

**FEBRUARY 2005**

**EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK**

**MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

This examination is intended to “assess the candidate’s working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined” [G-14.0310d(5)].

The intent of this examination is to test readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates will utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy of the 2004-2005 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.

**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

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CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 2 OF 6**

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- Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution;
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole;
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

\*\*\*\*\*

**IMPORTANT:    READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION BEFORE  
BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.**

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CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

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**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

The *Book of Order* states under the section on The Unity of the Church:

Visible Oneness:

Visible oneness, by which a diversity of persons, gifts, and understandings is brought together, is an important sign of the unity of God's people. It is also a means by which that unity is achieved. Further, while divisions into different denominations do not destroy this unity, they do obscure it for both the Church and the world. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), affirming its historical continuity with the whole Church of Jesus Christ, is committed to the reduction of that obscurity and is willing to seek and to maintain communion and community with all other branches of the one, catholic Church. (G-4.0203)

**REQUIRED RESPONSE:**

Cite and discuss at least five (5) references from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) from five (5) different chapters which describe how this commitment to visible oneness is lived out in the ministry and mission of the church.

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**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

Following the Annual Meeting of First Presbyterian Church, you, the pastor, are questioned by several members.

Carmen:      Every year, at the Annual Meeting, we are told that the session has already approved the budget for the coming year. Why doesn't the congregation vote on it?

Roy:      I get confused about that too. We are presented with the budget which contains your salary and benefits. We can't vote on the budget but we do vote on your salary. Please explain this to me.

Alma:      Whenever we discuss the salary someone mentions the "minimum" salary. Who decides what the minimum is? Don't you work for us?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least one (1) issue raised by each person. For each issue raised, cite at least one (1) reference from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Carmen, Roy, and Alma.

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A OR B**

**A.**

The members of Second Presbyterian Church have recently had a crisis in the life of the church resulting in the presbytery's decision to dissolve the relationship between the pastor and the congregation. About fifty members of the church have now come to you, the parish associate, asking you to leave the Second Presbyterian Church with them to form a new congregation where you would become the pastor.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least five (5) issues raised by this situation as they relate to the members of the congregation, the parish associate and the presbytery. For each issue cite at least one (1) reference from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, write a brief and appropriate letter that you might send to the congregation in response to the group's request.

**OR**

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A OR B**

**B.**

You are the pastor of the Third Presbyterian Church. At the first meeting of the nominating committee, the following comments are made:

Sam:            It seems to me we can make our job easier by nominating two persons for every vacancy. That way we don't have to ask for additional nominations from the floor.

Judy:           How about expediting the election by listing all the qualified people suggested? When we vote, the five people receiving the most votes will be elected.

Helen:          I don't know. These suggestions don't sound right to me. Pastor, what is the best way to elect officers? Can we choose our own procedure?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least three (3) issues raised by this situation. Cite at least one (1) reference from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the nominating committee.

**AUGUST 2005**

**EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK**

**MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

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**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

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**PAGE 2 OF 6**

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- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

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**IMPORTANT:     **READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION BEFORE**  
**BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.****

**AUGUST 2005  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 3 OF 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR                      OPEN BOOK                      REQUIRED**

The *Book of Order* states in G-4.0403:

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all racial ethnic groups, different ages, both sexes, various disabilities, diverse geographical areas, different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition, as well as different marital conditions (married, single, widowed or divorced) shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making of the church. (G-9.0104a)

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least four (4) *Book of Order* references (e.g., X-0.0000) from at least four (4) chapters (other than G-4.0000) that reflect how this commitment is to be lived out in the life of the church.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article suitable for a church newsletter, discussing diversity and inclusiveness in the church.

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**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

You are moderating a session meeting of the church you serve as pastor. An elder says, "I serve on the board of an organization that is quite worried about the increasing number of homeless individuals and families in our community. We have more than an acre of land behind the church that we do not use. I told my organization that I thought my church would be happy to build a shelter and lease it to them." The following comments were made:

- George: This sounds like just the mission project we've been looking for! When can we get started?
- Jose: Wait a minute, I believe we would have to take out a mortgage.
- Mary: Isn't caring for the homeless the responsibility of the town government? Why would the church get involved?
- Sarah: I wonder how our neighbors will feel about us building a shelter?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least four (4) issues the session must consider before making a decision. For each issue cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000). Citations must come from at least three different chapters of the *Book of Order*.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1 and showing pastoral sensitivity, respond to George, Jose, Mary and Sarah individually.

