

1 **OVERTURE 8** from Ascension Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
2 “Amend *BCO* 13-6 to Clarify the Examinations that Must Be Sustained by Men  
3 Coming from Other Denominations”  
4

5 **Whereas**, *BCO* 13-6 requires that when ministers seek admission to a PCA Presbytery from  
6 some other denomination, “the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in  
7 knowledge and views as required by *BCO* 21-4 . . .”; and  
8

9 **Whereas**, this portion of *BCO* 13-6 was added in 1997 on the grounds that prior to the  
10 amendment Presbyteries could “examine a man only with reference to his views  
11 whether he comes from another PCA Presbytery, a sister Reformed denomination, or  
12 an independent, Charismatic, Baptist, or some other denomination,” that this was  
13 deemed to be “a weakness in our polity,” and that “the *BCO* should require that if a  
14 man is coming to us from another denomination he must sustain the same exam for  
15 ordination, in knowledge and views, as any candidate” (see *M25GA*, p. 178); and  
16

17 **Whereas**, it is right and proper to seek to ensure that men coming from other denominations  
18 have, not only the orthodoxy of views, but also the level of education, training, and  
19 knowledge required of men being ordained in the PCA; but  
20

21 **Whereas**, it is not clear as to whether the reference to *BCO* 21-4 in *BCO* 13-6 is intended to  
22 cover all of the trials for ordination mentioned in *BCO* 21-4, or whether it is intended  
23 only to cover the areas of examination listed under “a;” and  
24

25 **Whereas**, mandating that Presbyteries require ministers coming from denominations with  
26 whom the PCA has formal fraternal relations to “sustain the same exam for  
27 ordination . . . as any candidate” appears to devalue the ordination of those sister  
28 denominations, and thus our unity with those denominations; and  
29

30 **Whereas**, the denominations with whom we have formal fraternal relations (i.e., NAPARC)  
31 typically do not require full ordination examinations for men transferring to them  
32 from the PCA; and;  
33

34 **Whereas**, it is important to allow Presbyteries the latitude to conduct more thorough  
35 examinations should they deem that to be necessary based on the background of the  
36 individual being examined and/or the ecclesiastical setting from which he comes;  
37

38 **Therefore be it resolved** that the Presbytery of the Ascension hereby overtures the 37<sup>th</sup>  
39 General Assembly to begin the process of amending *BCO* 13-6 to read as follows  
40 (strike-outs indicate language to be removed, and bold type indicates language to be  
41 added):  
42

43 **13-6.** Ministers seeking admission to a Presbytery from other Presbyteries in the  
44 Presbyterian Church in America **or from denominations with which the**  
45 **Presbyterian Church in America has formal fraternal relations** shall be  
46 examined on Christian experience, and also touching their views in theology, the  
47 Sacraments, and church government. If applicants come from ~~other~~ denominations

1           **with which the Presbyterian Church in America does not have formal fraternal**  
2           **relations**, the Presbytery shall examine them thoroughly in knowledge and views as  
3           required by *BCO 21-4.a*. **Presbyteries may require ministers coming from other**  
4           **denominations to complete any other trials specified in BCO 21-4 should the**  
5           **Presbytery deem that to be necessary**, and **Presbyteries must** require them to  
6           answer in the affirmative the questions put to candidates at their ordination.  
7           Ordained ministers from other denominations being considered by Presbyteries for  
8           reception may come under the extraordinary provisions set forth in *BCO 21-4*.

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10       *Adopted by the Presbytery of the Ascension at its stated meeting, November 8, 2008*

11       *Attested by /s/ RE Frederick R. Neikirk, stated clerk*