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The Confessional Statement  
and  
The Book of Government  
and Worship

The United Presbyterian Church  
of North America



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The  
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of the  
United Presbyterian Church  
of  
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## PREFACE

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The revision of the Book of Government and Discipline and of the Directory for Worship resulted in the adoption, June 1, 1910, of "The Book of Government and Worship of the United Presbyterian Church of North America." A few sections, omitted in the original draft, were adopted on May 30, 1911. Certain amendments were enacted on June 2, 1925, some of these being required by the new Confessional Statement. The official record of all this constitutional legislation will be found in the Minutes of the General Assembly.

## ATTESTATION

It is hereby certified that this edition of the Book of Government and Worship contains the authoritative text as duly adopted by the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

JOHN MCNAUGHER

Corresponding Secretary of Board of  
Publication and Bible School Work

D. F. MCGILL

Clerk of General Assembly

## CERTIFICATION

It is hereby certified that by constitutional overture sections 129 and 145 were amended in 1936 so as to read as now appears. Further, by constitutional overture section 206 was amended in 1938 so as to read as now appears. Further, the "Form of a Call for a Minister" was amended by constitutional overture in 1939 so as to read as now appears. See Minutes of General Assembly for 1935, 1936, 1938, and 1939.

**JOHN MCNAUGHER**

Corresponding Secretary of Board of  
Publication and Bible School work

**O. H. MILLIGAN**

Clerk of General Assembly

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THE  
CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT  
OF THE  
UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
OF  
NORTH AMERICA

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PREAMBLE

The United Presbyterian Church of North America declares afresh its adherence to the Westminster Confession of Faith and Catechisms, Larger and Shorter, as setting forth the system of doctrine taught in the Scriptures, which are the only infallible and final rule of faith and practice. Along with this it affirms the right and duty of a living Church to restate its faith from time to time so as to display any additional attainments in truth it may have made under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Accordingly, by constitutional action consummated June 2, 1925, it adopted the following Confessional Statement. This Statement contains the substance of the Westminster symbols, together with certain present-day convictions of the United Presbyterian Church. It takes the place of the Testimony of 1858, and wherever it deviates from the Westminster Standards its declarations are to prevail.

Subscription to the foregoing Subordinate Standards is subject to the principle maintained by our fathers, that the forbearance in love which is required by the law of God is to be exercised toward any brethren who may not be able fully to subscribe to the Standards of the Church, while they do not determinedly oppose them, but follow the things which make for peace and things wherewith one may edify another.

# THE CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

In keeping with its creedal declaration of truth, the United Presbyterian Church believes that among the evangelical communions of the world there is "one Lord, one faith, one baptism," and therefore, shunning sectarian temper, it cherishes brotherly love toward all branches of the Church Universal and seeks to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

## ARTICLE I

### OF GOD

We believe that there is one living and true God, a self-existent, personal Spirit, eternal and unchangeable, the creator, upholder, and ruler of the universe, a God of infinite love, mercy, holiness, righteousness, justice, truth, wisdom, and might. We believe that the one God exists as the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and that these three Persons are the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

Gen. 1:1, 26, 27; Gen. 17:1; Exod. 3:14; Exod. 34:6; Deut. 6:4; Deut. 32:4; Deut. 33:27; Neh. 9:6; Psa. 9:8; Psa. 62:11; Psa. 90:2; Psa. 103:19; Psa. 108:4; Psa. 145:8, 9; Isa. 6:3; Isa. 40:26, 28; Isa. 45:21, 22; Isa. 57:15; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 10:10; Jer. 31:3; Mal. 3:6; Matt. 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 4:24; John 5:19, 26; John 10:30, 38; John 17:3, 5; Acts 17:28; Rom. 2:5; Rom. 5:8; Rom. 11:33; 2 Cor. 13:14; Eph. 1:11, 19; Eph. 2:4; Phil. 2:6; 1 Thess. 1:9; 1 Tim. 1:17; Jas. 1:17; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 John 4:8; Rev. 4:11.

## ARTICLE II

### OF DIVINE REVELATION

We believe that the works of nature, the mind and heart of man, and the history of nations are sources of knowledge concerning God and His will, though insufficient for human need; that a clearer revelation came through men who spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit; and that in the fullness of the time God perfectly revealed Himself in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh.

Gen. 1:27; Deut. 32:8; Psa. 19:1-6; Psa. 119:105; Luke 1:70; John 1:1, 10, 14, 18; John 5:39; John 10:30; John 14:9; Acts 3:21; Acts 14:17; Acts 17:26, 27, 30; Rom. 1:18-21; Rom. 2:14, 15; 1 Cor. 1:21; Gal. 1:12; Heb. 1:1-3; 2 Pet. 1:21.

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## ARTICLE III

### OF HOLY SCRIPTURE

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments are the Word of God and are inspired throughout, in language as well as thought; that their writers, though moved by the Holy Spirit, wrought in accordance with the laws of the human mind; that they faithfully record God's gracious revelation of Himself and bear witness of Christ; and that they are an infallible rule of faith and practice and the supreme source of authority in spiritual truth.

Deut. 18:15; Psa. 19:7-11; Psa. 119:160; Isa. 8:20; Isa. 11:1, 2; Matt. 4:4; Luke 16:29; Luke 24:27, 44; John 5:39; John 10:35; John 16:13; Acts 1:16; Acts 3:18; Acts 8:35; Acts 10:43; Rom. 1:1-4; Rom. 3:2; 1 Cor. 2:13; Gal. 3:16; Eph. 3:3-5; 2 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 3:7; 1 Pet. 1:10, 11; 2 Pet. 1:21.

## ARTICLE IV

### OF THE DIVINE PURPOSE

We believe that all things which have come to pass, or are yet to come to pass, lie within the eternal and sovereign purpose of God, either positively or permissively, and are ordained for the manifestation of His glory; yet is God not the author of sin, nor is the free agency of moral beings taken away.

Gen. 45:7, 8; Gen. 50:20; Job. 1:12; Job 2:6; Psa. 33:11; Prov. 16:33; Isa. 46:9-11; Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27, 28; Acts 13:29; Rom. 8:28; Rom. 11:36; Eph. 1:4-6, 11, 12; Eph. 3:10, 11; Phil. 2:12, 13; Jas. 1:13, 14.

## ARTICLE V

### OF CREATION

We believe that God, for His own wise ends, was pleased in the beginning to create by His infinite power the universe of worlds, and that all intelligent beings, human and superhuman, are the product of His will; that through progressive stages He fashioned and ordered this world in which we dwell,

## THE CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

giving life to every creature; and that He created man with a material body and with an immortal spirit made in His own image, with intelligence, feeling, and will, possessed of holiness and happiness, capable of fellowship with Him, free and able to choose between good and evil, and therefore morally responsible.

Gen. 1:1-31; Gen. 2:7, 16, 17; Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; Psa. 33:6; Isa. 40:26; Jer. 27:5; Acts 17:24, 25; 1 Cor. 8:6; Eph. 3:9; Col. 3:10; Heb. 11:3; Heb. 12:9; 1 John 1:3; Rev. 4:11.

### ARTICLE VI

#### OF PROVIDENCE

We believe that God is above all His works and in them all; that He upholds all things by His own supreme will and energy, providing for and preserving His creatures according to the laws of their being; and that He directs and governs all events to the praise of His glory. We believe that, while in relation to the eternal purpose of God, the First Cause, all things are fixed immutably, they are accomplished through the operation of second causes, although, as an extraordinary proof of His presence, God may dispense with natural means and instrumentalities.

Exod. 15:18; Josh. 24:17; Neh. 9:6; Psa. 22:28; Psa. 47:7; Psa. 77:13-15; Psa. 93:1; Psa. 103:19; Psa. 135:6; Psa. 145:9, 15; Isa. 40:26; Ezek. 21:27; Dan. 4:25; Zech. 14:9; Matt. 5:45; Matt. 6:26; Acts 2:23; Acts 17:25, 28; Acts 27:24, 31; Rom. 11:36; Jas. 1:17; 1 Pet. 5:7.

### ARTICLE VII

#### OF ANGELS

We believe that God created a superhuman order of intelligent and immortal beings, mighty in strength, to be the servants of His will; that these are of various ranks; that, having been placed under probation, some kept their original holiness and were confirmed therein, while some fell into sin, and remain fallen; that holy angels are the ministers of God's providence in the interests of His kingdom

## THE CONFESSIO<sup>N</sup>AL STATEMENT

and the human race; and that the apostate angels, led by Satan, their personal head, are seeking to establish a dominion of evil by the temptation and corruption of men.

Gen. 19:1; Psa. 91:11; Psa. 103:20, 21; Matt. 4:3; Matt. 13:41; Matt. 24:31; John 8:44; Acts 7:53; Acts 12:7-11; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 1:21; Eph. 6:11, 12; 1 Tim. 5:21; Heb. 1:14; 1 Pet. 3:22; 2 Pet. 2:4; Jude 6; Rev. 20:1-3.

### ARTICLE VIII

#### OF THE SIN OF MAN

We believe that our first father Adam was created sinless and that there was held out to him a promise of eternal life dependent on perfect obedience for a season, while the penalty of disobedience was to be death, bodily and spiritual; that Adam, as the common ancestor of the race, was constituted the representative head of the human family; that he broke the Divine command through temptation of the devil, by which transgression he fell from his original state of holiness and communion with God and came into bondage to sin; that in consequence all men descending from him by ordinary generation have come under condemnation and are born with a sinful nature which is alienated from God and from which proceed all actual transgressions; and that out of this condition of guilt and depravity none are able to deliver themselves.

Gen. 2:16, 17; Gen. 3:19; Hos. 6:7; John 6:44; John 8:34; Rom. 3:19, 20; Rom. 5:12, 14, 17; Rom. 6:23; 1 Cor. 2:14; 1 Cor. 15:22; 2 Cor. 11:3.

### ARTICLE IX

#### OF SALVATION

We believe that God, Who is rich in mercy, out of His infinite love for the world, entered from all eternity into a covenant of grace with His Only-begotten Son, wherein the Son, standing as the representative of sinners and their mediator with God, freely consented to secure for them a full salvation by taking their humanity and through a life of

## THE CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

obedience and a vicarious death satisfying the Divine law and providing a perfect righteousness for all who believe on Him; that because of this covenant there was held forth from the first, immediately after the Fall, a promise of redemption, in fulfilment of which, when the time of preparation was ended, Christ Jesus came into the world and wrought out a salvation sufficient for all and adapted to all; and that they who accept this salvation, being born anew, are restored to the fellowship of God, given a desire to forsake sin and live unto righteousness, and made heirs of eternal life.

Gen. 3:15; Psa. 40:7, 8; Isa. 42:21; Isa. 53:4-6; Isa. 55:1; Jer. 31:3; John 1:12; John 3:16; John 5:24; John 10:29; John 17:1-26; Acts 5:31; Rom. 3:22; Rom. 5:1-11; Rom. 8:5, 30; Rom. 10:4; Rom. 12:1; 1 Cor. 1:30; Gal. 4:4, 5; Eph. 1:7; Eph. 2:4, 5; Eph. 4:20-24; 1 Tim. 2:5; Tit. 1:2, 3; Heb. 7:22, 25; Heb. 8:6; Heb. 9:12, 15, 28; Heb. 12:24; Heb. 13:20; 1 Pet. 2:24; 1 John 4:10; 1 John 5:11, 12; Rev. 22:17.

### ARTICLE X

#### OF ELECTION

We believe that the Eternal Father, before the foundation of the world, in His own good pleasure gave to His Son a people, an innumerable multitude, chosen in Christ unto salvation, holiness, and service; that all of these who come to years of discretion receive this salvation through faith and repentance; and that all who die in infancy, and all others who are given by the Father to the Son and are beyond the reach of the outward means of grace, are regenerated and saved by Christ through the Holy Spirit, Who works when and where and how He pleases.

Mark 10:14, 15; Luke 18:16; John 6:37, 39; John 17:6, 9; Acts 10:35; Acts 13:48; Acts 17:27; Rom. 8:29, 30; Eph. 1:4; Eph. 2:10; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 1:9; 1 Pet. 1:1, 2; Rev. 5:9; Rev. 7:9.

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## ARTICLE XI

### OF GOD THE FATHER

We believe that within the Godhead the Father is the First Person in the order of office and operation; that in some inconceivable manner, by eternal generation, He is the Father of the Only-begotten Son; that from Him and from the Son the Holy Spirit proceeds; that with the Son and the Holy Spirit He abides in mutual union and fellowship; and that He is the originating source in creation and redemption. We believe that He is the Father of all men as His rational and moral creatures, made after His likeness; that, beyond His universal benevolence, He so loved the world of humanity as to provide a common salvation at the cost of immeasurable self-sacrifice; and that, though men as sinners have lost the privileges of sonship and denied its obligations, they still retain traces of their heavenly Father's image and share in His providential care and bounty. We believe in the fatherhood of God in a pre-eminent sense with reference to those who become His children by regeneration and adoption, and who yield a filial response to His love; that in His parental relationship with these He attains to the satisfaction of His desires for men; that He welcomes them into communion with Himself, makes them partakers of His holiness, and works out for them His gracious purpose in all that pertains to their present and eternal well-being.

Gen. 1:26, 27; Gen. 6:2; Num. 16:22; Psa. 2:7; Isa. 63:16; Mal. 2:10; Matt. 3:17; Matt. 5:45; Matt. 6:9; Matt. 17:5; Luke 3:38; Luke 15:11-32; John 1:14, 18; John 3:16; John 5:20, 26; John 10:29; John 16:28; Acts 2:33; Acts 17:26-29; Rom. 8:11, 14, 15, 28; 1 Cor. 8:6; Gal. 3:26; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 3:14, 15; Heb. 1:2, 3, 5; Heb. 12:9, 10; Jas. 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:3, 11, 17; 2 Pet. 1:4; 1 John 4:7, 9.

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## ARTICLE XII

### OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Eternal Son of God, having a Sonship that is natural and necessary, inhering in the very constitution of the Godhead; that, freely laying aside His Divine glory and majesty, He became man by taking to Himself a true body and soul, yet without sin, being conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary; that thus He is very God and very man, two whole and distinct natures, the Divine and the human, being joined together in His one Person, never to be divided; and that He, the God-man, is the sole mediator between God and men, by Whom alone we must be saved. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was anointed by the Holy Spirit to be our perfect and eternal prophet, priest, and king; that He has revealed the will and counsel of God; that for our redemption He fulfilled all righteousness by His holy obedience and His propitiatory sacrifice for the sin of the world; that, having died upon the cross and been buried, He rose from the dead by a physical resurrection and ascended into heaven, where as their advocate He makes continual intercession for His people; that He abides in believers as an indwelling presence, communicating newness of life and power, and making them sharers of what He has and is; that He sits at the right hand of God as the Head of His Church and Kingdom, with dominion over all created persons and things; and that He will come again in glory for the vanquishing of evil and the restoration of all things.