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A OR B**

**A.**

Prairie Presbyterian, a church of 50 members, has been without a pastor for 11 years. You are serving as Moderator. At a session meeting, the Clerk of Session reports that she has received a call from the Committee on Ministry suggesting that the session consider a Commissioned Lay Pastor.

Albert:    Who are Commissioned Lay Pastors? They aren't ordained, are they?

Bertha:    I don't want someone who is untrained and just thinks he can preach.

Connie:    Is presbytery trying to find a way to avoid paying attention to us? We like having you moderate the session. We would hate to lose your input.

David:    Would there be any advantages to Prairie Presbyterian Church by having a Commissioned Lay Pastor?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least four (4) issues this situation raises. For each issue identified, cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to each elder.

**--OR--**

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A OR B**

**B.**

A Presbyterian Church in a neighboring town is interested in calling Kelly, a minister of the United Church of Christ, to be their pastor. Kelly comes to you, a Presbyterian pastor, for counsel. “Please educate me. Would it be possible for me to serve a Presbyterian church?”

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss four (4) issues in this situation. For each issue identified, cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Kelly.

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CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

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**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

The *Book of Order* states in G-2.0500a:

In its confessions, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) expresses the faith of the Reformed tradition. Central to this tradition is the affirmation of the majesty, holiness, and providence of God who creates, sustains, rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love. Related to this central affirmation of God's sovereignty are other great themes of the Reformed tradition:

- (1) The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation;
- (2) Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God;
- (3) A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation;
- (4) The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.

**REQUIRED RESPONSE:**

God's sovereignty is a central affirmation in the confessions of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Cite and discuss at least one (1) reference from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) that gives expression to each of the four (4) numbered themes in G-2.0500a.

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**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

You are the pastor of First Presbyterian Church. The Clerk of Session gives you a letter from a deacon alleging that an elder male sexual advances toward her after last Sunday night's service. The deacon also wrote that the elder has been calling and harassing her. The clerk asks, "What are we to do?"

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least four (4) issues in this situation. Cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference, (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the clerk.

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A OR B**

**A.**

You are a member of your presbytery council. At a council meeting, the Committee on Representation makes its annual report and the committee members make the following remarks:

- Jonah:      We have finished our work. I recommend that the committee be dismissed with thanks because their work is done.
- Lee:        We can't find any more qualified racial ethnic persons in the presbytery since we have so few churches with racial ethnic members.
- Geraldo:    Why is diversity such a big deal? It's hard enough to get people to serve on committees, and as long as the work gets done, we should be happy.
- Susan:      Aren't we supposed to be responsible for finding women to serve on committees? How can we be dismissed when there are no women chairing presbytery committees?
- Ramona:    Can't we just merge with the nominating committee since our work is really part of their work?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least one (1) issue raised by each committee member. For each issue cite one *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond individually to Jonah, Lee, Geraldo, Susan, and Ramona.

**--OR--**

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A OR B**

**B.**

You are the pastor of Sweet Meadows Presbyterian Church. Although not a member of your church, Elizabeth, one of the regular participants in the youth fellowship, is a young woman with a physical disability. Elizabeth asks to talk with you.

“I’m frustrated in choosing a career. Many of the options in which I am interested seems to be ruled out because of my physical limitations. Do you think I could be a pastor? What would I have to do to become a Presbyterian pastor?”

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least four (4) issues raised by Elizabeth’s situation. For each issue raised, cite at least one (1) reference from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Elizabeth, including her concerns about physical limitations.

**AUGUST 2006  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**OPEN BOOK**

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**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

*The Book of Order* in G-1.0200 states:

The great ends of the church are  
the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind;  
the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship  
of the children of God;  
the maintenance of divine worship;  
the preservation of the truth;  
the promotion of social righteousness; and  
the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. For each of the six (6) Great Ends of the Church, cite at least one *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) that assigns responsibility for furthering that great end.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an essay discussing how *The Book of Order* calls the church to work for the fulfillment of the Great Ends of the Church.

