UP TO DATE? (Not Required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS:
33. IS THE REGISTER FOR DEATHS UP TO DATE? (not required)		
YES	NO	REMARKS:
34. DOES YOUR CHURCH HAVE A REGISTER FOR OTHER PARTICIPANTS? (non-members)		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-1.0404
35. HAS THE CLERK DONE A RETENTION EVALUATION AND SENT RECORDS TO THE HISTORICAL SOCIETY?		
YES	NO	REMARKS: G-3.0107

REMEMBER: YOU MUST

1. NUMBER YOUR PAGES
2. FILL ENTIRE PAGE OR MARK A LINE TO INDICATE A BLANK SPACE OR PAGE
3. USE ACID FREE PAPER
4. KEEP YOUR PAGES IN A BINDER
5. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS CALL THE PRESBYTERY OFFICE AT 570.368.3906

PCUSA General Assembly-Approved Ethical Conduct Standards

Adopted by the 210th General Assembly. The standards for church officers, Ministers of Word and Sacrament, Elders and Deacons, are as follows. The standards were developed by a special committee authorized by the General Assembly in 1995. They have been approved for use by the entities of the General Assembly, and commended to synods, presbyteries and congregations as a model for their use.

Life Together in the Community of Faith: Standards of Ethical Conduct for Ordained Officers in the PC(USA)

As an ordained officer in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture and guided by our Confessions, I affirm the vows made at my ordination, confirm that the pattern for my life and ministry is Jesus Christ and, relying on God's grace, commit myself to the following standards of ethical conduct.

I: CONDUCT OF MY PERSONAL LIFE

I will conduct my life in a manner that is faithful to the gospel and consistent with my public ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Practice the disciplines of study, prayer, reflection, worship, stewardship and service;
2. Be honest and truthful in my relationships with others;
3. Be faithful, keeping the covenants I make and honoring marriage vows;
4. Treat all persons with equal respect and concern as beloved children of God;
5. Maintain a healthy balance among the responsibilities of my office of ministry, my commitments to family and other primary relationships, and my need for spiritual, physical, emotional and intellectual renewal;
6. Refrain from abusive, addictive or exploitive behavior and seek help to overcome such behavior if it occurs;
7. Refrain from engaging in gossip and abusive speech; and
8. Maintain an attitude of repentance, humility and forgiveness responsive to God's reconciling will.

II: CONDUCT OF MY MINISTRY

I will conduct my ministry so that nothing need be hidden from a governing body or colleagues in ministry. Therefore I will:

1. Preach, teach and bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ with courage, speaking the truth in love;
2. Honor the sacred trust of relationships within the covenant community and observe appropriate boundaries;
3. Be judicious in the exercise of the power and privileges of my office and positions of responsibility I hold;
4. Avoid conflicts of interest that might compromise the effectiveness of my ministry;
5. Refrain from exploiting relationships in the covenant community for personal gain or gratification, including

sexual harassment and misconduct as defined by Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) policy;

6. Respect the privacy of individuals and not divulge information obtained in confidence without express permission, or unless an individual is a danger to self or others;

7. Recognize the limits of my own gifts and training, and refer persons and tasks to others as appropriate;

8. Claim only those qualifications actually attained; give appropriate credit from sources used in sermons, papers, music, and presentations: and observe copyrights;

9. Refrain from incurring indebtedness that might compromise my ministry;

10. Be a faithful steward of and fully account for funds and property entrusted to me;

11. Observe limits set by the appropriate governing body for honoraria, personal business endeavors and gifts or loans from persons other than family;

12. Accept the discipline of the church and the appropriate guidance of those to whom I am accountable for my ministry;

13. Participate in continuing education and seek the counsel of mentors and professional advisors;

14. Deal honorably with the record of my predecessor, and upon leaving a ministry or office speak and act in ways that support the ministry of my successor;

**15. Participate in the life of a ministry setting I left or from which I have retired, only as directed by presbytery;

**16. Provide pastoral services for a congregation I previously served only as directed by the presbytery, and provide pastoral services to members of other congregations only with the consent of their pastors; and

**17. Consult with the committee on ministry in my presbytery of residence regarding my involvement in any ministry setting during my retirement.