Matt. 1:20; Matt. 3:15; Matt. 28:16-20; Luke 1:30-35; Luke 3:21, 22; Luke 4:18; John 1:1, 14, 18, 33; John 3:13, 16; John 10:36; John 14:6; John 15:5; John 17:5; John 20:19-29; Acts 1:9-11; Acts 2:33; Acts 3:21; Acts 4:12; Acts 10:38; Rom. 3:24, 25; Rom. 8:3, 17, 32, 34; Rom. 9:5; 1 Cor. 15:3, 4, 25; Gal. 1:12; Gal. 4:4, 5; Eph. 1:20-23; Eph. 3:17; Phil. 2:6-11; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Tim. 1:15; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 1:5, 8, 13; Heb. 2:14; Heb. 7:25, 26; Heb. 12:24; 1 Pet. 1:7, 13; 1 Pet. 3:22; 1 John 1:5; 1 John 2:1, 2; 1 John 4:2; Rev. 1:5, 6.



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## ARTICLE XIII

### OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a real personality, the Third Person within the Divine Being, proceeding from the Father and the Son, and together with the Father and the Son is to be believed in, loved, obeyed, and worshiped; that He shared in the work of creation, and is the Lord and Giver of all life; that He is everywhere present with men, inclining them unto good and restraining them from evil; that He spoke by the prophets and apostles and inspired all writers of the Holy Scriptures to record infallibly the mind and will of God; that He had peculiar relations with the Lord Jesus Christ, enabling the Son of God to assume our nature without being defiled by sin, and guiding, animating, and supporting the Saviour in His mediatorial work; that the dispensation of the gospel is especially committed to Him, in that He accompanies it with His persuasive power and urges its message upon the reason and conscience of men, so that they who refuse its merciful offer are without excuse. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the only efficient agent in the application of redemption, convicting men of sin, enlightening them in the knowledge of spiritual realities, moving them to heed the call of the gospel, uniting them to Christ, and dwelling in them as the source of faith, of power, of holiness, of comfort, and of love; that He abides in the Church as a living Presence, giving efficacy to its ordinances, imparting various gifts and graces to its members, calling and anointing its ministers for their holy service and qualifying all other officers for their special work; and that by Him the Church will be preserved, edified, extended throughout the world, and at last be glorified in the heavenly places with Christ.

Gen. 1:2; 2 Sam. 23:2; Job 26:13; Psa. 139:7; Zech. 4:6; Matt. 1:18-25; Matt. 4:1; Matt. 12:28; Matt. 28:19; Luke 1:35; Luke 4:14; John 14:16, 26; John 15:26; John 16:7-14; Acts 1:2, 8; Acts 2:1-4, 38; Acts 7:51; Acts 8:17; Acts 10:38; Acts 16:7; Rom. 8:9, 11, 13, 16, 26; 1 Cor. 2:4, 10-13; 1 Cor. 12:4; 2 Cor.

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13:14; Gal. 4:6; Gal. 5:16-23, 25; Eph. 2:18; Eph. 3:16; Eph. 4:30; Phil. 1:19; 1 Thess. 1:5; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:21; 1 John 2:20.

## ARTICLE XIV

### OF THE ATONEMENT

We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, by the appointment of the Father, and by His own gracious and voluntary act, gave Himself a ransom for all; that as a substitute for sinful man His death was a propitiatory sacrifice of infinite value, satisfying Divine justice and holiness, and giving free access to God for pardon and restoration; and that this atonement, though made for the sin of the world, becomes efficacious to those only who are led by the Holy Spirit to believe in Christ as their Saviour.

Psa. 40:7,8; Psa. 130:7; Matt. 20:28; John 1:29; John 3:16; John 10:18; Rom. 3:25; Rom. 8:3, 4; 1 Cor. 15:3; Gal. 2:20; Gal. 3:13; 1 Tim. 2:4-6; 1 Tim. 4:10; Heb. 10:5-10, 14, 19; 1 Pet. 1:19; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10.

## ARTICLE XV

### OF THE GOSPEL CALL

We believe that the gospel is a revelation of grace to sinners as such, and that it contains a free and unconditional offer of salvation through Christ to all who hear it, whatever may be their character or condition; that the offer is in itself a proper motive to obedience; and that nothing but a sinful unwillingness prevents its acceptance.

Isa. 55:1; Matt. 9:13; Matt. 11:28; John 3:16; John 6:37; Rom. 1:16, 17; Rom. 10:8-10; Eph. 1:13, 14; Heb. 4:7; Rev. 22:17.

## ARTICLE XVI

### OF REGENERATION

We believe in the necessity of regeneration, whereby we who by nature are spiritually dead are made new creatures, established in union with Christ, released from bondage to sin, and made alive unto God; that this is the immediate act of the Holy Spirit,

## THE CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

Who changes the governing disposition of the soul by a secret and direct operation of His power; and that ordinarily, where years of understanding have been reached, regeneration is wrought in connection with the use of Divine truth as a means.

Ezek. 11:19; John 3:3-6; 1 Cor. 1:30; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 4:5-7; Eph. 2:1, 5; Eph. 5:26; Tit. 3:5, 6; Jas. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23.

### ARTICLE XVII

#### OF SAVING FAITH

We believe that saving faith is the gift of God; that in it there is not merely an assent to the truth that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Saviour of sinners, but also a cordial acceptance and appropriation of Him, and a fixed reliance upon Him, as our Saviour; that this faith, which involves the conviction of the mind, the trust of the heart, and the obedience of the will, rests solely upon the free and unlimited offer of Christ made in the gospel to sinners of mankind; and that such faith is the necessary and all-sufficient condition and channel for the communication of every spiritual gift and the progressive realization of salvation.

Mark 1:15; John 1:12; John 3:16; John 20:27, 28; Acts 10:43; Acts 15:9; Rom. 10:17; Rom. 13:14; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 5:6; Eph. 2:8; Col. 2:6; 2 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 3:15; Heb. 11:6; Jas. 2:14-26; 1 Pet. 1:21; 1 John 5:4, 10.

### ARTICLE XVIII

#### OF REPENTANCE

We believe that saving faith issues in repentance, which is essentially a turning away from sin unto God, accompanied not only with sorrow over sin, but with hatred of sin and with an earnest desire and sincere purpose to obey God's righteous law; that, while repentance is produced in the believing sinner by the Holy Spirit, it springs from a sense of sin as involving guilt and defilement and from an apprehension of God's mercy in Christ; that it is not to be rested in as any satisfaction for sin, or any

## THE CONFESSIONAL STATEMENT

ground of the pardon thereof, and yet it is of such necessity that none are saved without it; and that it is evidenced by humble confession of sin before God and by reparation for wrongs done to men.

Isa. 6:5; Matt. 3:2, 8; Luke 3:3, 8; Luke 5:32; Luke 13:5; Luke 15:18; Luke 24:47; John 16:8; Acts 2:38; Acts 15:9; Acts 20:21; Acts 26:20; Rom. 2:4; Rom. 7:24; 2 Cor. 7:10, 11; 1 Thess. 1:9; 2 Pet. 3:9.

### ARTICLE XIX OF JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is a judicial act of God by which in His free grace He places sinners in a new relation to Himself and His law, so that henceforth they are forgiven and accepted as righteous in His sight; that the procuring cause or ground of this is not anything wrought in them, or done by them, but only the perfect righteousness of Christ, embracing all that He did in the way of obedience and all that He suffered in their stead while on earth, a righteousness imputed to them, and received by faith alone; and that the evidence of justification is holy living.

Isa. 53:11; Acts 13:39; Rom. 3:22-26; Rom. 4:25; Rom. 5:1, 9, 16, 18; Rom. 6:22; Rom. 8:1, 30, 33; 1 Cor. 6:11; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:24; Eph. 1:7; Phil. 3:9; Tit. 3:7; Jas. 2:18.

### ARTICLE XX OF ADOPTION

We believe that adoption is an act of the free grace of God whereby those that are justified are received into the number of His saved children, have His Name put upon them, have the Spirit of His Son given them, are the objects of His fatherly care and discipline, are admitted to the liberties and privileges of the family of God, and are made heirs of all the promises and fellow-heirs with Christ in glory.

John 1:12; Rom. 8:15-17, 23; 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 3:26; Gal. 4:4-6; Eph. 1:5; Tit. 3:7; Heb. 12:7, 8; 1 John 3:1; Rev. 3:12.

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## ARTICLE XXI

### OF SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the carrying on to completion of the great change effected in regeneration, being a progressive deliverance from the dominion and defilement of sin and a corresponding growth in holy character; that it is wrought by the power of the indwelling Spirit, whereby union with Christ is maintained and holy dispositions are fostered; that in sanctification believers are fellow-workers with the Holy Spirit, being called to faith and repentance, to true obedience in motive and act, to dedication of themselves to the will of God, and to a diligent use of the outward means of grace; and that, while, because of defective faith and human frailty, perfection never can be reached in the present life, it is nevertheless the duty of believers to aim at entire conformity to the will of God, to which, with advancing experience and fuller appropriation of Christ, they may increasingly approach.

Psa. 19:12, 13; Ezek. 36:25-27; Matt. 5:48; John 17:17; Acts 15:9; Acts 20:32; Rom. 6:1-6, 12, 14; Rom. 7:18, 23; Rom. 8:13; Rom. 13:14; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Cor. 6:11; 2 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 7:1; Gal. 2:20; Gal. 5:16, 17, 24; Eph. 1:4; Eph. 3:16-19; Eph. 4:11, 12, 15, 16, 23, 24; Eph. 5:26; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 2:12, 13; Phil. 3:12-14; Phil. 4:13; Col. 1:10, 11; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:21; Heb. 12:1, 14; 1 Pet. 1:2; 1 Pet. 2:11; 2 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 1:5-10; 1 John 3:6, 9; 1 John 5:4.

## ARTICLE XXII

### OF UNION WITH CHRIST

We believe that all who receive Christ by saving faith are made one with Him in a mystical union through the Holy Spirit; that thereby they become vitally related to Him as the Sin-bearer and the Life-giver, insuring their acceptance with God, their renewal of nature, and their growth in holiness and fruitfulness; and that believers thus joined to Christ as their Head, and nourished by His life communicated to them, are bound together in one spiritual organism, which is called the Body of Christ.

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John 14:19; John 15:1-5; John 17:21-23; Rom. 6:3-5; Rom. 8:1; 1 Cor. 1:30; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 27; 2 Cor. 4:10, 11; 3 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 1:23; Eph. 5:30; Col. 2:10, 19.

### ARTICLE XXIII

#### OF THE SECURITY OF BELIEVERS

We believe that, because of the original purpose, the unchanging love, and the constant operation of God, all who are brought into vital union with Christ, and are members of His mystical body, abide permanently in a state of grace and finally are made perfect in glory; that, while such fall into sin, and come under God's fatherly displeasure, until they humble themselves and make confession, they never become utterly apostate; and that this continuance on the part of believers is accomplished by the Holy Spirit in harmony with their rational nature, the warnings, cautions, and exhortations of Scripture addressed to them being used to foster self-examination, watching, prayer, and the faithful observance of all sacred ordinances.

Psa. 51:1-17; Psa. 73:23; Jer. 31:3; Jer. 32:40; Matt. 24:24; Matt. 26:69-74; Luke 22:31, 32; John 8:31; John 10:28, 29; John 17:2, 3, 11, 24; Rom. 8:31-39; 1 Cor. 1:8, 9; 1 Cor. 9:27; Eph. 4:30; Phil. 1:6; 2 Thess. 3:3; 2 Tim. 2:19; Heb. 3:12; Heb. 4:1, 7; Heb. 6:4-6, 9, 10; Heb. 7:25; Heb. 10:10, 14; Heb. 13:20, 21; 1 Pet. 1:5, 8, 9; 2 Pet. 1:10; 1 John 2:17, 19, 27; 1 John 3:9; Jude 20, 21, 24.

### ARTICLE XXIV

#### OF ASSURANCE

We believe that from the first the believer has a persuasion, proportioned to the strength of his faith, that he is saved, this initial confidence resting on the promise and power and faithfulness of God; that, in addition, there is the assurance of sense or feeling, to which he attains through his conscious possession of the graces of the children of God and through the inner witness of the Holy Spirit; and that it is the privilege and duty of every believer to give diligence to attain this conscious assurance of salvation, whereby he may live in joy and peace, may be moved

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the more by love and thanksgiving to God, and may be led to a fuller obedience and service.

Psa. 23:1-6; Psa. 73:23-26; Rom. 5:2, 5; Rom. 8:16, 38, 39; Rom. 15:13; 2 Cor. 1:21, 22; Eph. 1:13, 14; Eph. 4:30; Col. 2:2; 2 Tim. 1:12; Tit. 2:11-14; Heb. 6:11, 17-19; Heb. 10:22; 1 Pet. 1:3; 2 Pet. 1:4, 10, 11; 1 John 2:3; 1 John 3:2, 3, 14, 19, 21, 24; 1 John 4:13, 16; 1 John 5:13.

### ARTICLE XXV

#### OF THE LAW OF GOD

We believe that the moral law of God summarized in the Ten Commandments, proclaimed by the prophets, and unfolded in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ, is of perpetual obligation; that it demands not only right acts and words, but also right dispositions and states of mind; that it is of use to all men in setting before them the inflexibly holy will of God, in discovering to them sin in its true light, and in preparing the way for the gospel of grace; and that although believers, because of their justification, are not subject to it as a condition of salvation, they are required to obey it as a rule of action and standard of character.

Psa. 19:7, 8, 11; Psa. 119:4; Jer. 31:33; Matt. 5:17-19, 21-48; Matt. 6:1-34; Matt. 22:37-40; Act 13:39; Rom. 3:20, 31; Rom. 6:14; Rom. 7:4, 6, 7, 9, 12, 14, 22, 25; Rom. 8:4; Rom. 10:4; Rom. 13:8; 1 Cor. 7:19; 2 Cor. 9:20, 21; Gal. 2:16; Gal. 3:13, 21, 24; Gal. 4:4, 5; Gal. 5:14; Eph. 6:2; 1 Tim. 1:8; Heb. 8:10; Jas. 1:25; Jas. 2:8, 9, 12; 1 John 2:3, 4, 7, 8.

### ARTICLE XXVI

#### OF THE STUDY OF GOD'S WORD

We believe that Holy Scripture, as God's written Word, is adapted to the spiritual needs of man, containing whatever doctrine is necessary to salvation and all things that pertain to life and godliness; that, therefore, it deserves and demands our reverent attention and our deepest thought; and that the reading and study of the Word, when entered upon with a mind illumined by the Holy Spirit and with prayerful reflection, will always prove an efficacious means of grace, transforming life and character.