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**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

The congregation that you serve as pastor has a deteriorating and inconvenient facility with virtually no parking. Previously, the session has discussed finding a piece of land and building a new facility.

At last month's session meeting, Elder Lee raised the issue again saying: "I was talking with Mr. Ramirez and he offered to give us 10 acres of land for a new church if we would be willing to support his efforts to have the rest of his farm rezoned so that a developer would want to buy it to build new apartments."

Elder Berry spoke up to say, "I know that the Little ABC Nursery School is looking for a new and larger location. Maybe they would want to lease space in the new building."

Elder Anciano said, "A new facility would enable us to start a ministry to senior citizens in our community. There's a big need, but most of them can't make it up the steps to our current building."

Elder Grouper said, "Don't I remember something about Presbytery needing to approve any property transactions? Pastor, could you give us some guidance?"

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three issues raised by the elders. Cite and briefly discuss at least one reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from *The Book of Order* for each issue. Use two or more chapters from *The Book of Order*.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a document for the next session meeting that explains the issues and identifies the applicable responsibilities (if any) of the congregation, session, presbytery, or other higher governing bodies of the church.

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**( CHOOSE ONE: A or B )**

**A.**

A new member, Bernard, questions you. “Pastor, I noticed that you did not vote at the congregational meeting last week. Why? I think you should have a voice in the government of the church. Are there other things you can and cannot do?”

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three issues raised in the situation above. For each issue, cite and briefly discuss at least one reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from *The Book of Order*.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Bernard.

**--OR--**

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**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR      OPEN BOOK      REQUIRED**

**( CHOOSE ONE: A or B )**

**B.**

You open the local newspaper to read that one of the deacons of the church that you serve as pastor is reported to have made racist remarks at the municipal council meeting. You receive phone calls and e-mails from concerned parishioners, members of session, and others.

Elder Santos said, “Pastor, his comments will destroy our ministry and witness to the Hispanic community.”

Elder Pringle added, “Don’t we Presbyterians champion freedom of conscience? Smith has the right to say what he thinks. We have to defend him.”

Mr. Orderly said, “I think we need to start a disciplinary case against Deacon Smith. He needs to be punished by the church. How do we do that?”

Pastor Jones (pastor of another church in town) exclaimed, “We can’t go through with our planned ecumenical worship services this summer—my people don’t want to be associated with a racist congregation!”

After the phones quiet down, you call a special meeting of the session for the following evening.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three issues raised in the above situation. For each issue, cite and briefly discuss at least one reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from *The Book of Order*.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare the remarks you will make at the beginning of the special meeting of session. Discuss the issues and explain how *The Book of Order* provides guidance to the session.

**JANUARY 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK**

**MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

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**JANUARY 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 2 OF 6**

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\*\*\*\*\*

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**JANUARY 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 3 OF 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**PRINCIPLES OF CHURCH DISCIPLINE**

**PREAMBLE**

**D-1.0102 Power Vested in Christ's Church**

The power that Jesus Christ has vested in his Church, power manifested in the exercise of church discipline, is one for building up the body of Christ, not for destroying it, for redeeming, not for punishing. It should be exercised as a dispensation of mercy and not of wrath so that the great ends of the Church may be achieved, that all children of God may be presented faultless in the day of Christ.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Cite three (3) references from Chapters 1, 2, or 3 of the *Form of Government* (e.g. X-0.0000) and discuss the constitutional heritage for the statement in D-1.0102. The references must be from more than one chapter.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an essay discussing the constitutional heritage for D-1.0102.

**JANUARY 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 4 OF 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

You are the pastor of First Presbyterian Church. Returning from vacation, you are surprised to discover that the church parking lot has been paved in your absence. Rudolph, a new member, appears in your office. “Pastor, isn’t this a great surprise? They were paving the road out in front of the church and I was able to swing a great deal if they paved our parking lot that day. Because they were in the neighborhood, we saved 20%. The total bill is only half of our annual budget. Don’t worry about how we will pay for it. I signed a long-term payment plan on behalf of the church. I stood up in church last Sunday and told the congregation that we will take a special offering every Sunday until it is paid off.”