** These standards apply only to pastors; they also apply to commissioned lay pastors when they are performing pastoral functions.

III: CONDUCT IN CHURCH UNIVERSAL

I will participate as a partner with others in the ministry and mission of the Church universal. Therefore I will:

1. Participate in the mission and governance of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and work for the unity of the holy catholic church;

2. Show respect and provide encouragement for colleagues in ministry;

3. Recruit church members responsibly, respect existing congregational relationships and refrain from exploiting persons in vulnerable situations; and

4. Cooperate with those working in the world for justice, compassion and peace, including partners in ministry of other faith traditions.

CHILD ABUSE

WHO?: MANDATED REPORTERS:

All ministers, elders, deacons in the PCUSA are required to report to ecclesiastical and civil legal authorities knowledge of harm or the risk of harm, related to the physical abuse, neglect, and/or sexual molestation or abuse of a minor of an adult who lacks mental capacity when such information is gained outside of privileged communication; or she or he reasonably believes that there is risk of future physical harm or abuse.

HOW DO I REPORT?: CALL CHILD ABUSE HOTLINE:

For all of Pennsylvania (800) 923-0313

WHERE ELSE CAN I CALL?: Check your county listings for other appropriate numbers:

WHAT IS CHILD ABUSE [23 Pa C.S.A. §6303]

Child abuse is:

Any recent act of failure to act by a perpetrator which cause non-accidental serious physical injury, serious mental injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age

Any recent act, failure to act or series . . . by a perpetrator which creates an imminent risk of serious physical injury to or sexual abuse or sexual exploitation of a child under 18 years of age

Serious physical neglect by a perpetrator constituting prolonged or repeated lack of supervision or the failure to provide the essentials of life, including adequate medical care, which endangers a child's life or development or impairs the child's functioning.

A perpetrator is:

A person who has committed child abuse and is a parent of a child, a person responsible for the welfare of a child, an individual residing in the same home as a child (14 years of age or older) or a paramour of a child's parent.

Person responsible for the child's welfare is:

A person who provides permanent or temporary care, supervision, mental health diagnosis or treatment, training or control of a child in lieu of parental care, supervision and control.

Physical abuse: Serious physical injury is

- An injury that causes a child sever pain
- An injury that significantly impairs a child's physical functioning, either temporarily or permanently
- One that is a demonstrable injury.

[Source: Support Center for Child Advocates, Philadelphia, PA.]

Sample Document

LETTER TO NON-ATTENDING MEMBERS

November 15, 201x

Jane Jones
RR3, Box123
Central PA, 16600

Dear Jane or John

We miss you!

According to our records (based on the pew sheets signed each Sunday), we haven't seen you in worship recently. We care about you, and so we're sending this letter to ask your thoughts about membership at First Presbyterian Church.

Would you please take a minute to complete and return the enclosed response post card? As you see, it lists several possibilities. On the enclosed card, you can. . .

- Check this box if you would like to talk to someone from the church
- Check the second box if you intend to resume being an active member of the church or if our records are mistaken and you have been attending regularly
- Check the third box if you cannot regularly attend but wish to remain connected to this church. Our Presbyterian Book of Order defines this as a church participant, but not a member. As a participant you are still part of the church family, entitled to pastoral care and the sacraments, but ineligible to hold church office or vote in church meetings
- Check the fourth box if you are attending another church and do not plan to return to First Presbyterian, but have not yet decided to unite with the other church. We will place your name on the inactive list and later transfer your membership to another church whenever you request it.
- Check the fifth box if you wish to have your membership transferred to another church, and let us know which church. We will act promptly on your request.
- Check the sixth box only if you wish to be deleted from the church rolls.

Could we hear from you by December xx? If we do not hear back from you by that time, we will assume that you wish to be considered an inactive member and will place your name on that roll.

If something has happened to hurt or offend you or if something needs to be brought to our attention, please let us know. We want to do our art to bring healing. Our prayer is that you will be an active, participating member of this congregation.