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Psa. 1:1-3; Psa. 19:7; Psa. 119:130; Matt. 21:42; Matt. 22:29; Luke 24:27, 32; John 5:39; Acts 8:30-35; Acts 17:11; Rom. 15:4; Eph. 6:17, 18; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:2; Jas. 1:21, 25.

## ARTICLE XXVII

### OF PRAYER

We believe that prayer is an indispensable condition of fellowship with God and a vital requirement in spiritual growth and the obtaining of promised mercies; that it must be offered in the name of Christ, in reliance on His merits, and by the help of the Holy Spirit; that it includes adoration, thanksgiving, aspiration, the outpouring of the soul in converse with God, confession of sin and shortcomings, supplication for pardon and all blessings promised in the gospel, and petition for such temporal benefits as may be agreeable to the Divine will; that remembrance of others at the throne of grace is an obligation without which the life of prayer cannot be fully realized; and that God has given the intercession of His children an essential place in bringing about the salvation of men and in promoting the advance of His Kingdom and the doing of His will on earth.

Neh. 1:4-11; Psa. 17:1; Psa. 32:5; Psa. 62:8; Psa. 122:6; Ezek. 36:37; Dan. 9:4; Matt. 5:44; Matt. 6:9-15; Matt. 7:7, 8, 11; Mark 11:24; Luke 11:2-4; Luke 18:9-14; John 14:13, 14; John 16:23, 24; Acts 9:11; Rom. 8:26, 27; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 1:3, 15-23; Eph. 3:14-19; Eph. 6:18, 19; Phil. 1:9; Phil. 4:6; Col. 4:3, 12; 1 Thess. 5:25; 1 Tim. 2:1-4, 8; Heb. 4:16; Jas. 1:5-8; Jas. 5:16; 1 Pet. 2:5; 1 John 1:9; 1 John 5:14, 15; Jude 20, 21, 25.

## ARTICLE XXVIII

### OF PRAISE

We believe that God is worthy of all praise and adoration because of His glorious perfections as unfolded in creation, providence, and redemption; that praise as a definite ordinance of worship is expressed in words joined to music; and that in this ordinance the Psalms of the Bible, by reason of their Divine inspiration, their excellence, and their evident design, are accredited for permanent use.



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2 Sam. 23 :1, 2 ; 1 Chron. 16 :7-9, 23 ; 2 Chron. 29 :30 ; Psa. 47 :6, 7 ; Psa. 95 :1, 2 ; Psa. 105 :2 ; Psa. 137 :3 ; Psa. 147 :1 ; Psa. 150 :1, 2 ; Matt. 26 :30 ; Luke 20 :42 ; Luke 24 :44 ; Acts 1 :20 ; Rom. 15 :9 ; Eph. 1 :6, 12, 14 ; Eph. 5 :19 ; Col. 3 :16 ; 2 Tim. 3 :16 ; Rev. 4 :11 ; Rev. 5 :9-14 ; Rev. 14 :3 ; Rev. 15 :3, 4.

### ARTICLE XXIX

#### OF SABBATH OBSERVANCE

We believe that the holy Sabbath, originally a memorial of creation, is an institution which has its foundation in the revealed will of God, which was established for the physical, moral, and spiritual well-being of man, and which was designed for all ages and nations; that its transfer from the last day of the week to the first, commemorating the resurrection of the Redeemer of mankind, was effected by Christ's own example and by Apostolic sanction; that, in the spirit of gratitude for the blessings it conveys, the Sabbath, or the Lord's Day, should be hallowed by refraining from worldly employments and recreations and, aside from the duties of necessity and mercy, by devoting the day to public and private worship, spiritual culture, and Christian activities; and that the civil Sabbath of legally protected rest, because of its great and manifold benefits to human society, should be maintained and defended against desecration.

Gen. 2 :2, 3 ; Exod. 20 :8-11 ; Exod. 31 :13 ; Lev. 19 :30 ; Neh. 13 :15-22 ; Isa. 56 :2-7 ; Isa. 58 :13, 14 ; Isa. 66 :23 ; Jer. 17 :24-27 ; Matt. 5 :17, 18 ; Matt. 12 :2-12 ; Mark 2 :27, 28 ; Luke 4 :16 ; John 20 :19, 26 ; Acts 2 :1 ; Acts 20 :7 ; 1 Cor. 16 :2 ; Rev. 1 :10.

### ARTICLE XXX

#### OF THE SACRAMENTS

We believe that the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper were instituted by Christ and are of perpetual validity and obligation; that they are signs and seals of the new covenant and channels of a real communication of grace to those receiving them in faith; and that through their observance the Church of Christ confesses her Lord and is visibly distinguished from the world.

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We believe that baptism with water into the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is the sacrament that recognizes membership within the Church, in which are set forth union to Christ, regeneration and cleansing by the Spirit, the remission of sins, and our engagement to be the Lord's; that it is rightly administered by the pouring or sprinkling of water upon the person, but the mode is not essential; that not only are adult believers to be baptized, but also the children of believers before reaching the age of accountability, on the faith of the parents, who appropriate for their children the benefits which the sacrament offers and promise to rear them in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the sacrament of communion with Christ, in which bread and wine are given and received in thankful remembrance of Him and of His sacrifice on the cross, and they who in faith receive the same partake of the body and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, after a spiritual manner, to their building up in grace; that it should never be engaged in without previous self-examination as to a sincere desire to be cleansed from all sin, a true and living faith in the Lord Christ, and brotherly love toward all; and that all are to be invited to the Lord's Supper who have confessed their faith in Christ and are leading a Christian life.

Gen. 17:7; Isa. 52:15; Ezek. 36:25; Matt. 26:26-30; Matt. 28:19; Mark 10:13-16; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 18:15-17; Luke 22:17-20; John 3:5; John 6:48-58; Acts 2:38-41; Acts 8:12, 37, 38; Acts 16:15, 33; Acts 22:16; Rom. 4:11; Rom. 6:3, 4; 1 Cor. 7:14; 1 Cor. 10:1-4, 16, 17, 21; 1 Cor. 11:23-34; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Eph. 5:25, 26; Col. 2:12; Tit. 3:5; 1 Pet. 3:21.

### ARTICLE XXXI

#### OF LAWFUL OATHS AND VOWS

We believe that an oath is an act of religious worship in which we solemnly call upon the only true and living God to witness the truth of what we affirm or our voluntary assumption of an obligation to do something in the future, with an implied

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imprecation of God's judgment if we lie or prove false to our engagements; that the proper circumstances under which an oath may be taken are those in which serious and perfectly lawful interests are involved, in which an appeal to God is necessary to secure confidence and end strife, and where the oath is imposed by the duly constituted authority of Church or State.

We believe that a vow is a promise formally made to God, in way of thankfulness for mercy received, or for the obtaining of what we desire; that it is of like sacred nature with an oath, because it is God to Whom the promise is made; that a vow cannot bind to do that which is unlawful or impossible, nor where its continued observance is inconsistent with our spiritual interests; and that to vow on a trifling occasion, or, having rightly vowed, to fail in performance, is to be guilty of profanity.

Gen. 24:2-9; Gen. 28:20-22; Exod. 20:7; Lev. 19:12; Deut. 6:13; Deut. 10:20; Deut. 23:21; Judg. 11:30, 36, 39; 2 Chron. 6:22, 23; Neh. 5:12; Neh. 13:25; Psa. 15:4; Psa. 61:8; Psa. 66:13, 14; Psa. 76:11; Psa. 116:14; Prov. 20:25; Eccl. 5:5; Isa. 65:16; Jer. 4:2; Matt. 5:33-37; Mark 6:23, 26; Acts 18:18; Acts 23:12-14; 2 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 1:20; Heb. 6:16; Jas. 5:12.

### ARTICLE XXXII

#### OF THE CHURCH

We believe that there is one holy Catholic or Universal Church, consisting of the whole number of those of every age and nation who have been chosen of God unto salvation and redeemed by the Lord Jesus, and who, being united by the Holy Spirit to Christ their living Head, are one spiritual body in Him; that it is the will of Christ that His Church on earth should exist as a visible brotherhood, composed of all those who profess faith in Him and obedience to His laws, together with their children, organized for the confession of His Name, the public worship of God, the preaching and teaching of the Word, the administration of the sacraments, the nurture and fellowship of the children of God, the

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propagation of the gospel, and the promotion of social righteousness; and that all particular Churches or ecclesiastical denominations throughout the world which hold the fundamental truths of evangelical religion and own allegiance to Jesus Christ as Divine Lord and Saviour are to be regarded as within the one visible Church.

Psa. 2:8; Psa. 22:27-31; Matt. 16:18; Matt. 18:17; Matt. 28:18-20; John 10:16; John 17:21, 24; John 21:15-17; Acts 8:1; Acts 13:1; Acts 20:28; Rom. 15:9-12; Rom. 16:1, 3-5, 16, 23; 1 Cor. 1:2; 1 Cor. 4:17; 1 Cor. 10:32; 1 Cor. 12:12, 13, 28; 1 Cor. 15:9; 1 Cor. 16:19; Gal. 1:2, 13, 22; Eph. 1:10, 22, 23; Eph. 2:19, 20; Eph. 3:10; Eph. 4:11-13; Eph. 5:23-32; Phil. 3:6; Phil. 4:15; Col. 1:18, 24; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23; Rev. 7:9, 10; Rev. 22:16.

### ARTICLE XXXIII

#### OF CHURCH ORDER

We believe that the supreme and only Head of the Church is the Lord Jesus Christ, under Whose authority and according to Whose will the worship, teaching, discipline, and government of the Church are to be administered; that through those who serve lawfully in the offices of the Church Christ exercises mediately His own power and enforces His own laws; and that the Presbyterian form of church polity is in accordance with the Scriptures.

Matt. 16:19; Matt. 18:17, 18; Matt. 28:18-20; John 20:23; Acts 14:23; Acts 15:2-29; Acts 16:4; Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Cor. 12:28; 2 Cor. 2:6-8; Eph. 4:11, 12; Eph. 5:24; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Tim. 3:1-13; 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Tim. 5:17; Tit. 1:5-9; Heb. 13:7, 17, 24; 1 Pet. 5:1.

### ARTICLE XXXIV

#### OF THE MINISTRY

We believe that Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church has appointed therein the official ministry of reconciliation; that He calls men to this ministry through the working of the Holy Spirit in their hearts and by the orderings of providence; and that those thus called are to be set apart by ordination, whereby they are solemnly invested with the authority, powers, and duties of their sacred office.

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Matt. 9:38; Acts 13:2, 3; 1 Cor. 3:5; 1 Cor. 4:1; 1 Cor. 12:28; 2 Cor. 5:18; Eph. 4:11, 12; Eph. 6:21; Phil. 1:1; Col. 1:7; Col. 4:7, 17; 1 Thess. 3:2; 1 Tim. 4:14; 1 Tim. 5:22; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2 Tim. 4:5; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4.

### ARTICLE XXXV

#### OF CHURCH FELLOWSHIP

We believe that all who have accepted Christ as their Redeemer should unite themselves with some branch of the visible Church, in order to share in the privileges and responsibilities of its members and confess Christ before men; that under Christ they should yield the Church their supreme loyalty, honoring its ordinances and seeking its welfare in season and out of season; and that with this they should forsake all associations, whether secret or open, that they find prejudicial to their Church allegiance and a hindrance to the fulfilment of Christian duties.

Matt. 10:32; Acts 2:41, 42, 47; Acts 11:26; 1 Cor. 10:32; 1 Cor. 12:13; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 6:14-18; Eph. 4:11-13; Eph. 5:11; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 10:25; 1 John 2:15, 16, 19; Rev. 18:4.

### ARTICLE XXXVI

#### OF THE FAMILY

We believe that the family is the unit of society and is fundamental to human welfare; that marriage is ordained of God, and is therefore an institution which involves a religious as well as a civil contract; that the law of marriage, requiring monogamy, governing the prohibited degrees of consanguinity or affinity, and establishing the permanence of the tie, is laid down in the Word of God, upon which the enactments of the State may not transgress rightfully; that the true Christian home is built on the Divine ideal of marriage, is sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and is observant of family religion; and that it is the duty of parents to dedicate their children to God and give them a moral and spiritual training for the making of character. We believe that, since the standard of marriage is a lifelong union of one

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man and one woman, its dissolution is not to be lightly regarded; that, where warrantable, this can be effected only by competent civil authority; and that the remarriage of divorced persons is permissible, while both parties are living, only when the divorce has been obtained on the ground of adultery, and then for the innocent party alone.

Gen. 1:27, 28; Gen. 2:24; Gen. 5:1, 2; Lev. 18:6-30; Deut. 6:6, 7; 1 Sam. 1:11, 28; Jer. 1:5; Amos 2:7; Matt. 5:31, 32; Matt. 19:3-9; Mark 6:18; Mark 10:2-12; Rom. 7:2, 3; 1 Cor. 5:1; 1 Cor. 7:10-16, 39; Gal. 1:15; Eph. 5:22-33; Eph. 6:1-4; Col. 3:18-21; 2 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 13:4.

### ARTICLE XXXVII

#### OF CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is an ordinance of God, instituted for His glory and the welfare of society, and that the sovereign authority of the Lord Jesus Christ extends over this province of human life, so that States and their rulers are responsible to Him and are bound to render Him obedience and to seek the furtherance of His Kingdom upon earth, not, however, in any way constraining religious belief, imposing religious disabilities, or invading the rights of conscience; that it is binding on all to yield willing submission to constituted authorities, except where this very clearly conflicts with the still higher duty of obedience to God; and that the due fulfilment of our duties as citizens includes a loyal consent to taxation for the necessities of the State and the lesser civic communities, the giving of aid to all worthy public causes, and faithful participation in the government of the country.

Psa. 2:10-12; Psa. 22:28; Psa. 47:7-9; Psa. 82:1, 2; Prov. 8:15, 16; Matt. 22:21; Acts 4:19; Rom. 13:1-7; Eph. 1:20-22; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2; Tit. 3:1; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14, 17; Rev. 17:14; Rev. 19:16.

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## ARTICLE XXXVIII

### OF THE SOCIAL ORDER

We believe that the Divine plan for mankind includes a social order in harmony with the ideals and spirit of Jesus Christ; that the triumph of the Kingdom of God in its present aspect would mean not only its establishment in the hearts of men individually, but a world in which righteousness and brotherhood should prevail; and that a primary duty of the Church is to give positive witness that the Christian principles of justice and love should have full expression in all relationships whatsoever—personal, industrial, business, civic, national, and international.

Exod. 20:1-17; Micah 6:8; Mark 12:30, 31; Acts 17:26; Rom. 13:1-10; Eph. 6:5-9; Phil. 1:27; Col. 3:22-4:1; James 5:1-6.

