

1 **OVERTURE 6** from Central Carolina Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

2 “Amend BCO 59:1 and 59:6 and then grant amended Chapter 59,  
3 *The Solemnization of Marriage*, full constitutional authority”  
4

5 **Whereas**, Scripture clearly teaches that marriage is only to be between one man and one  
6 woman (Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6; Rom. 7:3; Prov. 2:17); and  
7

8 **Whereas**, we love people who struggle with same-sex attraction and do not want to consign  
9 them to a lifetime of what God’s Word clearly calls sexual sin through an unbiblical  
10 union, but want them to experience the true freedom from sexual sin available to  
11 them in Christ; and  
12

13 **Whereas**, several countries including the Netherlands, Belgium, Spain, Canada, South Africa,  
14 Nepal, and Norway have declared same sex marriages to be legal; and  
15

16 **Whereas**, the U.S. states of Connecticut and Massachusetts already recognize same sex  
17 marriage and several other U.S. states are likely to recognize it in the future; and  
18

19 **Whereas**, citizens of the United States have already been found guilty of discrimination in  
20 state courts for refusing to take part in homosexual commitment ceremonies; and  
21

22 **Whereas**, chaplains and ministers who refuse to conduct same-sex marriages and churches  
23 that refuse to make their facilities available for these events are likely to be  
24 subjected to lawsuits and charges of discrimination; and  
25

26 **Whereas**, these chaplains, ministers, and churches will need to be able to show that not just  
27 they, but the denominations they belong to are opposed to same-sex marriage; and  
28

29 **Whereas**, liberal Presbyterian churches are already performing same-sex weddings and the  
30 PCA needs to publicly indicate its strong disagreement with and condemnation of  
31 this practice; and  
32

33 **Whereas**, while Chapter 24-1 of the *Westminster Confession* states that marriage is to be  
34 between one man and one woman, the same liberal Presbyterian churches conducting  
35 same-sex weddings also include the same statement in their own publicly accepted  
36 Confessions; and  
37

38 **Whereas**, there is no statement with constitutional authority prohibiting same sex marriage  
39 in the PCA *BCO* at present; and  
40

41 **Whereas**, in legal cases it might be pointed out that other Presbyterian denominations that  
42 technically adhere to the *Westminster Confession* are conducting same-sex weddings  
43 and commitment ceremonies and/or having their facilities used for same-sex  
44 ceremonies; and  
45

46 **Whereas**, chapter 59 of the *BCO* clearly states that “Marriage is to be between one man and  
47 one woman, in accordance with the Word of God” (59-3); and  
48

49 **Whereas**, chapters 56, 57, and 58 of the Directory of Worship were all granted constitutional  
50 authority at the same General Assembly (GA 11); and

1 **Whereas**, it would be confusing and unnecessary to give one paragraph in a *BCO* chapter  
2 constitutional authority, rather than the entire chapter; and  
3

4 **Whereas**, chapter 59 contains nothing touching on the conduct of worship services, or even  
5 the conduct of the marriage ceremony and its instructions regarding the nature of  
6 marriage are almost exclusively taken from the Directory for the Public Worship of  
7 God (1645); and  
8

9 **Whereas**, only two clauses, in paragraph 59-1 and 59-6 of this chapter (“which all citizens  
10 are bound to obey” and “nor the laws of the community”) might cause problems of  
11 interpretation, which problems can be remedied by a simple edits; and  
12

13 **Whereas**, a denominational *in thesi* statement on the nature of marriage would be difficult,  
14 expensive, and time consuming to draft and be of dubious value and constitutional  
15 authority; and  
16

17 **Whereas**, the simplest, quickest, and least expensive manner of taking a stand on the issue  
18 of biblical marriage and protecting the PCA’s ministers and churches is to grant  
19 chapter 59 of the *BCO* constitutional authority;  
20

21 **Therefore**, Central Carolina Presbytery hereby overtures the 37th General Assembly to:  
22

- 23 1) Amend *BCO* 59-1 by deleting the words “which all citizens are bound to obey”  
24 as shown below:  
25

26 59-1. Marriage is a divine institution though not a sacrament, nor  
27 peculiar to the Church of Christ. It is proper that every commonwealth,  
28 for the good of society, make laws to regulate marriage, ~~which all citizens~~  
29 ~~are bound to obey.~~  
30

- 31 2) Amend *BCO* 59-6 by deleting the words “nor the laws of the community” as  
32 shown below:  
33

34 59-6l Marriage is of a public nature. The welfare of society, the  
35 happiness of families, and the credit of Christianity, are deeply interested  
36 in it. Therefore, the purpose of marriage should be sufficiently published  
37 a proper time previously to the solemnization to it. It is enjoined on all  
38 ministers to be careful that, in this matter, they ~~transgress neither the laws~~  
39 ~~of God, nor the laws of the community~~ **do not transgress the laws of**  
40 **God**; and that they may not destroy the peace and comfort of families,  
41 ministers should be assured that, with respect to the parties applying to  
42 them, no just objections lie against their marriage.  
43

- 44 3) Begin the process of granting *BCO* Chapter 59, *The Solemnization of Marriage*  
45 (as modified by the above changes), full constitutional authority.  
46

47 *Adopted by Central Carolina Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 24, 2009*

48 *Attested by /s/ RE J. Howard Donahoe, stated clerk*