

1 **OVERTURE 2** from Calvary Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 Grant *BCO* 59, "Solemnization of Marriage," Full Constitutional Status
3

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

7 **Whereas**, the nations of Canada and the United States of America, in which the vast
8 majority of PCA congregations are located, have both taken the extraordinary and
9 historically unprecedented step of legalizing same-sex marriage in all of their states
10 and territories; and
11

12 **Whereas**, many of the nations in which PCA missionaries are active have also declared
13 same-sex marriages to be legal; and
14

15 **Whereas**, the Armed Forces, in which PCA chaplains minister, have dropped their
16 opposition to same-sex marriages and now conduct same-sex marriages on military
17 installations and in military chapels; and
18

19 **Whereas**, considerable pressure is currently being exerted on churches, both socially and
20 legally, to abandon their commitment to biblical marriage, and adopt the practice of
21 same-sex marriage; and
22

23 **Whereas**, most mainline protestant denominations have already authorized the practice of
24 same-sex marriage, and many churches, congregations, pastors, and theologians who
25 profess to be evangelical and/or Reformed have also endorsed same-sex marriage;
26 and
27

28 **Whereas**, citizens and Christian organizations in the United States and Canada have already
29 been found guilty of discrimination and subjected to considerable fines in several
30 jurisdictions for exercising their right to refuse to take part in same-sex weddings;
31 and
32

33 **Whereas**, ministers and chaplains who refuse to conduct same-sex marriages and churches
34 that refuse to make their facilities available for these events are also likely to be
35 subjected to lawsuits, disciplinary actions, and charges of discrimination; and
36

37 **Whereas**, there is great need in this time of rapidly increasing sexual immorality for the
38 church of Jesus Christ to bear prophetic witness to the teaching of the Bible
39 regarding marriage and the right use of the good gift of human sexuality and to call
40 the nations to repentance; and
41

42 **Whereas**, if we fail to take an unambiguous stand for biblical marriage at this critical point
43 in time, it is likely that we will compromise on this issue and other issues related to
44 human sexuality in the future; and

1 **Whereas**, our ministers, chaplains, missionaries, and churches should receive clear
2 constitutional guidance in this matter and be able to show that the denomination that
3 they belong to, is absolutely opposed to same-sex marriage on biblical grounds; and
4

5 **Whereas**, there is no statement with constitutional authority prohibiting same-sex marriage
6 in the *BCO* at present; and
7

8 **Whereas**, chapter 59 of the *BCO* clearly states that “Marriage is to be between one man and
9 one woman, in accordance with the Word of God” (59-3), and that ministers are
10 required to obey the civil laws of the community regarding marriage “to the extent
11 that those laws do not transgress the laws of God as interpreted by the Constitution
12 of the Presbyterian Church in America” (59-6); and
13

14 **Whereas**, chapters 56, 57 & 58 of the directory of worship already have constitutional
15 authority; and
16

17 **Whereas**, chapter 59 contains nothing touching on the conduct of worship services, or even
18 the conduct of the marriage ceremony and its instructions regarding the nature of
19 marriage are almost exclusively taken from the Directory for the Public Worship of
20 God (1645); and
21

22 **Whereas**, a denominational in thesi statement on the nature of marriage would be difficult,
23 expensive, and time consuming to draft and would be of dubious value and
24 constitutional authority; and
25

26 **Whereas**, the simplest, quickest, and least expensive manner of both taking a God honoring
27 stand on the issue of biblical marriage and protecting the PCA’s ministers and
28 churches is to grant chapter 59 of the *BCO* constitutional authority;
29

30 **Therefore**, Calvary Presbytery hereby overtures the 45th General Assembly to grant *BCO*
31 Chapter 59 “The Solemnization of Marriage” full constitutional authority.
32

33 *Adopted by Calvary Presbytery at its stated meeting, October 27, 2016*

34 *Attested by /s/ RE Melton L. Duncan, stated clerk*