## ARTICLE XXXIX

### OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE

We believe that the souls of the righteous dead are immediately made perfect in holiness, and during the interval until the resurrection, though separated from the body, continue conscious, active, and at peace in the presence and fellowship of Christ, Who, after His ascension, sat down on the right hand of God; that in the abode of woe the souls of the impenitent wicked also continue conscious and active, enduring punishment for their sins; and that this intermediate state is one of incompleteness, the supreme blessedness of the saints and the utter wretchedness of the lost beginning only with their resurrection and the judgment.

Luke 9:28-36; Luke 16:19-31; Luke 23:43; John 8:56; John 14:3; Rom. 8:23; 1 Cor. 15:26; 2 Cor. 5:8-10; Phil. 1:6, 26; 1 Thess. 1:10; Heb. 11:39, 40; Heb. 12:23; 1 Pet. 1:7; 1 Pet. 3:19; 1 John 3:2; Jude 6; Rev. 7:9; Rev. 19:1-5.

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## ARTICLE XL

### OF THE SECOND ADVENT

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, Who at His ascension was received up into heaven, will come again to earth in person, visibly, with power and great glory; that His coming marks the consummation of the Kingdom of God; that the time thereof is reserved in the Divine counsels; and that this blessed hope is to be cherished as an incentive to watchful living and faithful witness-bearing on the part of Christ's followers.

Matt. 24:29-51; Matt. 25:1-13, 31-46; Mark 13:33-37; Luke 9:26; Acts 1:7, 11; Acts 3:21; 1 Thess. 1:10; 1 Thess. 4:16, 17; 1 Thess. 5:1-11; Heb. 9:28; 1 Pet. 5:4; 2 Pet. 3:8-13; Rev. 1:7.

## ARTICLE XLI

### OF THE RESURRECTION

We believe that through the power of Almighty God there will be a bodily resurrection of all the dead, both of the just and of the unjust; that to the just it will be a resurrection unto life and to the unjust a resurrection unto condemnation; and that the mortal bodies of those who are fallen asleep in Jesus, as well as of the faithful who are alive at His coming, will be fashioned anew and conformed to the body of His glory.

Job 19:26; Dan. 12:2; John 5:25, 28, 29; John 11:23-25; Acts 24:15; Rom. 8:11, 23; 1 Cor. 15:12-58; 2 Cor. 4:14; Phil. 3:11, 21; 1 Thess. 4:15, 16; 2 Tim. 2:18; Heb. 11:35.

## ARTICLE XLII

### OF THE JUDGMENT

We believe that, at the resurrection, He Who alone can read the heart will judge the world in righteousness by Jesus Christ; that the wicked, being condemned for their inexcusable sin and depravity, will go away into eternal punishment; and that the righteous, although made manifest before the judgment-seat of Christ, will be acquitted and



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eternally accepted, and of God's grace rewarded according to their deeds.

Gen. 18:25; Matt. 10:15; Matt. 12:36; Matt. 25:31-46; Luke 12:47, 48; Luke 16:26; John 5:22, 24, 27-29; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; Acts 24:25; Rom. 2:5-16; Rom. 8:33; Rom. 14:10; 1 Cor. 4:4, 5; 1 Cor. 6:2, 3; 1 Cor. 11:32; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Thess. 1:8, 9; 1 Tim. 5:24; 2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 6:2; Heb. 9:27; Heb. 10:27; Heb. 12:23; Jas. 1:12; 2 Pet. 2:4; 2 Pet. 3:7; 1 John 4:17; Jude 6, 14, 15; Rev. 20:11-15.

### ARTICLE XLIII

#### OF THE LIFE EVERLASTING

We believe in, and with glad and solemn hearts look for, the consummation and bliss of the life everlasting, wherein the people of God, freed from sin and sorrow, shall receive their inheritance of glory in the Kingdom of their Father, and, with capacities and powers exalted and enlarged, shall be made fully blessed in the fellowship of Christ, in the perfected communion of saints, and in the service of God, Whom they shall enjoy forever and ever.

Psa. 16:9-11; Psa. 17:15; Psa. 23:6; Psa. 73:24-26; Matt. 25:21, 23, 34, 46; Luke 23:43; John 3:15, 16; John 14:3; John 17:22-24; Rom. 6:22; Rom. 8:18-25; 1 Cor. 13:12; 2 Cor. 4:17; 2 Cor. 5:8; Phil. 1:23; Col. 3:4; 2 Tim. 4:8; Heb. 9:15; Heb. 12:2-24; Jas. 1:12; Jas. 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:3-5; 1 Pet. 5:1, 10; 2 Pet. 1:11; 1 John 3:2; Rev. 3:4; Rev. 7:13-17; Rev. 14:13; Rev. 21:3, 4; Rev. 22:1-5.

### ARTICLE XLIV

#### OF CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND THE FINAL TRIUMPH

We believe that, as disciples and servants of Christ, we are bound to further the extension of His Kingdom by our prayers, gifts, and personal efforts, to defend the truth, to do good to all men, to maintain the public worship of God, to hallow the Sabbath, to preserve the inviolability of marriage and the sanctity of the family, to uphold the just authority of the State, and to live in all honesty, purity, and charity. We obediently receive the word of Christ bidding His people go into all the world and make disciples of the nations, declaring unto them that God is in Christ reconciling the world unto

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Himself, and that He will have all men to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. We confidently believe in the ultimate and complete triumph of our Saviour King, that by His grace and power all His enemies shall finally be overthrown, and the Kingdom of the world shall become the Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ.

Exod. 20:8; Psa. 2:1-12; Psa. 22:27, 28; Psa. 72:8-17; Matt. 6:10; Matt. 13:31, 32; Matt. 16:18; Matt. 19:3-9; Matt. 24:14; Matt. 28:19, 20; Rom. 7:2, 3; Rom. 13:1-7; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; 2 Cor. 5:19; 2 Cor. 9:7-15; Gal. 6:10; Eph. 4:1, 2; 2 Thess. 1:7-10; 1 Tim. 2:4; Tit. 2:11-14; Heb. 10:25; Heb. 13:4; 1 Pet. 2:13, 14; Jude 3; Rev. 5:12-14; Rev. 11:15; Rev. 19:11-16; Rev. 22:17.

# The Book of Government and Worship

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## PREFACE

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The revision of the Book of Government and Discipline and of the Directory for Worship resulted in the adoption, June 1, 1910, of "The Book of Government and Worship of the United Presbyterian Church of North America." A few sections, omitted in the original draft, were adopted on May 30, 1911. Certain amendments were enacted on June 2, 1925, some of these being required by the new Confessional Statement. The official record of all this constitutional legislation will be found in the Minutes of the General Assembly.

## ATTESTATION

It is hereby certified that this edition of the Book of Government and Worship contains the authoritative text as duly adopted by the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

JOHN MCNAUGHER

Corresponding Secretary of Board of  
Publication and Bible School Work

D. F. MCGILL

Clerk of General Assembly

## CERTIFICATION

It is hereby certified that by constitutional overture sections 129 and 145 were amended in 1936 so as to read as now appears. See Minutes of General Assembly for 1935 and 1936.

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Corresponding Secretary of Board of  
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# PART I

## CHURCH ORGANIZATION

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### CHAPTER I OF THE CHURCH

**1. The Church Invisible.**—The invisible Church, which is catholic, or universal, consists of the whole number of those who have been chosen of God unto salvation and redeemed by the Lord Jesus.

**2. The Church Visible.**—The visible Church is a formal organization which consists of all those throughout the world who profess publicly their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to His laws, together with their children.

**3. Particular Churches.**—According to Scripture example, and by necessity, the visible Church consists of many particular churches or congregations. Each of these is composed of a company of professing Christians, together with their children, voluntarily associated in a given locality for worship, instruction, fellowship, and work, and submitting to a certain form of government.

**4. The Unity of the Visible Church.**—The visible unity of the Christian Church, though obscured, is not destroyed by its division into different bodies or denominations. All of these unions or associations of particular Churches which maintain the essential laws and ordinances of Christ are to be regarded as true branches of the catholic or universal Church.

# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER II

### OF THE CHURCH'S KING AND HEAD

**5. The Kingship of Christ.**—The visible Church, which is one and the same in all ages, owes its organization and maintenance to the Lord Jesus Christ, and is subject to Him as its living Head and its reigning King. It belongs to Him alone to rule and teach the Church, and in employing the ministry of men in such offices He exercises mediately His own authority and enforces His own laws.

**6. The Revelation of His Will.**—Christ, the King and Head of the Church, has given the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as an infallible and authoritative revelation of Himself and His holy will to His people.

**7. His Appointments.**—Christ, as King, has given to His Church its constitution, laws, ordinances, and offices. These are set forth in Scripture, and they are to be administered solely under His authority.

**8. His Abiding Presence Through the Spirit.**—Since the ascension of Jesus Christ He abides in His Church by the Holy Spirit Whom He has sent, Who exerts His saving and governing power through the teaching of the Word of Christ and the administration of His laws and ordinances.

## CHAPTER III

### OF THE ENDS OF THE CHURCH

**9. The Importance of the Church.**—The Church fulfills an essential mission in the economy of grace that Christ is carrying forward, and through it the manifold wisdom of God is made known unto the principalities and powers in the heavenly places.

**10. The Ends of the Church Defined.**—The great ends of the Church are the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of men, the shelter, nurture, and holy fellowship of the children of God, the maintenance of Divine worship, the preservation of the

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truth and appointments of pure religion, the promotion of social righteousness, and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven to the world.

### CHAPTER IV OF CHURCH POWER

**11. The Bestowal of Church Power.**—Christ has clothed His Church and its officers with spiritual authority. This authority vests in the whole body, constituting it a spiritual Kingdom distinct from the civil power.

**12. The Exercise of Power.**—The power which Christ, the ever present King, has given to His Church is exercised in the selection and ordination of officers and the constituting of courts for the administration of His laws and ordinances and the establishment and control of any subordinate agencies designed for the extension of His Kingdom in the world.

**13. The Ministerial Nature of Church Power.**—The power of the Church is only ministerial and declarative. The Holy Scriptures determine all legislation and procedure which are warrantable.

**14. Jurisdiction of the Church.**—The jurisdiction of the Church extends to those only who are within its membership, and is limited to their spiritual interests and duties as the disciples of Christ.

### CHAPTER V OF CHURCH MEMBERS

**15. Requisites to Church Membership.**—All who profess faith in Christ and obedience to His laws and ordinances are members of the visible Church, and are entitled to all its rights and privileges.

**16. The Children of Professed Believers.**—Through the covenant of God with His people the infant children of professed believers are within the Church. By reason of this they are entitled to baptism and pastoral care, and, when a responsible

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

age is reached, they are under peculiar obligations to make a personal profession of their faith in Christ.

**17. Baptized Adults.**—Even though they are adults, and have made no profession of their faith in Christ, baptized persons are entitled to the watchful care and instruction of the Church.

### CHAPTER VI

#### OF THE FORM OF CHURCH GOVERNMENT

**18. Necessity of Government.**—No society can exist, or further the ends of its existence, without some form of government. The Church has always existed under a government of Divine authority.

**19. Presbyterian Church Government.**—Government by elders, or presbyters, is a New Testament ordinance. This form of organization is according to the plan of government developed under the Old Testament and brought to completion in the synagogue system. The first congregations of the New Testament Church were, by apostolic authority, organized after the model of the synagogue, and by the same authority the principle of government by elders was applied to the organization of the Church at large.

**20. Presbyterianism as Distinguished from Episcopacy and Independency.**—The Presbyterian system in distinction from the Episcopalian, or more properly Prelatic, recognizes the teaching and the ruling elders as the only officers of spiritual authority in the Church, and the former of these as of equal rank, and as invested with the highest official powers which are permanent in the Church. In distinction from the Congregational, or Independent, order, Presbyterianism recognizes the organic unity of the Church, the subordination of courts, and the derivation of official authority not from the membership, but from Christ the Divine Head of the Church.

# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER VII

### OF VOCATION TO OFFICE AND OF ORDINATION

**21. What Constitutes a Call.**—A call from God to a certain office is a conviction wrought in the heart of a person by the Holy Spirit, through the Word and providence of God, that he is required by the Divine will to serve the Lord in that position, together with the election thereto of God's people, and the concurring judgment of a lawful court of the Church.

**22. Qualifications for Office.**—Besides possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, it is indispensable that every one admitted to an office shall be sound in the faith, and that his life be according to godliness.

**23. Admission to Office.**—Those who have been lawfully called are to be set apart to their respective offices by the ordination of a court of the Church.

**24. Nature of Ordination.**—Ordination is the official recognition of a Divine call to an office or work in the Church, dedication thereto, and solemn investiture in the name of Christ with its authority, powers, and duties. The formal act of ordination consists in prayer and the laying on of hands, to which there should be added the giving of the right hand of fellowship.

## CHAPTER VIII

### OF THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

**25. Extraordinary Officers.**—Among the various classes of office-bearers mentioned in the New Testament some were extraordinary and have no successors. These were such as the peculiar needs of the apostolic age required—apostles, prophets, and others. Each of these possessed his own supernatural gift, and each had an official calling in correspondence with that gift. When these distinguishing gifts were withdrawn, the offices ceased.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

**26. Ordinary and Permanent Officers.**—The ordinary and permanent Church officers enumerated in the New Testament are ministers of the Word, or teaching elders, ruling elders, and deacons.

### CHAPTER IX

#### OF MINISTERS OF THE WORD

**27. Nature of the Office.**—The ministers of the Word are the highest ordinary officers in the New Testament Church. They are called by different names in Scripture to express the different relations and duties of their office. As they are commissioned to declare the Divine will and in Christ's stead to beseech men to be reconciled to God, they are termed ambassadors. As they make public proclamation of the gospel, they are termed preachers. As they expound the Word and exhort and convince gainsayers, they are termed teachers. As they dispense the manifold grace of God and the ordinances instituted by Christ, they are termed stewards of the mysteries of God. As they serve Christ and His people, they are termed ministers. As they have oversight of souls and of the activities of the Church, they are termed bishops. As they feed the flock of Christ with spiritual food, they are termed pastors. As it is their duty to be grave and prudent, and to govern well in the Church of Christ, they are termed presbyters or elders.

**28. Duties of the Office.**—(1) *Peculiar Duties.* The peculiar duties of the minister of the Word are to make authoritative proclamation of the gospel of Christ, expound the Word of God, administer the sacraments, instruct and lead the people in holy things, bless the people in the name of God, and minister the manifold grace of God to the wants of all men. (2) *Associate Duties.* Together with the ruling elders it is the duty of the ministers of the Word, or teaching elders, to exercise the power of oversight, government, and ordination.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

**29. Qualifications for the Office.**—They who occupy this office should possess such a competency of human learning and be so enlightened by the Spirit of God that they may be capable teachers of Divine truth, so fashioned in character and life by the Spirit that they may stand before the people as fit representatives of the Lord Jesus Christ, and so endowed with wisdom that they may efficiently conduct the affairs of the Kingdom which are committed to their charge.

