

1 **OVERTURE 21** from Nashville Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *Book of Church Order* 14-1.10., 14-1.11., and 14-1.12” (Version 3)
3

4 **Whereas**, the Presbyterian Church in America believes Christ has called his church to be a
5 “spiritual commonwealth” (*BCO* 3-1), in which members elect godly men to be
6 ordained as elders who are given the power of jurisdiction as they act jointly in the
7 courts of the church (*BCO* 3-2); and
8

9 **Whereas**, a robustly complementarian perspective affirms the oversight of these elders and
10 the proper, vital and full expression of the gifts given by Christ to men and women for
11 his service; and
12

13 **Whereas**, vigorous participation of women in the life of the early church is attested by
14 the New Testament: they helped select (Acts 1:14) and train (Acts 18:26) leaders of
15 the church, prophesied (Acts 21:8-9), served the church through deeds of mercy in
16 vital ways (Acts 9:36–41), were instrumental in the planting of churches (Acts 16:12–
17 15; 17:4,12) and other missionary endeavors (Acts 18:1f), and were acknowledged as
18 important leaders for the church (Rom. 16:3-4); and
19

20 **Whereas**, as part of the calling of church leaders to “equip the saints for the work of ministry
21 for building up the body of Christ” (Eph. 4:12), sessions throughout the PCA identify
22 gifted men and women to serve on committees of the church, such as missions,
23 building, and pastoral search committees; and
24

25 **Whereas**, in contrast with a commission in the PCA, which is "authorized to deliberate and
26 conclude the business referred to it," committees are appointed by courts “to examine,
27 consider and report” to their constituting court concerning the matters that court
28 delegates to them (*BCO* 15-1) and thus do not exercise governing authority; and
29

30 **Whereas**, in accordance with this principle, Permanent Committees established by the
31 General Assembly are “to serve and not to direct any Church judicatories. They are
32 not to establish policy, but rather execute policy established by the General Assembly”
33 (*BCO* 14-1.7); and
34

35 **Whereas**, these considerations suggest there is no impediment to an unordained member in
36 good standing in the PCA serving on a Permanent Committee of the General Assembly
37 established in *BCO* 14-1.12; and
38

39 **Whereas**, the 45th General Assembly adopted the recommendation of The Ad Interim
40 Committee on Women Serving in the Ministry of the Church that stated “sessions,
41 presbyteries and the General Assembly strive to develop, recognize, and utilize the
42 gifts, skills, knowledge, and wisdom of godly women in the local, regional, and
43 national church, and particularly consider overtures that would allow qualified women
44 to serve on appropriate committees and agencies within the church”; and
45

1 **Therefore be it resolved** to amend *The Book of Church Order* by deleting 14-1.10; by
2 amending 14-1.11 as follows (and renumbering as 14-1.10); by adding a new 14-1.11;
3 and by amending 14-1.12 as follows: [Proposed additions underlined and deletions
4 noted by strike out.]

5
6 ~~10. The committees are to be established on the basis of an equal number~~
7 ~~between teaching and ruling elders.~~

8
9 ~~11.~~ 10. A Nominating Committee shall be comprised of one representative
10 elected by each Presbytery in the following manner. Each Presbytery shall be
11 assigned to a class by the Stated Clerk based on its date of formation. The
12 members shall serve in classes of three year terms, alternating between ruling
13 and teaching elders. When necessary, unexpired terms shall be filled by an
14 elder of the same class, teaching or ruling. This committee is to present all
15 nominations for which it is responsible to the next meeting of the Assembly
16 from a slate of ~~men~~ candidates nominated by the Presbyteries. Presbyteries
17 shall utilize the nominating forms provided by the Stated Clerk for their
18 nominations. Each presbytery may present one teaching elder, ~~and~~ one ruling
19 elder, ~~and, when applicable, one candidate who is not an elder to fill openings~~
20 that are designated for members at large for each committee or agency. Any
21 non-ordained person nominated must meet the qualifications outlined in BCO
22 14-1.11.

23 In addition to nominees for expired terms, the Committee shall nominate
24 for each permanent Committee one ruling, ~~and~~ one teaching elder and a
25 member at large candidate as alternates to fill any vacancies that may occur
26 during the year. Each alternate should attend each meeting and fill any vacancy
27 necessary to meet a quorum. In addition to the new nominees from the
28 Presbyteries, alternates not assuming any vacancies during a year will be
29 automatically considered by the Nominating Committee as candidates for
30 nomination to that same committee.

31
32 11. To be qualified for nomination and election to serve on a Permanent
33 Committee or Agency as a member at large, a non-ordained candidate must be
34 a member in good standing of a Church in the Presbyterian Church in America
35 and must receive an endorsement from their Session. The endorsement will
36 consist of testimony regarding the candidate's Christian character, knowledge
37 of and adherence to the Constitution, and promise of faithful service to the
38 General Assembly.

39
40 12. The Assembly permanent committees are the Administrative Committee
41 of the General Assembly, Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee
42 on Mission to North America, Committee on Mission to the World, and
43 Committee on Reformed University Fellowship.