Yours in the grace and love of Jesus Christ, The Session of First Presbyterian

RESOURCES

1. Book of Order: [Order from Presbyterian Distribution Service (800)-524-2612]
2. Book of Confessions: [Order from Presbyterian Distribution Service (800)-524-2612]
3. E-Certificates for Baptism, Ordination, Installation, and appreciation (download from Presbytery website under Documents/Clerk of session)
4. Parliamentary Procedure Guide: (download from Presbytery website under Documents/Clerk of session)
5. Northumberland Presbytery Records Review Worksheet (on line under clerk of session)
6. Executive Presbyter & Stated Clerk & members of Commission on Ministry 570.368.3906

Useful Handbooks from Denominational Sources

Companion to the Constitution: Polity for the Local Church (Geneva Press) download from presbytery web site under clerk of session

Earl S. Johnson, Jr., The Presbyterian Elder

Earl S. Johnson, Jr., The Presbyterian Deacon

Joan S. Gray and Joyce C. Tucker, Presbyterian Polity for Church Officers (third or later edition; Westminster/John Knox Press) Look for New Form of Government edition

[all available through Presbyterian Publishing Corporation. Call (800)-524-2612 and tell them you want Presbyterian Publishing and you will be transferred there.]

Legal Resource Manual for Presbyterian Church (USA) Middle Governing Bodies and Churches

(updated every three years). www.pcusa.org/legalresources (download from web site)

On the Presbytery Web site under Documents you will find the following downloadable Handbooks and documents for sessions and nominating committees: www.northumberlandpresbytery.org

1. New Members Class
2. Nominating Committee Handbook
3. Session Personnel Handbook
4. Treasurers' Handbook
5. Ruling Elder and Deacon Handbook (excellent for training new church officers)
6. Minimum Compensation for installed pastors
7. Minimum Fee Schedule for other professional ministerial services
8. Current Per captia
9. COM/CPM Handbook
10. Northumberland Ministry Handbook
11. Sample bylaws
12. Sample Manual of Administrative Operations

OTHER

Christian Ministry Resources: 1-800-222-1840 or online at www.churchlawtoday.com

Richard R. Hammar. Church & Clergy Tax Guide. (Updated annually)

Reducing the Risk II: Making Your Church Safe from Child Sexual Abuse

Well-Being in Ministry

Leadership & Team Building

PRESBYTERY MULTI-MEDIA CENTER IS LOCATED AT THE HUNTINGDON PRESBYTERY OFFICE

1319 Logan Ave., Tyrone, PA 16686 Phone: 814-682-7289

Hours: 8:30 AM-4:00 PM Website: www.huntingdonresources.org

APPENDIX A—SAMPLE FINANCIAL REVIEW

Procedures for Congregational Financial Review Committees

Financial Review Checklist (for use by review committee)

Church _____ Year Ending _____

Date _____

Reviewers; _____, _____, _____

Basics Check List:

1. Spot check the percentage indicated by the session and/or trustees: _____% of receipts and disbursements during year being reviewed.
2. Cash Receipts. Spot check cash received and money counters reports. Compared with deposits made.
3. Expenditures. Spot check to see that disbursements are recorded by check number, payee, date and assigned to proper budget line.
4. Check to see that these disbursements are supported by invoices/statements.
5. Year End Reconciliation. Compare check book and bank balances to treasurer's records. Note the disposition of the balance of any fund or bank account that was closed during the year.
6. Treasurer's Books. Review treasurer's books and reports for proper reporting to Session. Verify that disbursements authorized by the session are paid per approval.
7. Petty Cash Funds. If a petty cash fund is used, check disbursement vouchers for proper approval; compared with reimbursement checks written.

More Advanced Check List (for use by the Financial Review Committee)

1. Check to see that funds for particular purposes were used in ways specified.
2. Account for all checks used.
3. Regarding petty cash funds, check assignment of expenses to appropriate budget lines.
4. Spot check session minutes for authorization of bill payment.
5. Check/compare financial secretary's posting of contributions from members to actual member giving.
6. Check insurance policy in force and compare to minimum requirements of the presbytery.
7. Verify balances of debt owed to all lenders.
8. Identify all securities by number on certificates or accounts. Note which securities are kept on file.
9. Report on totals of all cash reserves funds and investments.