**30. Special Appointments.**—(1) *The Minister as a Teacher.* A minister of the Word, having suitable gifts, may be called to be a teacher in a theological seminary or other school. In such case it pertains to the duties of his office not only to be an instructor, but to take a pastoral oversight of those under his charge. (2) *The Minister as an Evangelist or Missionary.* A minister of the gospel may be called and commissioned by the proper court of the Church as an evangelist without a pastoral charge or as a missionary to preach the Word and administer the sacraments in remote places beyond the reach of immediate presbyterial oversight, and to organize congregations and ordain officers therein. (3) *Ministers in Other Special Positions.* When a minister is appointed to labor in any other special work, it shall be incumbent on him to make full proof of his ministry by seeking the edification of the Church.

### CHAPTER X OF RULING ELDERS

**31. Authorization of the Office.**—It appears from the New Testament that the organization of a local church required a body of ruling elders, chosen by the people, to be associated with the pastor, or teaching elder, in the government and oversight of the congregation.

**32. Powers of the Office.**—Ruling elders are the second in rank of the ordinary officers of the Church. Their official power is of government and administration alone, and in this they are the equal of min-



## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

isters of the Word. They are eligible to all offices in the courts of the Church.

**33. Duties of the Office.**—It belongs to ruling elders to have an oversight of the spiritual interests of the congregation, to be a help to the pastor by instructing the ignorant, encouraging the weak, reproving and reclaiming the erring, and visiting and comforting the sick, and in the courts to exercise the power of ordination and government.

**34. Qualifications for the Office.**—They who occupy this office should have such correct views of the truth of Christ, such godliness of character, and such soundness of judgment as will fit them for being safe and efficient leaders and governors of the people.

**35. Ministers Eligible to the Office.**—A minister without charge, residing within the bounds of a congregation and worshiping statedly with it, may be elected as a ruling elder. Being installed, he shall perform all the functions of that office, except that he may not be a delegate from the session to a higher court. His ministerial rights and duties in the higher courts shall remain unimpaired.

### CHAPTER XI

#### OF DEACONS

**36.—Authorization of the Office.**—The office of the deacon is set forth in the New Testament as one of perpetual appointment in the Christian Church.

**37. Nature of the Office.**—The office of deacon is one of service, without the power of ordination or government.

**38. Duties of the Office.**—Deacons are helpers to the pastor and the elders of a congregation in the work of the Lord as visitors to the sick, ministers to the poor, succorers to those in trial, and messengers of the gospel in the homes of the people.

**39. Qualifications for the Office.**—Deacons should be possessed of such piety, judgment, sympathy, and tenderness of spirit as will qualify them for

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the ministries of their office. In addition they should be persons of such liberality of spirit in honoring the Lord with their substance that they may be leaders of the people in the right use of the talents which the Lord has placed in their hands.

**40. The Board of Deacons.**—The deacons shall be organized as a board by the election of a president, vice-president, secretary, and, if necessary, a treasurer. The board of deacons is specially charged with the collection and distribution of the offerings of the people for charitable and missionary purposes, under the advice and direction of the session. To the board of deacons may also be committed the management of the temporal affairs of the congregation.

**41. Women Eligible.**—Women may be elected to the office of deacon, but they may not be constituted into an order or separate body.

### CHAPTER XII

#### OF THE COURTS OF THE CHURCH

**42. Names and Authorization.**—The Churches of Christ of the Presbyterian order are governed by various courts in regular gradation. These are the session, the presbytery, the synod, and the General Assembly. The Divine authority for these courts appears from the whole history of the church organization recorded in the New Testament.

**43. Nature and Relations.**—These courts are all alike presbyterial as being composed exclusively of presbyters, and are possessed inherently of the same kind of rights and powers, differing only as the constitution of the Church may prescribe. The session exercises jurisdiction over a single church; the presbytery over what belongs in common to the ministers, sessions, and congregations within a prescribed district; the synod over what belongs in common to a group of presbyteries, and their ministers, sessions, and congregations; and the General Assembly over such matters as concern the whole Church.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

44. **How Constituted.**—Each of these courts, when convened, shall be formally constituted with prayer in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and each particular session shall be opened and closed with prayer.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### OF THE OFFICERS OF CHURCH COURTS

45. **Officers.**—Every court of the Church must have a moderator and a clerk. To these a vice-moderator and a treasurer may be added. In case the moderator is a ruling elder, his alternate, or the vice-moderator, shall be a minister.

46. **Duties of Officers.**—(1) *The Moderator.*—The moderator of a court is its head and presiding officer. It belongs to him to direct the proceedings of the court according to the rules of the Church, perform all the duties usually belonging to the president of a deliberative body, and, with the clerk, sign the minutes when sustained, and all other documents which require to be authenticated. In addition to these powers as the head of a court of the Church, a moderator is empowered to constitute and announce the adjournment of the court in the name of the Head of the Church, and to voice its decisions and execute its judgments in all judicial and other proceedings. In the intervals between the meetings of the court he is the embodiment of its authority, and is authorized to act for it executively in all matters that lie within the scope of its previous acts and decisions. The moderator shall vote with the other members of the court when the vote is taken by ballot or by yeas and nays. In any other case, if the court is equally divided, he shall have the casting vote.

A moderator pro tempore has all the powers and responsibilities of the office.

(2) *The Vice-Moderator.*—In the absence of the moderator the vice-moderator, if there be such, shall perform all the duties of the office.

(3) *The Clerk.*—The clerk of a court shall keep

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an exact minute of its proceedings, which shall stand as the official record when adopted, and shall be signed by him in conjunction with the moderator. He shall keep a roll of the members, preserve all papers belonging to the court, give certified extracts from the minutes when instructed, or upon proper application made, and perform all other duties which may be required by the court.

(4) *The Treasurer.*—The treasurer of a court shall receive and disburse its funds according to the directions of the court, keep a full and accurate account of the same, and make due report thereof.

### CHAPTER XIV OF THE SESSION

**47. The Members.**—The lowest court of the Church is the congregational presbytery, commonly designated the session. It consists of the pastor, or pastors, and the ruling elders of a particular congregation. Where the congregation is without a pastor, or in case of the disability or prolonged absence of the pastor, the court is legitimate when composed of ruling elders alone.

**48. The Moderator.**—The pastor of the congregation is the standing moderator of the session. When there are two pastors, the senior pastor shall be the moderator and the associate pastor the vice-moderator.

When for prudential reasons it may appear advisable that some other minister be invited to preside as moderator, the pastor may, with the concurrence of the session, invite one, belonging to the same presbytery, to preside in that case. The same expedient may be adopted in case of the sickness or absence of the pastor. Where a congregation is without a pastor, the presbytery shall appoint a minister to preside during the vacancy; but in exceptional cases, where such an appointment cannot be made without injurious delay, it is competent for the ruling elders to invite a minister, or choose one of their own number to preside. Where

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judicial cases arise during a vacancy, the moderator shall always be a minister, and shall be a member of the same presbytery to which the congregation belongs.

**49. Powers and Duties.**—The session is charged with the government and spiritual nurture of the congregation, including all baptized persons. It belongs to it to order the election of ruling elders and deacons, to judge of the qualifications of those elected, and, if approved, to ordain and install them in their respective offices; to decide upon the qualifications of applicants for membership in the church, and to certify departing members to other congregations; to watch over the deportment of the members of the congregation; to counsel parents in training up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to administer the ordinances of the Lord's house and judicially enforce His laws governing the lives of His people; to devise and direct ways and means of leading the people to honor the Lord with their substance; to determine the uses to be made of the church edifice or other attached buildings; to appoint a ruling elder from its number to act as a member of the presbytery and of the synod; to exercise control over the Sabbath school and supervise all other organizations and agencies in the congregation; to direct the service of praise and other ordinances of worship, and to attend to all other matters which, in its judgment, pertain to the spiritual welfare of the congregation. For greater efficiency in caring for the religious interests of the people the session should apportion the congregation among its members. Each elder should keep a list of the communicants and adherents assigned to him, and should cultivate special acquaintance with them, visiting, counseling, and encouraging or warning, as may be required.

The session, being in subordination to the higher courts, shall take measures to have all the orders of these courts carried out by the congregation.

**50. How Convened.**—The session should have stated meetings for the transaction of business and

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for prayer and religious conference. It may also be convened by the moderator, when he may judge it necessary. It shall always be convened when request for this is made by two elders. It may meet on its own adjournment and, if there is no pastor, by an agreement among the members. It shall always meet when ordered by the presbytery.

**51. Quorum.**—Two elders, with a minister, or three elders in the absence of a minister, shall constitute a quorum. In a vacancy, where the number of elders in a session does not exceed two, it shall be competent for these to transact business. When from any cause the number of elders is not sufficient to form a quorum, application shall be made to the presbytery for the appointment of elders to act with the session until additional elders shall have been elected and installed.

**52. Records.**—Every session shall keep an exact record of its proceedings and a roll of the members of the congregation in full communion, together with a register of all deaths, removals, or other changes in the membership, of all baptisms, and of all contributions of the congregation. The roll of communicants shall be revised at least once a year, and especially before application is made for a call to a minister. The records shall, at least once a year, be submitted to the presbytery for revision, and annually there shall be made to the presbytery a report of the membership and the changes therein, of baptisms and contributions, and whatever else may be necessary for a full record of the work of the congregation.

### CHAPTER XV

#### OF THE PRESBYTERY

**53. The Members.**—The presbytery is the next court of the Church above the session. It consists of the pastors and all other ministers within a defined district and of a ruling elder from each session. In special cases in connection with the mission work of the Church among diverse races in the

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home field the General Assembly may authorize synods having jurisdiction to organize presbyteries without regard to existing boundaries of other presbyteries, as, in their judgment, may best serve the interests of the Church.

**54. Corresponding Members.**—Ministers in good standing in sister presbyteries or in other evangelical Churches, being present, may be invited to sit with the presbytery, and may take part in the deliberations of the court, but they shall not have the right of voting. In all these cases it is proper for the moderator to introduce these brethren to the presbytery and give them the right hand of fellowship.

**55. The Moderator.**—The presbytery shall elect one of its members as moderator. He shall serve for such time as the presbytery may determine, but ordinarily the term of his office should never be longer than one year.

As the general executive officer of the presbytery, it devolves on him during the intervals between the meetings of the court to carry out its instructions in matters relating to the welfare of the congregations and the promotion of the work of the Church. On the invitation of pastors or sessions he may visit congregations in the interest of harmony and brotherly love, and he may appear as the representative of the presbytery in conference with similar representatives of other presbyteries or Churches. Of all such action he shall make report to the presbytery at its next meeting.

**56. Powers and Duties.**—The presbytery is charged with the government and spiritual oversight of its ministers and of the congregations within its bounds. It belongs to the presbytery to receive and act upon issues coming before it by complaint, review, appeal, or reference; to assume original jurisdiction in cases in which it judges that a session cannot with propriety act; to take knowledge of erroneous teaching; to determine questions of doctrine or order proposed; to admit and have the care of students of theology; to license candi-

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dates for the ministry; to moderate in calls to the pastorate, and sustain or set aside the same; to receive, dismiss, ordain, and release from ordination, install, remove, judge, suspend, and depose ministers of the gospel; to set apart evangelists for their peculiar work; to examine and approve or censure the records of sessions, and, where necessary, direct the acts of sessions by injunction; to remove elders and deacons when in its judgment the interests of religion demand it; to organize, receive, unite, divide, and disorganize congregations; to adopt measures for promoting the religious life of the congregations within its bounds; to visit them for the purpose of inquiring into their state and redressing evils which may have arisen, and in general to do whatever pertains to their welfare; to concert measures for the extension of the Church within its own territory; to promote the general work of the Church at large; to propose to the higher courts by memorial such action or measures as may be for the advantage of the whole Church; to appoint commissioners to the General Assembly; and to deal with matters sent down by the superior courts.

**57. Meetings.**—(1) The presbytery shall meet at stated intervals, and at other times as its business demands. It is the duty of every member to attend the meetings, and absentees may be called to account. No meeting of presbytery should be held during the necessary absence of commissioners to the General Assembly.

(2) If a presbytery has neglected to appoint its next stated meeting, or if no meeting has been held on the day appointed, it shall be the duty of the moderator, or, in his necessary absence, of the clerk, to convene a meeting for the resumption of business by letter addressed to every member on the roll of the presbytery at the time of the last meeting, and dispatched at least ten days before the time fixed for the meeting. If a quorum of members is present on the day named, it shall be competent for them to proceed to business as at a stated



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meeting. If there be no quorum, the court shall adjourn from time to time until a quorum be obtained.

(3) A special meeting of presbytery is a meeting appointed for the transaction of special business. The particular business to be attended to and the time and place of meeting shall be recorded in the minute of the meeting which appointed it. No business shall be transacted at a special meeting except that for which the meeting was appointed.

(4) A called meeting is a meeting called during the interval between one stated meeting and another to consider business demanding immediate attention. Such a meeting shall be called by the moderator, either on his own motion, or upon requisition of three or more members of the court, or by two or more sessions. The meeting shall be called by letter giving ample notice to all members of the court, issued either by the moderator, or by the clerk on the moderator's authority, and the specific business for which it is called shall be stated in the letter. When the presbytery meets it shall first consider the action of the moderator in appointing the meeting, and, if that is approved, proceed to business, entering the letter of convocation in the minutes. No business other than that specified in the letter may be taken up. In the event of the death or disability of the moderator, and until a successor is elected, his rights and duties in connection with the calling of meetings shall devolve upon the clerk.

(5) Special and called meetings may be adjourned, if necessary, to complete the business for which they have been called; but it is not competent to adjourn to a date beyond that of the next stated meeting of the court.

(6) A ruling elder elected as delegate to a stated meeting, or his alternate, shall represent the congregation in all special and called meetings until the next stated meeting.

(7) Stated, special, or called meetings may be

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held at the meeting of synod, with leave of that court, provided that the synod is not sitting at the same time, and that due notice of the meeting has been given in open synod. At these meetings the ruling elders representing the congregations of the presbytery in the synod shall serve as members of the presbytery.

(8) No meeting of presbytery shall be held outside its own territorial bounds, except such as may be held at the synod.

**58. Quorum.**—One-fourth of the ministerial members, provided that number be not less than two, together with at least one ruling elder duly appointed, shall be a quorum competent to proceed to business.

**59. Opening and Closing.**—Inasmuch as the presbytery is a court of the Church, there shall be a devotional service at the opening of every meeting. In connection with this service a sermon should be delivered, if convenient. Each particular session shall be opened and closed with prayer. At the final adjournment the moderator, in addition to prayer, may have an appropriate Psalm sung, and the meeting shall be closed with the benediction.

