

1 **OVERTURE 6** from Pacific Northwest Presbytery
2 “Amend *RAO 11* and *13* to Disallow Memorials”

(to CCB, OC)

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4 (All parts should be considered as a single proposal, considered together.)

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6 1. Add new ***RAO 11-12***.

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8 **11-12.** No communication or overture shall be received that seeks to memorialize
9 someone.

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11 2. Revise ***RAO 13-2*** by adding new final sentence.

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13 **13-2.** New business must be presented to the General Assembly before the
14 recess of the afternoon session on the second day of business, and if it was not
15 first presented as an overture to a Presbytery, the proposal must include an
16 explanation for why it was not. If received by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the
17 commissioners present and voting, [it] shall be referred by the Stated Clerk to
18 the appropriate committee of commissioners. No proposed amendment to the
19 Constitution shall be received as new business. No proposal that seeks to
20 memorialize someone shall be received as new business.

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22 3. Strike all of ***RAO 13-6***.

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24 ~~**13-6.** Any overture that deals with a memorial resolution which honors a~~
25 ~~recently deceased Teaching Elder or Ruling Elder and is received by the Stated~~
26 ~~Clerk within thirty days of the convening of a General Assembly shall be~~
27 ~~received by the Assembly and included by the Stated Clerk in the minutes of~~
28 ~~the General Assembly, if the overture 1) has been approved by a Presbytery, 2)~~
29 ~~— memorializes an elder who has played a significant role in the General~~
30 ~~Assembly, and 3) is no longer than one thousand words. Ordinarily, memorial~~
31 ~~resolutions shall not be read to the Assembly.~~

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33 **Grounds:**

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35 1. There are problems with the current *RAO 13-6*, which became most apparent last year at
36 the 2018 GA regarding Overtures 31, 36 and 37.

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38 a) There is currently no provision for the Assembly to consider approval/disapproval of
39 a memorial, should it wish to do so.
40 b) *RAO* currently has no provision for amending any resolution in a memorial overture.
41 c) *RAO* currently does not restrict content. So, for example, it could allow memorial
42 resolutions with differing views of the person and his contribution to the General
43 Assembly.
44 d) Currently, the text of any memorial overture would appear in an appendix of the
45 Assembly Minutes, because its entirety would be included along with other Overtures.

1 But a reader might be confused as to whether and how the Assembly acted on the
2 memorial. Furthermore, if a memorial was in order per *RAO* 13-6 and thus “included
3 by the Stated Clerk in the minutes of the General Assembly” (which would be a second
4 inclusion), it would add to the confusion.
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- 6 2. John Calvin was buried on Sunday, May 28, 1564, in an unmarked grave (per his
7 request), at a secret location in Geneva. Earlier, Calvin had written the following about
8 the death of Moses:
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10 “It is good that famous men should be buried in unmarked graves.”

11 *Commentaries on the Four Last Books of Moses*, Vol. 4, 406 (Grand Rapids:
12 Baker, 1979), on Deut. 34:6: “So Moses the servant of the Lord died there in
13 the land of Moab, according to the word of the Lord, and he buried him in the
14 valley in the land of Moab opposite Beth-peor; but no one knows the place of
15 his burial to this day.” (ESV)
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17 *Adopted by Pacific Northwest Presbytery at its stated meeting on January 25, 2019*

18 *Attested by /s/ RE Brett Chase, stated clerk*