

1 **OVERTURE 33** from Tennessee Valley Presbytery (to CCB, OC)  
2 "Amend *BCO 57-5* to Add Vow Regarding Trinity"  
3

4 **Whereas**, there is but one only, living, and true God, who exists as three persons—God the  
5 Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—of one substance, power, and eternity  
6 (WCF 2; WLC 9; WSC 6); and  
7

8 **Whereas**, the doctrine of the Trinity is foundational, essential, and vital to the Christian faith;  
9 indeed, presbyteries have been instructed to give due and serious consideration to  
10 "Appendix W," which includes the affirmation: "the confession of the Trinity is the  
11 heartbeat of the Christian religion" (as adopted by the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly, *Minutes*,  
12 29 and 624); and  
13

14 **Whereas**, the visible church is made up of those who profess faith in the Lord Jesus Christ  
15 (*BCO 2-1*), and such profession of faith is a profession of the whole Christ, who is  
16 both truly God and truly man; and  
17

18 **Whereas**, we live in a pluralistic age, where there is confusion over the essential being of  
19 God, illustrated by the fact that the vast majority of self-professing evangelicals in  
20 America affirm that "Jesus is the first and greatest being created by God" (Ligonier  
21 Ministries and LifeWay Research, "The State of Theology" 2018); and  
22

23 **Whereas**, the doctrine of the Trinity has been and is currently under assault by the unbelieving  
24 world, by cults, by unitarians, and by various religions; and  
25

26 **Whereas**, Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, and other non-Christian faiths could affirm our  
27 current membership vows as stated; and  
28

29 **Whereas**, the organization of a particular church in the Presbyterian Church in America  
30 includes the pronouncement and declaration of its organization in the name of the  
31 Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (*BCO 5-8*); and  
32

33 **Whereas**, when unbaptized persons apply for admission into the Church, they shall make a  
34 public profession of their faith, in the presence of the congregation, and thereupon be  
35 baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit (*BCO 56-6*;  
36 *57-3*), as shall the children of believing parents; and  
37

38 **Whereas**, "every Christian Church, or union or association of particular churches, is entitled  
39 to declare the terms of admission into its communion and the qualifications of its  
40 ministers and members" (Preface to the *BCO II.2*); and  
41

42 **Whereas**, at least three fellow NAPARC churches include a membership vow requiring  
43 affirmation of the Holy Trinity; and

1 **Whereas**, the current membership vows of the Presbyterian Church in America reference  
2 “God” (*BCO 57-5*), but do not require faith in God as He exists in three persons;  
3

4 **Therefore, be it resolved** to amend the *Book of Church Order 57-5* by adding the following  
5 question to the membership vows [as question 2, thereby renumbering questions 2–5  
6 as questions 3–6]:  
7

8 **2. Do you believe in the one, true, and living God who exists in three**  
9 **persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—who**  
10 **are of the same substance, equal in power and glory?**  
11

12 So that the membership vows in *Book of Church Order 57-5* would read:  
13

- 14 1. Do you acknowledge yourselves to be sinners in the sight of God,  
15 justly deserving His displeasure, and without hope save in His  
16 sovereign mercy?
- 17 **2. Do you believe in the one, true, and living God who exists in three**  
18 **persons—God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—**  
19 **who are of the same substance, equal in power and glory?**
- 20 ~~2.~~ **3. Do you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and**  
21 **Savior of sinners, and do you receive and rest upon Him alone for**  
22 **salvation as He is offered in the Gospel?**
- 23 ~~3.~~ **4. Do you now resolve and promise, in humble reliance upon the grace**  
24 **of the Holy Spirit, that you will endeavor to live as becomes the**  
25 **followers of Christ?**
- 26 ~~4.~~ **5. Do you promise to support the Church in its worship and work to**  
27 **the best of your ability?**
- 28 ~~5.~~ **6. Do you submit yourselves to the government and discipline of the**  
29 **Church, and promise to study its purity and peace?**  
30

31 *Adopted by the Tennessee Valley Presbytery at its stated meeting, April 13, 2019*

32 *Attested by TE Jacob A. Bennett, stated clerk*