**60. Records and Reports.**—The presbytery shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings and transmit the same annually to the synod for review. It shall also make a report to synod every year, giving details in reference to students of theology, licensures, ordinations, installations, dissolutions of pastoral relations, the organization, disorganization, union, or division of congregations, and noting whatever other important proceedings may have taken place within its bounds during the year.

## CHAPTER XVI

### OF THE SYNOD

**61. The Members.**—The synod is the next court of the Church above the presbytery. It consists of all the ministers on the rolls of its constituent presbyteries, together with a duly commissioned elder

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from each congregation or pastoral charge within its bounds. If the territory included is large, the General Assembly may authorize a synod of delegates from the constituent presbyteries and determine the ratio in which such delegates shall be chosen.

**62. Corresponding Members.**—Ministers of good standing in other United Presbyterian synods, or of other evangelical Churches, being present, may be invited to the floor of synod as visiting brethren, and may take part in the deliberations, but they shall not vote. In such cases it is proper that the visitors be given the right hand of fellowship by the moderator and be introduced to the synod.

**63. The Moderator.**—At each regular meeting the synod shall elect one of its members moderator, and he shall hold his office until the next regular meeting. In addition to the duties belonging to moderators in general, the moderator of a synod shall call special meetings of the synod, as provided for hereafter. As the general executive officer of the synod during the interval between the regular meetings, he is vested with the power to make such appointments for conference or advisory purposes as emergencies may require, to correspond with the moderators of the presbyteries in matters relating to overtures or instructions from the General Assembly, and to represent the synod and its institutions in the presbyteries. He may also appear as the representative of the synod in conference with like representatives of other synods and other Christian bodies regarding general evangelistic and Christian reform movements. He shall make report of what he has done to the synod at its next regular meeting.

**64. Powers and Duties.**—It belongs to the synod to receive and act upon issues coming before it by complaint, appeal, or reference, its decisions being final in all cases which do not affect the doctrine of the Church, the regularity of proceedings, or the interpretation of law; to review the records of its constituent presbyteries; to receive reports from

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the presbyteries concerning all important changes and proceedings that have taken place; to exercise the power of control over the presbyteries with reference to matters of doctrine and discipline, or the orders of the General Assembly; to organize, disorganize, unite, or divide presbyteries; to appoint ministers to such work, proper to their office, as may fall under its own particular jurisdiction; to have the care, singly or jointly with other synods, of theological seminaries, subject to such supervision of the General Assembly as is hereinafter provided for, and to maintain and control colleges and other literary institutions for general Christian education; to take measures for the promotion of vital piety and the support and enlargement of mission work within its bounds; to propose to the General Assembly any action that may be deemed for the welfare of the whole Church; and, in general, to take such order with respect to the presbyteries, sessions, and congregations under its care as may tend to further the edification, purity, peace, and prosperity of the Church and advance the Kingdom of God in the world.

**65. Stated and Called Meetings.**—The synod, unless otherwise authorized by the General Assembly by a two-thirds vote, shall convene at least once every year, meeting on its own adjournment. In a special emergency it may be convened by the call of the moderator or, in case of his inability to act, by the clerk, on the application of a presbytery. In this case the call shall be made and the business limited as in a called meeting of presbytery.

**66. Quorum.**—One-fourth of the ministers of a synod, if from two or more presbyteries, convened at the time and place appointed, together with at least four commissioned ruling elders, shall be a quorum for the transaction of business. A smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained. In the exceptional case where a synod is constituted a delegated body, its quorum shall be determined by the General Assembly.

**67. Opening and Closing.**—Every meeting of the

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synod shall open with a devotional service. In connection with this, at the opening of every regular meeting of synod there shall be a sermon by the moderator or his alternate, or, in case of the absence or inability of both, by the clerk, who shall constitute the synod and occupy the chair until the permanent moderator is chosen. When the clerk is thus called to act as the presiding officer, he shall, with the consent of synod, designate some member of the court to act temporarily as clerk. Every particular session of the court shall be opened and closed with prayer. The business of the synod having been finished, and a motion for adjournment having prevailed, the meeting shall be closed with prayer, the singing of praise, and the benediction.

**68. Records.**—The synod shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings, and shall submit this annually, attested by the stated clerk, to the General Assembly for review. The minutes of synod in printed form, when duly certified by the clerk, shall be recognized as the official record.

### CHAPTER XVII

#### OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

**69. Its Rank and Designation.**—The General Assembly is the highest court of the Church, being the great presbytery in which the entire Church is represented. It bears the title of "THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA," and constitutes the bond of union and co-operation among all the congregations and courts of the Church.

**70. Its Members and Their Credentials.**—The General Assembly shall consist of a delegation from each presbytery composed of ministers and ruling elders in equal number. Until otherwise ordered by overture, the following proportion shall be observed: Each presbytery which consists of not more than seven ministers shall be entitled to one minister and one ruling elder. Larger presbyteries shall

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be entitled to send one additional minister and ruling elder for each additional seven ministers or major fraction of that number. The number of delegates from a presbytery shall be determined by the number of ministers on the roll at the last stated meeting preceding the date of the General Assembly.

The clerk of each presbytery shall certify to the clerk of the General Assembly the names of the persons chosen as commissioners, and also the names of their alternates. In ordinary cases no one shall be seated as a member of the General Assembly without such certificate.

The granting of a certificate of dismissal to a commissioner either by a presbytery or session shall vacate the appointment, and his alternate shall take his place.

**71. Delegates From Other Bodies.**—Delegates from other evangelical bodies, or from organizations auxiliary to the Church, may be invited to a seat in the General Assembly and given a hearing on behalf of the interests they represent.

**72. The Moderator.**—The General Assembly being the highest court of the Church, the moderator sustains an official relation to the entire body. Besides the performance of such functions as may be assigned him by the General Assembly, it belongs to him to keep himself informed of the whole work of the Church, to correspond, as far as he may deem it advisable, with the boards, agencies, and institutions under the control of the General Assembly and also with the moderators of the synods with reference to the state of religion within the bounds of their respective synods and the measures proper to be taken to promote the cause of Christ, and to fill vacancies that may occur in the committees and commissions appointed by the General Assembly which are not otherwise provided for. He may appear as the representative of the General Assembly in the meetings of presbyteries and synods to encourage and strengthen them in their work. He may also meet with delegates from other bodies in

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conference regarding the promotion of ecclesiastical comity and co-operation in the advancement of the Kingdom of God, and he may appoint delegates to such conferences. He shall report to, and be a member-at-large of the next General Assembly with all the rights and privileges of a commissioner.

**73. Powers and Duties.**—The General Assembly shall have power to receive and decide all appeals, references, and complaints regularly brought before it from the lower courts; to review the records of synods; to determine questions of doctrine and discipline and give formal interpretation of law, which shall stand until reversed by a subsequent General Assembly or by overture; to warn and testify against any error in doctrine or against prevailing immoralities; to transmit overtures to presbyteries and enact regulations founded thereon; to organize, unite, divide, or change the boundaries of synods; to organize presbyteries in remote mission fields; to establish theological seminaries, and regulate those under the control of synods so far as to secure uniformity in the course and term of study; to confirm or veto the election or transfer of professors in all theological seminaries, and to remove for immorality or unsoundness in doctrine, when determined by regular judicial process, any theological professor; to conduct the missionary operations of the Church either by committees or boards duly chosen and organized, and to supervise and instruct the same and recommend to them such measures as may tend to secure the most liberal support and the largest possible dissemination of the gospel; to appoint commissions for the determination of questions of doctrine, the interpretation of law, or the transaction of such other business as it may direct; to correspond with similar courts of other Churches for the purpose of promoting harmony, brotherly love, and co-operation in the cause of religion and morals; and, in general, to adopt measures for the promotion of truth and holiness and to be a bond of union, concord, and mutual confidence among the congregations and courts of the Church. The General Assembly, being

Last sentence of Section 72 amended June 1950 as here appears.

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the supreme judicial, legislative, and administrative court of the Church, may deal with, and dispose of, any matter which may arise, and which is not provided for in the rules of the Church or its forms of procedure.

**74. Meetings.**—The General Assembly shall meet once every year. Each General Assembly shall fix the date and place of the succeeding General Assembly. The General Assembly shall cease to exist as soon as it is dissolved.

**75. Quorum.**—One-third of the delegates duly commissioned, being assembled at the time and place appointed, shall be a quorum for the transaction of business. A smaller number may adjourn from time to time until a quorum is obtained.

**76. Opening and Closing.**—At the time appointed for the meeting of the General Assembly the moderator of the last General Assembly, or his alternate, or, in their absence, the clerk, shall open the meeting with a devotional service and a sermon, constitute the General Assembly, and preside until a new moderator is chosen. When the business is finished, and a vote to dissolve the General Assembly has prevailed, the moderator shall say, "By virtue of the authority to me delegated I do hereby dissolve this General Assembly, and require another General Assembly, chosen in the same manner, to meet at . . . . ., on the . . . . . day of . . . . ., A. D. . . ." After this he shall close the General Assembly by prayer, praise, and the benediction.

**77. Records.**—The records of the proceedings of the General Assembly shall be kept in printed form, and each copy duly certified by the signature of the clerk shall be received as the official record.



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## CHAPTER XVIII

### OF OVERTURES

78. **Change of Standards.**—The standards of the Church may be changed when they fail to express fully and clearly the faith of the Church, or with a view to a greater efficiency in administration.

Any proposal which involves alteration or innovation in doctrine, worship, discipline, or government can become law only by being submitted as an overture to the presbyteries of the Church. A two-thirds vote of the General Assembly shall be necessary to transmit such an overture. Action thereon in each presbytery shall be taken at a time agreed upon at a previous meeting of the presbytery, or determined by the General Assembly. No absent member of the presbytery shall be entitled to vote. The vote shall be taken by the calling of the roll, and only the ayes and nays shall be counted. The vote shall then be carefully recorded and certified by the clerk to the General Assembly. For the information of the General Assembly the whole number of members present at the meeting of presbytery when the vote was taken shall also be reported. When a majority of all votes cast shall be in the affirmative, and at least two-thirds of the presbyteries shall have participated in the voting, the General Assembly shall enact such amendment or regulation, and incorporate the same in the constitutional law of the Church, unless, in the view of two-thirds of the whole enrolled delegation to the General Assembly, peculiar circumstances shall render it inexpedient.

79. **Information.**—To guard against premature legislation the General Assembly may submit to the presbyteries an informal overture on a question or proposed measure, in order to ascertain the sentiment of the Church thereon before proceeding to further action. The vote shall be taken and reported as in a formal overture, or as may be directed by the General Assembly.

Last sentence of Section 78 amended June 1950 as here appears.

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## CHAPTER XIX

### OF COMMISSIONS

**80. Definition.**—A commission is an agency invested with the power of the court appointing it, and authorized to deliberate upon and conclude the business committed to it. Such commissions may be appointed by any court to act in matters to which the full court cannot, without great inconvenience, attend, or in which the ends of government may be attained more judiciously by a smaller selected body than by the full court.

**81. Objects for Which Appointed.** — In general, commissions may be appointed in delicate or difficult matters requiring much deliberation; as courts of conciliation; for the investigation and adjustment of offenses and irregularities; for the taking of testimony in judicial cases; for the trial of cases; and for the adjudication of appeals, complaints, and references.

In addition to the general powers conferred by the foregoing, commissions may be appointed by presbytery for the organization of congregations; as provisional sessions; for the ordination and installation of ministers; for the visitation of congregations; and for special missionary work within presbyterial bounds. Likewise commissions may be appointed by a synod or by the General Assembly for the prosecution of some particular work; for the transaction of some special business; and for carrying into effect the acts and decrees of the court.

**82. Members Constituting a Commission.**—Except for the organization of a congregation, or for a provisional session, a commission of presbytery shall consist of not less than two ministers and an elder; a commission of synod of not less than five ministers and four elders; and a commission of the General Assembly of not less than eight ministers and seven elders. In each case two-thirds shall constitute a quorum.

**83. Appointment of Officers.**—The court appointing a commission shall designate the moderator

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thereof, but the commission shall elect its own clerk.

**84. Duties to be Defined by the Court.**—The court appointing a commission shall designate the time and place of its meeting for organization, define the nature of the business committed to it, and the extent of the power delegated. The clerk of the appointing court shall give the moderator of the commission a copy of the record of such action, with all the papers, if any, relating to the business intrusted to the commission.

**85. Proceedings and Records.**—The proceedings of a commission shall be according to the rules of the court appointing it. It shall submit a full record of its proceedings and findings to the court appointing it, which, if the proceedings have been regular, and the commission has not exceeded its powers, shall be entered upon and become a part of the records of that court.

The finding of a judicial commission of the General Assembly affecting in any way the doctrine, government, or worship of the Church shall be reviewed by the General Assembly.

### CHAPTER XX

#### OF PROVISIONAL SESSIONS

**86. When Appointed.**—If, for any reason, it appears to be inexpedient to complete the organization of a congregation by the election and installation of elders, or if a congregation, by the death, the resignation, or the removal of elders is left without a session, the presbytery shall appoint a minister and two or more ruling elders to constitute a provisional session, to have the care of the congregation until such time as elders may be elected. In like manner a provisional session may be appointed to have charge of a mission until it may be prepared for organization. The presbytery may also appoint a provisional session for a congregation in which, for the time being, delicate and difficult matters may render it inexpedient for the

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session to act. In this case the provisional session may either displace the session of the congregation entirely, or include it, in whole or in part, according to the order of presbytery.

**87. Powers.**—The authority of a provisional session is such as may be defined in its appointment. If there is no such definition, it has the ordinary powers of a session, except that only such of its members as may belong to the congregation or mission have a right to vote in the congregational meetings.

**88. Not Represented in Presbytery.**—The provisional session is not a part of the congregation or mission, and may not be represented in presbytery, except that in case of a partially disorganized congregation, an elder duly installed in it, who is a member of the provisional session, may be admitted as a delegate from a pastoral charge. Otherwise the congregation may appear in presbytery by a commissioner.

**89. Responsibility to Presbytery.**—The provisional session is especially responsible to the presbytery, shall exercise its powers in such manner, and for such time, as the presbytery shall direct, shall from time to time report its proceedings and minutes for review, and, when discharged from its appointment, shall place its records in the hands of the presbytery to be transmitted to the session of the congregation to become a part of its records.

### CHAPTER XXI

#### OF BOARDS OR EXECUTIVE AGENCIES

**90. Necessity.**—The efficient administration of the power of the General Assembly for the enlargement of the Kingdom of God requires the appointment of boards, as executive agencies, vested with the powers of the General Assembly for specific purposes, and responsible to the General Assembly for the prosecution of the missionary, educational, or other work of the Church.