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. List at least three (3) errors made by Rudolph. Cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.000) for each error.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, explain to Rudolph how decisions about matters relating to the paving of the parking lot should have been handled.

**JANUARY 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 5 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR                      OPEN BOOK                      REQUIRED**

**( CHOOSE ONE: A or B )**

**A.**

As the newly called pastor, you are participating with session in a planning retreat. The following comments are made:

Opal:                      I remember what our church was like when I joined in the early '60's. There were two services, Sunday school for everyone, the best choir in town and many young families. Our church was a leader in the community and many influential people belonged. I believe it is your role as our pastor to restore this church to its former place in the community.

Tomas:                      Opal, these days, the people you're talking about live in the suburbs miles from our church. Our neighbors today are elderly people, single parent families, and immigrants. They should be welcome to share in our worship and hear the Good News. What is our role as a session?

Jess:                      I don't think the size or makeup of our congregation matters as long as we are faithful. Isn't the role of the church to trust our future to God?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least one (1) issue raised by each session member above. Cite at least one reference from *The Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, use this situation as a teaching moment for session.

**--OR--**

**JANUARY 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 6 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**( CHOOSE ONE: A or B )**

**B.**

Rev. Lee is the pastor of Main Street Presbyterian Church. The local news media reported about an action of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). The reports were technically correct, but they were incomplete and lacked supporting background information. There were immediate negative and positive responses from the community.

On the following Sunday, Rev. Lee preached the sermon she had already prepared as part of a series based on the gospel of Luke. After worship and over the next few days she was asked why she did not preach about the PC(U.S.A.) action. Rev. Lee also was asked her position on the action. Several members threatened to leave Main Street Presbyterian Church if she agreed with the action. Several other members said they would leave the congregation if she disagreed.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss at least three (3) issues raised by this situation. For each issue raised, cite at least one (1) reference from *The Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, write a brief essay on how Rev. Lee could respond to the congregation of Main Street Presbyterian Church.

AUGUST 2007

EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY  
OPEN BOOK  
MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

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**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

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**AUGUST 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 2 OF 6**

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\*\*\*\*\*

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**AUGUST 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 3 OF 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

	<b>ONE HOUR</b>	<b>OPEN BOOK</b>	<b>REQUIRED</b>
<b>G-4.0300</b>	<b>Principles of Presbyterian Government</b>		
G-4.0301	Presbyterian Polity		
	The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) reaffirms, within the context of its commitment to the Church universal, a special commitment to basic principles of Presbyterian polity: ...		
	b. This church shall be governed by presbyters (elders and ministers of the Word and Sacrament, traditionally called ruling and teaching elders);		

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Using chapters other than 1-4 of the *Form of Government*, cite and briefly discuss at least four (4) *Book of Order* references (e.g. X-0.0000) that demonstrate how this principle is lived out in the church.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an essay on this “basic principle of Presbyterian polity” for use as an introduction in a church officer handbook.

**AUGUST 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 4 OF 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

As pastor, you are leading a training retreat for session. The following discussion occurs:

Terry: I just visited my mother's church, and they have a board of deacons. Mom Said that they visit the sick. What else do deacons do?

Ricky: Our session members are too busy to visit the sick. Let's ask some people To help and call them deacons.

Jorge: Why do some Presbyterian churches have deacons while we don't?

Pat: I think we need deacons; what do we need to do to have them?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least four (4) issues raised in the situation. For each issue cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000).
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a Presentation to respond to the session.

**AUGUST 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 5 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**A.**

As pastor, you are attending your first meeting of the congregation's nominating committee. The committee is charged with nominating church officers. The following comments are made:

Beth: Our community and our church are changing, and of course we're aware of more racial ethnic persons in our congregation. By accepting them as members, are we not obligated to ask some to be officers?

Bob: It seems to me we ought to be color-blind and nominate people whose gifts match what we need.

Mary: If we did nominate one of the racial ethnic members, shouldn't that person feel obligated to represent the other racial ethnic people and vote accordingly?

Tad: The congregation elected us to this nominating committee, but as I look around the table, we're not really very representative of the congregation.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least one issue raised by each committee member. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, explain to the nominating committee your understanding of the church's commitment to representation and how it should be practiced in the local congregation.

