

1 **OVERTURE 25** from Northwest Georgia Presbytery (to OC)  
2 “The Role of Men and Women to Office in the Church”  
3

4 **Whereas**, we believe that the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America (*BCO* 26-1)  
5 sufficiently addresses the various ordained roles for men and women in the church;  
6 and  
7

8 **Whereas**, there have been discussions over a number of years within the Presbyterian Church  
9 in America regarding the role of men and women in the church; and  
10

11 **Whereas**, recent assemblies have declined to settle this matter via study committees (which  
12 would inevitably have to propose many *BCO* amendments to change our practices in  
13 these areas, if desired); and  
14

15 **Whereas**, these discussions (and practices that deviate from the clear language contained in  
16 the *BCO* sections below) appear to have highlighted and manifested differences of  
17 views and practices within the PCA, which could possibly create division among  
18 churches and brothers;  
19

20 **Therefore**, be it resolved that the Session of Grace Presbyterian Church in Douglasville,  
21 Georgia, overtures the Northwest Georgia Presbytery, meeting on May 22, 2010, to  
22 overture the 38th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America that until  
23 or unless there are constitutional amendments to change our *BCO*, each court is to be  
24 reminded to be faithful in upholding the constitutional views of the Church and by  
25 adopting this overture to remind our churches and courts specifically:  
26

27 To reaffirm to the church and the watching world that while both male and female are  
28 created in God’s image and have equal redemptive standing before God (Gen. 1:27;  
29 Gal. 3:28), and that while all believers are gifted and called to participate in certain  
30 aspects of the ministry of the church, yet by God’s design only men are called to  
31 ordained roles in Scripture (1 Tim. 3:1; Tit. 1:6) and in our church’s Constitution  
32 (see below); and  
33

34 To urge its members to study and work for the peace and unity of the church by  
35 supporting the written Constitution or by seeking to amend it by ordinary process  
36 (see *BCO* 26-1 and 2; Note: this overture is not intended to prevent such process if  
37 this Assembly approves any other *BCO* amendment on this topic.); and  
38

39 To direct its members to the specific provisions within its Constitution regarding its  
40 structure and the nature of ecclesiastical office; that while not exhaustive, this  
41 direction includes an exhortation not to contradict in any way these pertinent  
42 provisions in the Constitution which manifest our view, to wit:  
43

44 The officers of the Church, by whom all its powers are administered,  
45 are, according to the Scriptures, teaching and ruling elders and deacons.  
46 (*BCO* 1-4)  
47

48 The power which Christ has committed to His Church vests in the  
49 whole body, the rulers and those ruled, constituting it a spiritual common-

1 wealth. This power, as exercised by the people, extends to the choice  
2 of those officers whom He has appointed in His Church. (*BCO 3-1*)  
3

4 Its [a particular church] officers are its teaching and ruling elders and  
5 its deacons. (*BCO 4-2*)  
6

7 The ordinary and perpetual classes of office in the Church are elders  
8 and deacons. . . . (*BCO 7-2*)  
9

10 . . . In accord with Scripture, these offices [elder and deacon] are open  
11 to men only. (*BCO 7-2*)  
12

13 The office of deacon is set forth in the Scriptures as ordinary and  
14 perpetual in the Church. . . . (*BCO 9-1*)  
15

16 To the office of deacon, which is spiritual in nature, shall be chosen  
17 men of spiritual character, honest repute, exemplary lives, brotherly  
18 spirit, warm sympathies, and sound judgment. (*BCO 9-3*)  
19

20 The church Session is charged with maintaining the spiritual government  
21 of the church, for which purpose it has power: . . . to ensure that the  
22 Word of God is preached only by such men as are sufficiently  
23 qualified (*BCO 4-4, 53-2, 1 Timothy 2:11-12*); . . . (*BCO 12-5; 12-5.e*)  
24

25 The government of the Church is by officers gifted to represent Christ,  
26 and the right of God's people to recognize by election to office those  
27 so gifted is inalienable. Therefore no man can be placed over a church  
28 in any office without the election, or at least the consent of that church.  
29 (*BCO 16-2*)  
30

31 . . . Wherefore every candidate for office is to be approved by the court  
32 by which he is to be ordained. (*BCO 16-3*)  
33

34 Those who have been called to office in the Church are to be inducted  
35 by the ordination of a court. (*BCO 17-1*)  
36

37 Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and  
38 deacon in the following manner: At such times as determined by the  
39 Session, communicant members of the congregation may submit  
40 names to the Session, keeping in mind that each prospective officer  
41 should be an active male member who meets the qualifications set  
42 forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. . . . (*BCO 24-1*)  
43

44 Accordingly, the 38<sup>th</sup> General Assembly thus believes that an adequate measure of clarity,  
45 unity, harmony, and peace may be obtained so that we might devote ourselves more to the  
46 mission of the church than to continued debates on these subjects.  
47

48 *Adopted by Northwest Georgia Presbytery at its called meeting, May 22, 2010*

49 *Attested by /s/ TE Michael Brock, stated clerk*