

1 **OVERTURE 5** from Central Indiana Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *BCO* 23-1 on Procedures for Dissolving Various Pastoral Relations”
3

4 Central Indiana Presbytery hereby overtures General Assembly to amend *BCO* 23-1 as follows
5 in order to clarify the procedures for the dissolution of the various pastoral relations:
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7 23-1. When any minister shall tender the resignation of his pastoral charge to
8 his Presbytery, the Presbytery shall cite the church to appear by its
9 commissioners, to show cause why the Presbytery should or should not accept
10 the resignation. If the church fails to appear, or if its reasons for retaining its
11 pastor be deemed insufficient, his resignation shall be accepted and the pastoral
12 relation dissolved.

13 If any church desires to be relieved of its pastor, ~~a similar procedure~~
14 ~~shall be observed. But whether the minister or the church initiates proceedings~~
15 ~~for a dissolution of the relation, there shall always be a meeting of the~~
16 ~~congregation called and conducted in the same manner as the call of the pastor.~~
17 In any case, or associate pastor, a congregational meeting must first be called
18 for the purpose of voting on the proposed dissolution. If the proposed
19 dissolution is approved, the church shall present its request to the Presbytery,
20 and the Presbytery shall make a final determination regarding the proposed
21 dissolution. In the case of an assistant pastor, the church Session may present
22 its request for dissolution directly to the Presbytery without prior approval at a
23 congregational meeting. In all cases, the minister must not physically leave the
24 field until the Presbytery or its commission empowered to handle ~~uncontested~~
25 requests for dissolution has dissolved the relation.

26 The associate or assistant pastors may continue to serve a congregation
27 when the pastoral relation of the senior pastor is dissolved, but they may not
28 normally succeed the senior pastor without an intervening term of service in a
29 different field of labor. However a congregation by a secret ballot with four-
30 fifths (4/5) majority vote may petition Presbytery for an exception which by a
31 three-fourths (3/4) majority vote Presbytery may grant. Presbytery needs to
32 determine if the dissolution of the pastoral relationship with the senior pastor
33 was brought about in Christian love and good order on the part of the parties
34 concerned.
35

36 **Rationale:**

37 The current language in the second paragraph of *BCO* 23-1 is unclear regarding the proper
38 procedure for a congregation to pursue in the interest of dissolving the different pastoral
39 relations. As it currently stands, it could be understood to imply that even in the case of an
40 assistant pastor, who is called only by the Session and not the congregation (*BCO* 22-3), the
41 congregation must first vote to approve the dissolution before the request to dissolve the
42 relationship is presented to the Presbytery. The proposed amendment simply seeks to clarify
43 the proper procedure in the case of a pastor, associate pastor, or assistant pastor.
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45 *Adopted by Central Indiana Presbytery at its stated meeting, September 14, 2018*

46 *Attested by TE Kristofer D. Holroyd, stated clerk*