**--OR--**

**AUGUST 2007  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 6 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**B.**

You are a minister member of the presbytery serving in a specialized ministry and have agreed to preach at a church whose pastor has recently left to accept another call. The clerk of session asks you to moderate the annual meeting of the congregation at which officers are to be elected. The meeting is scheduled immediately after the worship service at which you are preaching. The clerk then informs you that the previous pastor always ordained and/or installed newly elected elders and deacons at the close of the same congregational meeting. She wants to know if you will please do that as well.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by these requests. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each of the issues identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the clerk.

**JANUARY 2008**

**EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY  
OPEN BOOK  
MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

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**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

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**JANUARY 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 2 OF 6**

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**JANUARY 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 3 OF 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**G-4.0302     Presbyterian Unity**

The nature of Presbyterian order is such that it shares power and responsibility. The system of governing bodies, whether they have authority over one or many church, sustains such mutual relationships within the structures as to express the unity of the church.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) that is a direct expression of this principle, from each of the following:
  - the *Form of Government* (except chapters 1 – 4),
  - the *Directory for Worship*, and
  - the *Rules of Discipline*,Each citation must provide a different example of how governing bodies share power and responsibility in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article for a congregational newsletter explaining this principle of shared governance.

**JANUARY 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 4 OF 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

The longtime clerk of session died while in office. As pastor, you are moderating a meeting of session one week later. The following comments are made.

Lorene: How do we go about getting a new clerk of session? Pastor, can't you just appoint someone?

Harry: The clerk doesn't do anything but take the minutes. Why can't we just have our church secretary do that?

Vivian: How long does a clerk serve? Do we really have to have one?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify four (4) issues raised in the situation. Cite one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, instruct session regarding the office of clerk of session.

**JANUARY 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 5 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**A.**

You, as pastor, are teaching a class for prospective members. Several participants ask “who runs this church?”

Lewis: In my last church the minister made most of the decisions because he was ordained. Isn't it the same here?

Ilva: What officers are there? Who appoints them?

Rafael: What do officers do, and how long do officers serve?

Maria: I was in a church where all the elders were men over 65 years old.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least five (5) issues raised in the class. Cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article about the leadership of the church for a prospective member information packet.

**--OR--**

**JANUARY 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 6 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**B.**

One weekday morning two members invite you to see a change in the sanctuary. They unveil the old communion table to reveal a newly etched and gilded engraving on the front, visible even from the last pew. The engraving reads: “In loving memory of **Betty B. Worker**, wife, mother, friend and sister in Christ.” Easter lilies have been painted on both sides of the inscription.

“Don’t you think it’s lovely, Pastor? Betty worked so hard and faithfully all these years to make our sanctuary beautiful. She always loved lilies!”

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) problems raised in this situation. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each problem.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, outline a presentation for session on both memorial gifts and sanctuary furnishings.

# CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION

1. Do *not* include your name in this examination.
2. Do *not* include in this examination the name of the congregation or presbytery where you are a member.
3. Do *not* include in this examination the name of the seminary you attend or have attended.
4. Do *not* include in this examination the names of professors with whom you have studied, except in a footnote or bibliographical reference.
5. If you have taken the examinations before, do *not* include any reference to that in this examination.
6. Do *not* use a pencil to write your responses.
7. Clearly identify at the beginning of each of your responses the number of the section and/or required response which you are answering.

***If these instructions are not followed, the examination will be returned ungraded.***

If you type or print your examination, staple your responses to the first few pages of this booklet. Placing page numbers on your responses will assure that the readers see your response(s) as you intended.

**AUGUST 2008  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK**

**MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

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**THREE HOURS**

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**AUGUST 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

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**BEFORE BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.**

**AUGUST 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 3 OF 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**G-4.0104 A Particular Presbyterian Church**

Each particular church of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall be governed by this Constitution. Its officers are ministers of the Word and Sacrament, elders, and deacons. Its government and guidance are the responsibility of the session. *It shall fulfill its responsibilities as the local unit of mission for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.* (Emphasis added)

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that describe how a particular congregation seeks to “*fulfill its responsibilities as the local unit of mission for the service of all people, for the upbuilding of the whole church, and for the glory of God.*”
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a proposal for discussion at a church officer retreat suggesting how the congregation can fulfill its responsibilities as a local unit of mission.