44 The Administrative Committee of the General Assembly (AC) shall consist
45 of twenty (20) members:

- 1 a. Eleven members, six elders and five members who are not elders, shall
- 2 be in classes elected through the standard nomination and election
- 3 procedure,
- 4 b. One member from each of the following program committees or
- 5 agencies:
 - 6 1. Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM)
 - 7 2. Covenant College (CC)
 - 8 3. Covenant Theological Seminary (CTS)
 - 9 4. Mission to North America (MNA)
 - 10 5. Mission to the World (MTW)
 - 11 6. PCA Foundation (PCAF)
 - 12 7. PCA Retirement & Benefits, Inc. (RBI)
 - 13 8. Reformed University Fellowship (RUF)
 - 14 9. Ridge Haven Conference Center (RH)

15 The eleven elected members ~~at large~~ shall serve a term of four years. The

16 chairman of the Administrative Committee shall be one of its elected ordained

17 members ~~at large~~.

18 Each program committee and agency shall designate its member each year

19 at the last meeting of the committee or board before the meeting of the General

20 Assembly. The chief administrative officers of the program committees and

21 agencies may attend any meeting of the Administrative Committee. They shall

22 be entitled to the privilege of the floor but shall not have a vote and must be

23 excluded when an executive session is called.

24 Committee on Discipleship Ministries, Committee on Mission to North

25 America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed

26 University Fellowship shall consist of fifteen (15) ~~men~~ members divided into

27 five classes of three ~~men~~ members ~~each, with two men being TEs and one RE~~

28 ~~or two men being REs and one TE on alternate years. Three classes will have~~

29 one TE, one RE and one member at large. One class shall have one TE and

30 two members at large and one class shall have one RE and two members at

31 large. Each class shall be elected to serve five-year terms. Committee on

32 Discipleship Ministries, Committee on Mission to North America, Committee

33 on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed University Fellowship

34 shall have one ruling elder, ~~and~~ one teaching elder, and one member at large

35 as alternates to fill any vacancy that may occur during the year. A quorum for

36 each Committee shall be eight (8) members, with a majority of those present

37 being elders. The Chairman of each Committee shall be an elder.

38 Persons who have served for a full term, or for at least two years of a partial

39 term, on one of the Assembly's permanent committees or agencies shall not be

40 eligible for reelection to an Assembly committee until one year has lapsed.

41 (Exceptions may be permitted in agency bylaws approved by the Assembly).

42

43 So that *BCO* 14-1.10, 14-1.11, and 14-1.12 as amended would read:

44

1 10. A Nominating Committee shall be comprised of one representative elected
2 by each Presbytery in the following manner. Each Presbytery shall be assigned
3 to a class by the Stated Clerk based on its date of formation. The members shall
4 serve in classes of three year terms, alternating between ruling and teaching
5 elders. When necessary, unexpired terms shall be filled by an elder of the same
6 class, teaching or ruling.

7 This committee is to present all nominations for which it is responsible to
8 the next meeting of the Assembly from a slate of candidates nominated by the
9 Presbyteries. Presbyteries shall utilize the nominating forms provided by the
10 Stated Clerk for their nominations. Each presbytery may present one teaching
11 elder, one ruling elder, and, when applicable, one candidate who is not an elder
12 to fill openings that are designated for members at large for each committee
13 or agency. Any non-ordained person nominated must meet the qualifications
14 outlined in *BCO* 14-1.11.

15 In addition to nominees for expired terms, the Committee shall nominate
16 for each permanent Committee one ruling, one teaching elder and a member at
17 large candidate as alternates to fill any vacancies that may occur during the
18 year. Each alternate should attend each meeting and fill any vacancy necessary
19 to meet a quorum. In addition to the new nominees from the Presbyteries,
20 alternates not assuming any vacancies during a year will be automatically
21 considered by the Nominating Committee as candidates for nomination to that
22 same committee.

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26 a member in good standing of a Church in the Presbyterian Church in America
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29 of and adherence to the Constitution, and promise of faithful service to the
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8 of the Administrative Committee shall be one of its elected ordained members.

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11 Assembly. The chief administrative officers of the program committees and
12 agencies may attend any meeting of the Administrative Committee. They shall
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14 excluded when an executive session is called.

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16 America, Committee on Mission to the World, and Committee on Reformed
17 University Fellowship shall consist of fifteen (15) members divided into five
18 classes of three-members. Three classes will have one TE, one RE and one
19 member at large. One class shall have one TE and two members at large and
20 one class shall have one RE and two members at large. Each class shall be
21 elected to serve five-year terms. Committee on Discipleship Ministries,
22 Committee on Mission to North America, Committee on Mission to the World,
23 and Committee on Reformed University Fellowship shall have one ruling
24 elder, one teaching elder and one member at large as alternates to fill any
25 vacancy that may occur during the year. A quorum for each Committee shall
26 be eight (8) members, with a majority of those present being elders. The
27 Chairman of each Committee shall be an elder.

28 Persons who have served for a full term, or for at least two years of a partial
29 term, on one of the Assembly's permanent committees or agencies shall not be
30 eligible for reelection to an Assembly committee until one year has lapsed.
31 (Exceptions may be permitted in agency bylaws approved by the Assembly).

32
33 **Further, be it resolved** that the Stated Clerk shall be responsible for developing the
34 nomination forms necessary to implement this process and shall be responsible for
35 converting the composition of each class as each class term expires.

36
37 *Adopted by Nashville Presbytery at its stated meeting, November 13, 2018*

38 *Attested by /s/ TE R. Neil Spence, stated clerk*