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**91. Powers.**—The General Assembly shall adopt for each board a constitution and regulations defining its sphere of action, and vesting in it the power to devise plans and methods for the prosecution of the work committed to it, to handle all funds given for the maintenance of the same, to transact all business connected therewith, and to meet emergencies as they arise. Unless otherwise ordered for mission fields, a board shall have no judicial or presbyterial power.

**92. Incorporation.**—Inasmuch as the boards have the administration of the funds of the Church, and may be called upon to hold property, it is necessary that they become incorporated, under the liabilities and with the powers defined by their charters and the laws of the state where they are located, but subject always to the authority and instructions of the General Assembly. The articles of incorporation shall not be effective until approved by the General Assembly.

**93. Reports.**—The boards shall present to the General Assembly each year a full report of their work and a statement of their financial condition and needs, together with such recommendations as may be timely.

### CHAPTER XXII

#### OF SUBORDINATE ORGANIZATIONS

**94. The Sabbath School.**—(1) *Under the control of the Session.*—As the session is responsible for the Christian nurture of those under its care, it has control of the Sabbath school. It should appoint the officers and teachers, or exercise a veto power over such appointments made by others. By virtue of his office as moderator of the session the pastor has the supervision of the whole school, and may give such instruction to the officers and teachers as he deems necessary.

(2) *Purpose of the Sabbath School.*—The purpose of the Sabbath school is to supplement the work of parents in bringing the children of the Church to

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Christ through the teaching of His truth, and training them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to furnish advanced Christian training to all the older members and adherents of the Church. It is also a special object of the Sabbath school to extend a knowledge of the Word of God to those, both old and young, who are not connected in any way with the Church. All the officers and teachers, and all literature provided for the scholars, should be selected with these ends in view.

**95. Other Organizations.** — (1) *Their Permitted Range and Design.*—The members of a particular church or churches may associate themselves under regular forms of organization for the conduct of special work for missionary or other benevolent purposes, or for instruction in religion and development in Christian character.

(2) *Their Ecclesiastical Control and Oversight.*—When special organizations of the character above indicated exist in a particular church, they shall be under the control and oversight of the session of said church; when they cover the territory included within a presbytery or synod, they shall be responsible to the judicatory having jurisdiction; and where they cover a territory greater than a synod, they shall be responsible to the General Assembly.

(3) *Names and Powers.*—The names or titles of special organizations may be chosen by themselves, and the organizations shall have power to adopt each its own constitution and elect its own officers, subject always to the powers of review and control vested in the proper judicatories of the Church.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### OF THEOLOGICAL SEMINARIES

**96. Necessity for Schools of Theology.**—Inasmuch as the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed a ministry to preach the gospel, it is incumbent on His Church to establish and maintain schools of

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

theology in which those who are called to the sacred office may be instructed in the Holy Scriptures and qualified to expound the Word of God and preach the gospel.

**97. Their Government.**—(1) *Powers of the Synods.*—It is expedient that the theological seminaries shall be under the control, management, and support of the synods, subject only to the supervisory power of the General Assembly as hereinafter provided. Such control and management shall be exercised through a board of managers or directors elected by, and responsible to, the synods in control, and according to such constitutional regulations as may be adopted by such synods. It belongs to the synods to elect professors, to transfer them from one chair to another, and to suspend or remove from office for adequate cause.

(2) *Powers of the General Assembly.*—It belongs to the General Assembly to authorize the establishment of theological seminaries, to determine the term and course of study, to approve or veto the election of professors, or their transfer from one chair to another, and, if synods fail to act, to remove professors for unsoundness in the faith or improper conduct. If the General Assembly to which the election or transfer of a professor has been reported does not take action thereon, it shall be held as confirmed. No professor may be removed by the General Assembly without regular investigation and trial by the presbytery of which he is a member. In exceptional cases, as in mission fields, the General Assembly may make such provision for the training of ministers as may be found necessary.

**98. Who May be Employed as Professors.**—No person may be chosen as a stated professor in any established chair who is not an ordained minister in the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

**99. Removal of a Professor.**—If a professor shall be reported as chargeable with unsoundness in the faith or improper conduct, or if a synod in control of the Seminary shall make such complaint, the

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presbytery of which he is a member shall make investigation, and, if necessity appears, shall enter judicial process against him. The right of appeal, as in other judicial cases, shall not be impaired. If on the final judgment the accusation is sustained, the chair shall thereupon become vacant, without further action. If the presbytery shall fail to take proper cognizance of reports affecting the standing of a professor, the synod having jurisdiction over that presbytery or, should the synod fail to act, the General Assembly shall issue an injunction for an investigation of the charge.

Pending the judicial process, the board of management shall determine whether or not the accused shall perform the duties of his office. Removal for incompetency or unsuitableness devolves on the board of management, but such action must be approved by a majority of the votes cast in the governing synods at the next regular meeting of these courts.

### CHAPTER XXIV

#### OF TRUSTEES OF A CONGREGATION

**100. Incorporation.**—The Church and the State are separate from, and independent of, each other, but both are ordained of God and are mutually helpful. It is, therefore, proper, and usually desirable, for a congregation to become incorporated under the laws of the State wherein it is located and to elect trustees as its legal representatives in its relation to the civil law.

**101. Powers and Duties.**—The trustees of a congregation being its legal representatives in its civil relations, it belongs to them to conduct all the purely business affairs of the congregation, not including the uses to be made of its building or buildings, together with such other financial affairs as may be committed to them by the session or congregation.



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**102. Trustees not Ecclesiastical Officers.**—The trustees of a congregation are not ecclesiastical officers, and have no spiritual authority.

**103. Trustees Members of the Church.**—Ordinarily the trustees of a congregation shall be members in full communion of the Church, and a majority of them shall always be such.

# PART II

## GENERAL ADMINISTRATION

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### CHAPTER I

#### OF THE ORGANIZATION OF SYNODS

**104. Authorization.**—A new synod may be organized by the General Assembly on the petition, or with the consent, of the synod or synods that may be affected thereby, or on the petition of two or more presbyteries, after they have given notice of their purpose to the synod or synods having jurisdiction. The General Assembly may also on its own motion erect synods in fields wholly, or in part, beyond existing synods. In the formation of a synod regard should be had to the convenience of the members, and ordinarily the territory should include not less than three presbyteries.

**105. Method of Organization.**—The General Assembly shall define the territory of the synod to be organized, determine the time and place of the first meeting, and appoint a minister, together with an alternate, to preside in the organization as moderator. If, at the time appointed, both the principal and his alternate are absent, those present may call one of their own number to the chair to preside. The moderator shall preach a sermon and constitute the synod by prayer. A temporary clerk having been chosen, and the roll of the presbyteries and members having been made out, the moderator shall say,

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“By virtue of the power vested in me by the General Assembly I declare that the Synod of . . . . . has now been fully organized under the jurisdiction of the United Presbyterian Church of North America with all the powers of a synodical court of the Church of Christ, and is now prepared for the transaction of the business that may come before it.”

The synod shall then elect its permanent officers and proceed with its proper business. A report of the organization shall be made by the minister presiding to the next General Assembly.

**106. Transfer of Jurisdiction.**—Upon the erection of a new synod all proceedings and cases originally commenced in the territory from which it has been taken, but which after its formation belong to the territory embraced within its bounds, shall be under its jurisdiction. A certified copy of the record thereof, together with all papers connected therewith, shall be delivered by the clerk of the original synod to the clerk of the new synod, who shall enter the same of record and file respectively. Subsequent proceedings shall be had thereon as fully and completely as though said action had been commenced in the new synod.

## CHAPTER II

### OF THE ORGANIZATION OF PRESBYTERIES

**107. Authorization.**—The several synods shall have power and authority within their respective bounds to erect new presbyteries, to divide any presbytery already existing, and to change the lines of two or more adjoining presbyteries so as to suit the convenience of the members thereof. A new presbytery may be organized, or the boundaries of existing presbyteries changed, by the synod having jurisdiction, on the motion of the synod itself, or on the petition of the ministers and congregations desiring it. If the congregations to be included in the new presbytery belong to two or more synods, application shall be made to the General Assembly,

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after due notice to the synods that may be affected, for a change in the synodical boundaries. If the memorial is approved by the General Assembly, it shall determine the synod to which the new presbytery shall belong and give notice to the respective synods.

**108. Method of Organization.**—If the application is granted, the synod shall define the territory to be included in the new presbytery, determine the name by which it shall be known, the time and place of the first meeting, and appoint a minister, with an alternate, to act as moderator in effecting the organization. If, at the time appointed, both the principal and his alternate are absent, those present may call one of their own number to the chair to preside. The moderator shall preach a sermon and constitute the presbytery by prayer. A temporary clerk having been chosen, and the roll of the members having been made, the moderator shall say,

“By virtue of the authority vested in me by the synod I declare that the Presbytery of . . . . . has now been fully organized under the jurisdiction of the United Presbyterian Church of North America with all the powers of a presbyterial court of the Church of Christ, and is now prepared for the transaction of the business that may come before it.”

The presbytery shall then elect its permanent officers and proceed with its proper business. A report of the organization shall be made to the synod by the minister presiding.

### CHAPTER III

#### OF THE ORGANIZATION, LOCATION, AND DISSOLUTION OF CONGREGATIONS

**109. Congregations.**—A congregation is a society of professing Christians properly organized for mutual edification in the spiritual life, for fellowship in the ordinances of the gospel, for giving testimony to the truth, and for the extension of the Redeemer's Kingdom. A congregation of the United Presbyterian Church is organized on the basis of

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the standards of this Church and submission to its government and discipline.

**110. New Congregations.**—When it seems desirable to organize a new congregation, the persons who wish to be connected with it shall make application to the presbytery within whose bounds it is proposed to locate the organization, setting forth the grounds on which the organization is asked. Whenever such application is made, and before the petition is granted, notice shall be given by the presbytery to the session of any congregation that may be affected by the new organization.

**111. Organization.**—If the presbytery determines to grant the application, it may either organize the congregation itself or appoint a minister and, if practicable, two ruling elders as a commission to carry the object into effect. Having given due notice of the time and place of meeting, the presbytery or commission shall, after the usual exercises of public worship, proceed to receive members on certificate or the profession of their faith in Christ. The persons thus admitted shall, standing, enter into covenant by answering the following question affirmatively with the uplifted hand:

“Do you solemnly covenant with each other and with God that you will walk together as an organized congregation, on the principles of the faith and order of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and that you will seek the peace, purity, and enlargement of the whole body?”

The presiding minister shall then say:

“I now pronounce and declare that you are constituted a congregation according to the Word of God and the faith and order of the United Presbyterian Church of North America.”

The presbytery or commission shall then proceed to the election and, at the proper time, the ordination and installation of ruling elders.

**112. Records and Proceedings.**—The proceedings, together with the names of the ruling elders, shall be entered on the records of the presbytery, and

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shall also become a part of the records of the session of the congregation.

**113. Exceptional Cases.**—In exceptional cases, when the congregation to be organized is remote from any presbytery, a missionary or other minister may, without appointment, receive members and organize a congregation, and report his proceedings to the most convenient presbytery. On its approval of what has been done, that presbytery shall assume jurisdiction.

**114. Relocation of Organized Congregations.**—When a congregation already organized desires to change the location of its house of worship, it shall present the subject to the presbytery, and shall obtain its consent both as to removal and the site of the new edifice. Before action is taken by the presbytery, notice of the proposed new location shall be given to the congregations that may be affected thereby.

**115. Dissolution of Congregations.**—When a presbytery determines that a congregation shall be dissolved, the members of said congregation shall be granted certificates of standing and dismissal at the hand of the presbytery. The trustees of said congregation shall transfer immediately all property titles to the trustees of the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of North America. All sessional and other records shall be placed in the keeping of the presbytery.

### CHAPTER IV

#### OF THE ADMISSION OF MEMBERS

**116. Necessity of Care.**—Inasmuch as the Church of God should be holy and without reproach, and to the end that the interests of immortal souls may not be imperiled by a false profession, great care should be exercised that those only who give credible evidence of being disciples of Christ be admitted to membership. It is the duty of the minister and the elders to give opportunity for religious conversa-

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tion to all who desire to be received into the Church's fellowship, and to instruct them in the way of salvation, that they make an intelligent profession of their faith.

**117. Instructions to Sessions.**—Sessions should carefully examine applicants as to their knowledge and belief of saving truth, their religious experience and purpose of life.

In this examination special attention should be given to the doctrine of the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; the inspiration of the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments; the atonement; the necessity of repentance and faith in Christ; the duty of separation from the world, of household religion, including family worship, of Christian giving and the evangelization of the world, of diligent attendance on the ordinances of Divine worship, public, private, and family, and of conformity to the laws and usages of the Church.

In the admission of members great charity should be shown toward those who manifest a regenerate state, but who are not fully instructed in the Scriptures and the doctrines of the United Presbyterian Church, and have but little experience in the Christian life.

**118. The Covenant.**—Having satisfied the session respecting their faith and new obedience in Christ, the applicants shall be received on answering affirmatively the following questions in presence of the session:

(1) "Do you, believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the infallible and only rule of faith and practice?"

(2) Do you believe in the one living and true God—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as revealed in the Scriptures?

(3) Do you confess your guilt and helplessness as a sinner against God; take Jesus Christ as your Saviour as He is offered in the gospel; own Him as your Lord; and dedicate yourself to His service? Do you covenant with Him that you will endeavor

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to forsake all sin and conform your life to His teaching and example?

(4) Do you promise, in order to such a life of holy obedience, that you will be diligent in your attendance upon all the appointed means of grace, in the performance of all duty as it may be made known to you; that you will give the Church of the Lord Jesus supreme loyalty, separating yourself from all associations you may find to be a hindrance to godliness and the performance of Christian duties?

(5) Do you make this profession of your faith and purpose in the presence of God, in humble reliance upon His grace, and as you desire to give in your account with joy at the great day?"

**119. Public Recognition.**—It is important that persons received into membership by the session should be given public recognition and welcome into the fellowship of the congregation by the members of the church. For such public recognition the following form may be used:

The names of the persons received being announced, they shall present themselves before the congregation. The people standing, the minister shall say:

"You have made a profession of your faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and of your purpose to live a Christian life, and have been admitted by the session into the membership of the Church. It is becoming that you confess your faith before the congregation and be publicly welcomed into the fellowship of its members.

Do you, now, in the presence of the congregation, make acknowledgment of your faith in Christ and your purpose to live a Christian life, and publicly declare your engagement to cultivate the spirit of Christian fellowship and brotherly love, and to seek the welfare of this congregation while you remain a member thereof?"

Answer: "We do."



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The minister shall then address the congregation as follows:

“Do you, the members of this congregation, as those who are already under the obligations of this covenant, welcome into your fellowship these who have now professed their faith in Christ and their purpose as His disciples, and do you promise to encourage and help them in the Christian life?”

Answer: “We do.”