**AUGUST 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 4 OF 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

Dave, a young elder at the church where you are pastor, says, “As I listened to your recent sermon series, ‘The Gifts of the Spirit,’ I felt called to use my gifts to develop a recreational sports program for the community around our church. I want it to be a ministry of our congregation. We have that large space out back that could easily be made into sports fields. Here is a fifteen-page plan that I have prepared as a starting point. I feel God wants me to do this. What are the next steps?”

The two of you agree to meet in one week to discuss the “next steps.”

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify and briefly discuss three (3) significant considerations raised by this situation and cite at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, describe what you will say to Dave about next steps when you meet with him.

**AUGUST 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 5 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**A.**

You are pastor of a church in the center of a growing suburban area. The traffic light at the corner of the church property controls a central intersection and has been under review by local government leaders. You attended a public hearing some time ago but have heard nothing recently about the plans for the intersection.

One day an engineer from the Department of Transportation comes into your office. She explains that improvements are about to be made and asks you to sign a paper agreeing to sell to the local government nearly a thousand square feet of the church front lawn in order to add a turning lane. She indicates that your signature is all that is needed for the project to begin in two weeks.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) issues for the church in this situation. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the engineer, and outline what next steps you would take and with whom you would take them.

**--OR--**

**AUGUST 2008  
CHURCH POLITY EXAMINATION**

**PAGE 6 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY  
(Continued)**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**B.**

During a heated discussion with the chair of the session Personnel Committee, the pastor says, "I guess my ministry at this church is done. It is time for me to leave!" After returning home, the pastor emails the Personnel Committee chair, reiterating his intention to leave. The chair forwards the email to all session members. She also notifies the moderator of the Committee on Ministry (COM) that their pastor has resigned, and she asks how to proceed.

The moderator of COM contacts the pastor, who states that he never intended to resign. He does agree to meet with a representative from COM and the rest of session at a special meeting. As a member of COM, you have been asked to be that representative.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify three (3) issues in the situation. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write the opening statement that you will use to frame the discussion and provide the information needed by all parties for this special meeting.

**JANUARY 2009  
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

**OPEN BOOK**

**MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

This examination is intended to “assess the candidate’s working knowledge of the constitutional structure of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the method by which differences are properly resolved and programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined”

The intent of this examination is to test readiness for ministry, which includes using the *Book of Order* effectively. Candidates will utilize a clean, unmarked, printed copy of the 2007-2009 *Book of Order* of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in responding to the questions. No additional books, notes, outlines or other resources may be used. Questions will be from the *Form of Government*, the *Directory for Worship*, and the *Rules of Discipline*.

**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

The examination consists of three Sections. Sections I and II are required. Section III has two options. Select one option. Each Section is designed to be completed in one hour.

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**JANUARY 2009  
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

**PAGE 2 OF 6**

Be advised that exams written in pencil and illegible papers will be returned ungraded. Also, papers that cannot be understood by the readers because of poor syntax or grammar will be graded accordingly.

The readers, in grading the examination, will use the following criteria to assess readiness for ministry:

- Recognition and knowledge of the polity issues applicable to the question, and ability to cite relevant sections of the *Book of Order*;
- Ability to relate the polity issue to the situation, considering both the letter and the spirit of the constitution;
- Ability to express concern for the individual(s) involved in the situation and for the welfare of the church as a whole;
- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

\*\*\*\*\*

**IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION**

**BEFORE BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.**

**JANUARY 2009  
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

**PAGE 3 OF 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

The Historic Principles of Church Order, in G-1.0301, quote the *Westminster Confession of Faith*: “God alone is Lord of the conscience, and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men<sup>1</sup> which are in anything contrary to his Word, or beside it, in matters of faith or worship.”

The *Form of Government* states in G-6.0108b, “in becoming a(n) ... officer of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds.”

<sup>1</sup> The word “men” in this quotation from the eighteenth century should be understood as applying to all persons.

**REQUIRED RESPONSE:**

Write an essay of describing how a pastor or elder might live with the tension between these two affirmations. Include at least three (3) additional citations from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) that offer guidance in these considerations.

