

REGARDING AFFILIATION WITH THE PCA

When a church or pastor from another denomination contacts the PCA Stated Clerk's Office concerning affiliation with the PCA, they are directed to the presbytery clerk of the presbytery that oversees their region.

When contacted by a church, the Presbytery would follow the steps outlined in the letter below. When contacted by a pastor, refer to 045 Checklist for Reception from Another Denomination (*BCO* 13-6 & 21-4).

Sample letter from Presbytery:

Thank you for your interest in the PCA. In responding to your question about affiliation with the PCA, let me direct you to *The Book of Church Order*, sections 13-8 and 24-5.

- 13-8.** The Presbytery, before receiving into its membership any church, shall designate a commission to meet with the church's ruling elders to make certain that the elders understand and can sincerely adopt the doctrines and polity of the Presbyterian Church in America as contained in its Constitution. In the presence of the commission, the ruling elders shall be required to answer affirmatively the questions required of officers at their ordination. (see *BCO* 24-5 for questions)
- 24-5.** The day having arrived, and the Session being convened in the presence of the congregation, a sermon shall be preached after which the presiding minister shall state in a concise manner the warrant and nature of the office of ruling elder, or deacon, together with the character proper to be sustained and the duties to be fulfilled. Having done this, he shall propose to the candidate, in the presence of the church, the following questions, namely:
1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
 2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the *Confession of Faith* and the *Catechisms* of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
 3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?
 4. Do you accept the office of ruling elder (or deacon, as the case may be) in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the Church of which God has made you an officer?
 5. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
 6. Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity and edification of the Church?

The ruling elder or deacon elect having answered in the affirmative, the minister shall address to the members of the church the following question:

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive this brother as a ruling elder (or deacon), and do you promise to yield him all that honor, encouragement and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the Word of God and the Constitution of this Church, entitles him?

The members of the church having answered this question in the affirmative, by holding up their right hands, the candidate shall then be set apart, with prayer by the minister or any other Session member and the laying on of the hands of the Session, to the office of ruling elder (or deacon). Prayer being ended, the members of the Session (and the deacons, if the case be that of a deacon) shall take the newly ordained officer by the hand, saying in words to this effect:

We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us.

The minister shall then say:

I now pronounce and declare that _____ has been regularly elected, ordained and installed a ruling elder (or deacon) in this church, agreeable to the Word of God, and according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America; and that as such he is entitled to all encouragement, honor and obedience in the Lord: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

After which the minister or any other member of the Session shall give to the ruling elder (or deacon) and to the church an exhortation suited to the occasion.

Your church would be in the area under our Presbytery. I will be able to guide you through the process for reception into the Presbyterian Church in America if your church is interested.

Once again, thank you for your interest in the PCA.