**JANUARY 2009  
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

**PAGE 4 OF 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

A new church school curriculum was approved by session with an 8-1 vote after a protracted and heated discussion. After adjournment, you and a few elders are gathered in the parking lot where the following comments are made:

Elder Alphonse: Pastor, why couldn't we get Elder Bently to change her vote and support the new curriculum proposed by the Christian Education Committee? I don't think we can proceed to change the curriculum without a unanimous action of session. This is too important an issue to implement with a divided vote. I think we should reconsider it at our next meeting.

Elder Daniels: Pastor, isn't there some formal way that elders like Elder Bently can register their opposition to a decision without us having to revisit the entire debate?

Elder Engel: Elder Bently always finds reasons to object to new ideas. I think it is time for us to vote her off the session. Clearly she is not interested in the future of the congregation.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised in the parking lot discussion. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, describe what you would say, and in what setting or circumstance, you would address each of the elders named above, exercising appropriate pastoral sensitivity.

**JANUARY 2009  
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

**PAGE 5 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**A.**

You are the pastor of a Presbyterian church. Late one Thursday afternoon you receive a telephone call from the leader of a neighborhood group of Muslims requesting to use a room in the church the next day for Friday prayers. The meeting space that they have been renting has just been destroyed by a fire. The Muslim leader indicates that the Islamic Society might also be interested in a long-term rental of space in the church building.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least two (2) issues raised by this request. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to the Muslim leader, explaining the reasons for your reply.

**OR**

**JANUARY 2009  
CHURCH POLITY EXAM**

**PAGE 6 OF 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**CHOOSE ONE: A or B**

**B.**

You have been certified ready to be examined for ordination, pending a call. Last Sunday, on the recommendation of its Pastor Nominating Committee, the congregation of a Presbyterian church voted to call you as pastor. You begin to think about what additional steps need to be taken in order for you to become the installed pastor.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) constitutionally required steps between the congregational election of a pastor and hearing the words “you are now a minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this congregation.” (W-4.4006d(1)) Provide one (1) or more citations from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) for each step you have identified.
2. Briefly describe each step identified in your answer in Required Response 1, stating who (including yourself) needs to be involved and the particular role or responsibility of each person or entity.

**AUGUST 2009  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK**

**MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

**GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS**

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**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

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**AUGUST 2009  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 2 of 6**

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- Knowledge of the process by which programs to fulfill the mission of the church
  - are determined; and
- Ability to be coherent in expressing thoughts.

\*\*\*\*\*

**IMPORTANT: READ THE ENTIRE QUESTION**

**BEFORE BEGINNING TO WRITE YOUR ANSWER.**

**AUGUST 2009  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 3 of 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

One of the great themes of the Reformed tradition is

the recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of God to work for the transformation of society by *seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God*. (emphasis added)

(G-2.0500a [4])

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Excluding Chapters G-1 through G-4, cite and explain the significance of at least three (3) references from the *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) that are expressions of “*seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God*.”
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article for a church newsletter about the call for “*seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God*.”

**AUGUST 2009  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 4 of 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

During your first year in a new pastorate, the treasurer for a neighboring PC(U.S.A.) church, who serves on its session, schedules time to meet with you. In your office she says,

While our pastor was away on vacation, I received in my box two credit card account statements that I had never seen before. They both had names of mission projects we support as well as the church's name. When I opened the statements, I telephoned the bank and discovered that the pastor was the only person authorized to sign. I could find no record of the accounts in any session document for the last two years. When I asked our pastor about them, I found her to be defensive, vague, and evasive. I am frustrated and confused about what to do. Can you help me?

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by the scenario. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue identified.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, suggest a course of action for the elder. What action, if any, would you, as the new pastor, take?

**AUGUST 2009  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 5 of 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)**

**A.**

While serving as pastor of Hope Presbyterian Church, you are visited by a woman who says,

Pastor, I have been attending Sunday services for the last few months and have found the worship very meaningful. I would like to know if I can become a member. Is that possible? What would I have to do? Please explain membership to me.

**REQUIRED RESPONSE:**

Citing at least one (1) relevant *Book of Order* passage (e.g., X-0.0000) for each of the following, explain to the woman

- (a) the requirements for membership;
- (b) the responsibilities of membership; and
- (c) the steps to become a member.

**OR**

**AUGUST 2009  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 6 of 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY  
(continued)**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)**

**B.**

You are pastor of The Stained Glass Church in the City, where you have served for two years. One Friday afternoon, you receive a call from the previous pastor of the church asking if the sanctuary will be open that evening for the wedding rehearsal. You are not aware of a wedding scheduled for this weekend. After further inquiry, you are told that he had been asked by a couple who are members of your church to officiate at their wedding. He had agreed.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES:**

1. Identify at least three (3) issues raised by this scenario. Cite and briefly discuss at least one (1) *Book of Order* (e.g., X-0.0000) reference for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, outline the correct procedures that should have been followed by all involved.

**JANUARY 2010  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**OPEN BOOK  
MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS**

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**ESSAY QUESTIONS**

**THREE HOURS**

**OPEN BOOK**

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**JANUARY 2010  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 2 of 6**

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**JANUARY 2010  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 3 of 6**

**SECTION I. CONSTITUTIONAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

One of the Historic Principles of Church Order addresses mutual forbearance. *The Book of Order* states,

we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it the duty both of private Christians and societies to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.

(G-1.0305)

Note: The words “men” and “man’s” throughout this quotation from the eighteenth century should be understood as applying to all persons.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Cite and briefly discuss direct expressions of this principle for individuals or for entities of the church. Use at least one (1) reference (e.g., X-0.0000) from each of the following:
  - Form of Government (except chapters G-1 through G-4)
  - Directory for Worship
  - Rules of Discipline.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, write an article for a congregation’s newsletter explaining this practice of Presbyterian governance.

**JANUARY 2010  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 4 of 6**

**SECTION II. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER FOR THE PARTICULAR CHURCH**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

A fellow Presbyterian minister seeks your advice. She is the chaplain at a pediatric hospital. She tells you one of the patients confided in her that the pastor of a nearby Presbyterian church touched the patient inappropriately during a recent youth group retreat. The patient expressed concern that others may have had a similar experience.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that address the situation above. Include at least one (1) reference from each of the following:
  - Form of Government
  - Directory for Worship
  - Rules of Discipline.
  
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, advise the chaplain.

**JANUARY 2010  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 5 of 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)**

**A.**

At a regular meeting of session, it is reported that the next meeting of presbytery will include proposed actions pertaining to the state's regulation of homeless shelters. Elder Lin suggests that JB be elected as a commissioner to that presbytery meeting. "She is the leading public advocate in the state on this social justice issue and a well-respected member of our church."

Elder Pat, the clerk of session, says,

"JB is not an elder. We have to elect elders as commissioners to presbytery."

Elder Kim adds,

"Maybe we could have her brief us on the details before the meeting and tell commissioners how to vote on the proposals."

Elder Lou comments,

"I don't think anyone who has a well-known public position on such matters should be allowed to participate in a presbytery meeting. Couldn't our tax-exempt status be threatened for practicing politics at presbytery?"

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Identify at least three (3) polity issues expressed in the comments of the elders. Cite and briefly discuss one (1) *Book of Order* reference (e.g., X-0.0000) for each issue.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a presentation for the session that explains how its commissioners to presbytery are chosen, and how they serve.

**OR**

**JANUARY 2010  
EXAMINATION IN CHURCH POLITY**

**Page 6 of 6**

**SECTION III. CONSTITUTIONAL ORDER AS A TOOL FOR MINISTRY  
(continued)**

**ONE HOUR**

**OPEN BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**(CHOOSE ONE: A or B)**

**B.**

As pastor, you are meeting with the nominating committee that is considering Lucy Snowbird to serve as deacon. She is a part-year resident in this community and actively participates in the life of the congregation. She is a member of a Presbyterian church in another state.

The chair of the committee says, "Lots of our members are not as regular in attending as she is, so it's OK for us to nominate her, isn't it?"

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Cite and briefly discuss at least three (3) references (e.g., X-0.0000) from the *Book of Order* that relate to this situation.
2. Informed by your answer in Required Response 1, prepare a presentation to the nominating committee about the rights and privileges of membership in a particular church, and the qualifications for election and service as deacon.