The minister shall then say to the persons admitted:

“In the name of the Lord Jesus, the King and Head of the Church, we bid you welcome to the privileges of His Church, and the fellowship of His people, and we, the officers and members of this congregation, assure you of our sympathy, love, and assistance in the Christian life, and invite you to have part with us in all the services, labors, and benefits of the Church.

We also extend a like cordial welcome and assurance to you who have come to us from other congregations to enter our fellowship and make this your church home.”

“Now unto Him that is able to guard you from stumbling, and to set you before the presence of His glory without blemish in exceeding joy, to the only God our Saviour, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, dominion, and power, before all time, and now, and forever. Amen.”

He shall then offer a prayer for the blessing of God on those thus received.

**120. On Certificate.**—Members from other congregations of the United Presbyterian Church are to be admitted on certificate of such membership and dismissal. Members from other evangelical Churches may be admitted on certificate and on their submission to the instruction and discipline of the United Presbyterian Church.

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## CHAPTER V

### OF THE DISMISSION OF MEMBERS

**121. Testimonials.**—Any member in good standing in the Church is entitled to a certificate of standing and dismission from the session of the congregation to which he belongs, and, when removing from the congregation, should always take such a testimonial of Christian character. Whenever practicable, notice of the granting of such certificate should be given to the session of the congregation within the bounds of which the person removing intends to locate.

If a congregation becomes extinct, the presbytery with which it was connected shall have jurisdiction over its members and grant them certificates of standing and dismission.

**122. Limitation of Time.**—Members removing from a congregation without a certificate may afterwards be certified up to the time of their removal. A certificate of membership shall be considered valid for one year only from its date, unless its earlier presentation has been hindered by sufficient cause.

**123. Jurisdiction.**—Until received into another congregation, members receiving certificates shall be held to be under the jurisdiction and, as far as practicable, the pastoral oversight of the session giving the certificate, but without the right to take part in the proceedings of the congregation or exercise the functions of any office. A certificate returned to the session by which it was issued does not entitle one to exercise the functions of any office previously held in the congregation.

**124. Removal of Names from the Roll.**—The session may, at its discretion, remove from the register the name of any member who has been absent for one year from the congregation and beyond the knowledge of the session. It may also, in like manner, remove the name of a member who has practically withdrawn from the congregation, after all proper efforts to reclaim such a person have been

made, and when formal suspension would not promote the spiritual interests of the person or the congregation.

## CHAPTER VI

## OF STUDENTS OF THEOLOGY

**125. Care in Receiving and Training Students.**—As an able and godly ministry is of the utmost importance to the Church, presbyteries shall exercise great care in receiving and training young men therefor, having a tender and faithful supervision over them during their course of study, endeavoring to impress upon them worthy views of the office of the ministry, and the necessity of cultivating a spirit and life becoming those who are ambassadors for Christ.

**126. Qualifications.**—Presbyteries shall receive as students of theology only such as are certified to be members of the Church in full communion and of unexceptionable Christian deportment, who give satisfactory evidence of a saving acquaintance with Divine things and of a call to the holy office, who manifest an intelligent attachment to their profession, who possess such talents and graces as will fit them to prosecute theological studies with success, and who give promise of acceptability and usefulness in the ministry. In all ordinary cases a full collegiate course of study, or its equivalent, shall be required of those entering on the study of theology.

**127. Under the Care of Presbytery.**—Every student of theology shall at once place himself under the care of a presbytery, his own local presbytery if practicable, and be subject to its authority. He shall declare to the presbytery his acceptance of the standards of the United Presbyterian Church and his resolution to maintain the same. He shall prosecute his studies in a theological seminary approved by the presbytery or otherwise as the presbytery may direct, and shall, from time to time, as he may be required, deliver sermons before the presbytery as specimens of progress, and give such other exercises

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as may exhibit his proficiency in study and his qualifications for the ministry. If at any time a student of theology is temporarily resident or laboring in the bounds of another presbytery, that presbytery shall have him under its oversight, rendering him such encouragement and help as may be in its power, and make report concerning him to his proper presbytery.

### CHAPTER VII

#### OF LICENSING PROBATIONERS FOR THE MINISTRY

**128. Necessity of Licensure.**—The presbyteries should make trial of those who are to be ordained to the gospel ministry, that this sacred office be not committed to weak and unworthy men, and it is right that the people should have opportunity to judge of the qualifications of those by whom they are to be instructed and governed. To this end presbyteries shall license probationers to preach the gospel, who, after a competent trial of their gifts, and a good report from the congregation, may be ordained to the sacred office.

**129. Examination and Trials.**—In ordinary cases a student of theology shall not be admitted to trials for licensure until he has prosecuted theological studies for two full years. He shall submit to the presbytery from the faculty of the theological seminary which he has attended a certificate of his proficiency in the studies of the seminary course and of his uprightness of deportment. In addition to this, the presbytery shall examine him in regard to his experience of grace, the evidences of his call to the ministry, and his attachment to the principles of the United Presbyterian Church. The presbytery shall require him to present the following exercises: a textual sermon and an expository lecture. The subjects for these exercises shall be assigned by the presbytery.

**130. Mode of Licensure.**—The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and trials of the

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candidate, and having sustained them and decided to license him, the moderator shall propose to him the following questions, the members of presbytery standing:

(1) "Do you believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?"

(2) Do you believe and acknowledge the doctrines of the United Presbyterian Church, set forth in the Confession of Faith, the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms, and the Confessional Statement, as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God, and do you promise to adhere to and maintain the same against all opposing errors?

(3) Do you approve the form of church government and the system of worship set forth in the Book of Government and Worship of this Church as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God, and do you engage to maintain and defend the same?

(4) Are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire of saving souls, your chief motives for seeking the office of the holy ministry?

(5) Do you promise, in the strength of the grace that is in Jesus Christ, to preach the gospel in its simplicity, to expound the Word of God for the conversion of sinners and the edification of saints, to submit to the authority of the Church in its several courts, to seek the peace, purity, and prosperity of the Church, and to pursue a life of charity, godliness, and holy service?

(6) Do you make this profession and these promises as you would give in your account with joy at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, with all His saints, and have an entrance ministered to you abundantly into His everlasting Kingdom?"

If these questions are answered satisfactorily, the moderator shall then say:

"In the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the authority vested in His Church, we, constituted as a

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presbytery, do now license you to preach the gospel of Christ and to exercise your gifts as a probationer for the holy ministry; and we commend you to the grace of God in the discharge of all your duties."

The moderator shall then lead the presbytery in an appropriate prayer and close the act of licensure with a suitable word of exhortation. A certificate of licensure, signed by the moderator and clerk, shall be given to the probationer.

**131. Oversight of Probationers.**—A probationer shall be under the supervision of the presbytery to which he belongs as to all that relates to his public and ministerial department, and shall be under its direction and fulfill its appointments, or the direction and appointments of the presbytery into which he may be sent. He shall continue, however, to be a member of his congregation and be subject to the oversight and discipline of its session until ordination, when he becomes a member of presbytery. A notice of such ordination shall be given by presbytery to the session.

**132. Limitation of Licensure.**—A probationer shall be licensed for three years. If not ordained at the end of this time, the license may, at the discretion of presbytery, be renewed for two years more; if not ordained at the end of this time, it may be renewed for one year more; if at the end of this time his services do not appear to be edifying to the Church, the presbytery shall recall his license.

**133. Release from Licensure.**—If a probationer becomes unable to prosecute his course toward the ministry, or is no longer convinced of his call to the office, the presbytery shall withdraw his license, without prejudice to his character, and shall make a record of the same with the reasons therefor.

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## CHAPTER VIII

### OF THE ELECTION OF PASTORS

**134. Pastors Chosen by the Congregation.**—The authority by which ministers of the gospel hold their office is conferred by the Head of the Church through ordination, but in order to the exercise of their office stately in any congregation there shall first be an election thereto by the people.

**135. Pastors Necessary.**—Every congregation should be under the pastoral care of a minister, and therefore every vacant charge should seek without delay, by earnest prayer and the use of the appointed methods, to secure a pastor of the Lord's choosing.

**136. Preparatory Steps.**—When a congregation desires a pastor, the session shall petition the presbytery to appoint a minister to preside in the making of a call, and shall give such information as may be required concerning the readiness of the congregation for taking that step.

**137. Time of Election.**—If the petition is granted, the presbytery shall appoint a minister to preach on a week-day convenient to the parties and preside in the election of a pastor. Ten days' notice of this meeting shall be given to the congregation. If unexpected circumstances make it desirable, the minister appointed to preside may defer the election to another time.

**138. Order of Election.**—At the time appointed, after public worship, the minister shall state the object of the meeting. He shall then offer prayer for Divine direction, and shall proceed to call for nominations. The name or names presented shall be distinctly announced. The voting shall always be by ballot, and need not be confined to those nominated. No votes by proxy shall be allowed.

**139. Electors' and Elected.**—None are entitled to vote in the election of a pastor but such as are in full communion at the time of the election, and no

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one shall be declared elected who has not a majority of all the votes cast.

**140. Call Signed and Transmitted.**—After the election the result shall be announced and the blanks in the official form of call filled by the name of the person elected. The electors shall then be called upon to sign the call. The names of the elders should stand first, then those of the deacons and trustees, and after them those of the other members. Adherents of the congregation, being of the age of discretion, may be allowed to sign the call as such. The call thus subscribed shall be properly attested by the presiding minister and transmitted to the presbytery by a committee of the congregation. Pending its presentation to the presbytery, the call may be intrusted to the elders, that other members and adherents, who have not had the opportunity, may add their signatures. The number of signatures, both of members and adherents, should be noted on the call.

**141. When there is Opposition.**—If a minority is opposed to the person elected, and refuses to acquiesce, the minister presiding shall report the facts to the presbytery. Thereupon the presbytery shall decide what is best for the interests and peace of the congregation. If it is judged not expedient to prosecute the call, it shall be returned to the congregation, and a new election shall be held.

**142. Call Sustained and Presented.**—A call must be sustained by the presbytery as regular before it is presented to the pastor-elect. Even if regular, the presbytery may, for good reasons, refuse to present the call. In this event the reasons shall be entered upon the minutes. If the call is declined, the presbytery shall so notify the congregation, that steps for a new election may be taken. If the call is addressed to a probationer or a minister of another presbytery, and it is the will of the presbytery having jurisdiction over the congregation that the call be presented, it shall be transmitted for presentation, duly certified as regular, to the presbytery



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to which the pastor-elect belongs. No minister or probationer shall receive a call except through the hands of the presbytery in which he is enrolled. In the act of presentation the moderator shall make announcement of the call and shall ask the pastor-elect the question, "Do you accept or decline this call?" On acceptance the call shall be placed in the hands of the pastor-elect.

**143. Associate Pastors.**—When from any cause the pastoral duties in a congregation become too great for one minister, the congregation may elect an associate, who, when duly installed, shall sustain a proper pastoral relation to the congregation. In the event of the disability, death, or retirement of the senior pastor, the associate pastor may, by the action of the congregation at a meeting duly called, become the senior pastor. In the election of an associate pastor all the regular steps shall be taken.

**144. Pastoral Assistants.**—The session may, with the approval of the pastor, engage the services of a minister or probationer as an assistant to the pastor, who shall perform such duties, and for such time, as may be agreed upon, but without investiture with pastoral powers other than those common to his position as a minister or probationer.

### CHAPTER IX

#### OF THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF MINISTERS

**145. Trials and Examinations.**—When a call has been accepted by a probationer, the presbytery shall place him on trial for ordination. Unless the case is clearly exceptional, he shall be required to present a certificate from the faculty of the theological seminary which he has attended that he has completed the full course of study and passed satisfactory examinations. He shall be required to present the following exercises: two sermons—one of which shall be a lecture—on passages of Scripture assigned to him, a critical exegesis of a passage of Scripture, and a doctrinal thesis. He shall also be examined on personal religion, his motives for entering the ministry, and his knowledge of, and adherence to, the doc-

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trines, government, and discipline of the United Presbyterian Church.

**146. Edict.**—The foregoing trials having been approved, and a day for the ordination and installation having been appointed, the presbytery shall cause an edict to be read to the congregation, at least ten days before the day of installation, to the effect that the presbytery will proceed with the ordination and installation at the time appointed, if no valid objection be offered. At the time of the installation the edict shall be returned to the presbytery duly certified that it has been read to the congregation.

**147. Objections.**—The presbytery, having met in the church at the time appointed in the edict, shall make proclamation that it is now constituted for the ordination and installation service, and is ready to hear any objections that may be offered against further proceedings. If no objections are offered, the presbytery shall proceed with the appointed service. If any objections are offered, presbytery shall either sustain or overrule them, as its wisdom may direct. Should they be sustained, all proceedings shall be stayed until they are disposed of.

**148. Ordination and Installation Service.**—In connection with a devotional service a minister of the presbytery, previously appointed, shall preach a sermon adapted to the occasion. Then the minister appointed to preside shall briefly narrate the proceedings of the presbytery in reference to the call, and shall endeavor to impress all present with a proper sense of the solemnity of the ordination act.

The candidate shall then present himself and give answer to the following questions proposed by the presiding minister:

(1) "Do you believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of the living God, the infallible and only rule of faith and practice?"

(2) Do you believe and acknowledge the doctrines professed by the United Presbyterian Church,

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contained in the Confession of Faith, the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms, and the Confessional Statement, as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God, and do you engage to adhere to and maintain them against all opposing errors?

(3) Do you approve the form of church government and the system of worship set forth in the Book of Government and Worship of this Church as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God, and do you promise to maintain and defend them?

(4) Do you promise to be diligent in the cultivation of personal piety, endeavoring to adorn your profession by a course of life becoming the gospel and the ministry of Christ?

(5) Do you promise to be a faithful student of the Word of God, and to preach the gospel of the Lord Jesus in its simplicity and fulness, beseeching men to be reconciled to God, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, seeking to present every man perfect in Christ Jesus?

(6) Do you promise to give a dutiful attendance upon the courts of the Church, to submit yourself in the spirit of meekness to the authority of this presbytery and the superior courts, and to follow no divisive courses, but to maintain according to your ability the unity and peace of the Church?

(7) Are zeal for the glory of God, love for the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire to save sinners and edify the Church your great motives in entering upon the duties and the privileges of the office of the ministry?

(8) Do you consent to take charge of this congregation agreeably to your declaration on accepting its call, and do you promise to perform all the duties of a pastor, administering the ordinances and laws of the Church, visiting and exhorting from house to house, ministering to the sick, caring for the young, seeking to reclaim sinners and build up the disciples of Christ in Christian faith and life, and doing whatever else is incumbent on you as a minister of the gospel?

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(9) And these things you profess and promise through grace, as you would give in your account with joy at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints, and have an entrance ministered to you abundantly into His everlasting Kingdom?"

Satisfactory answers to the foregoing questions having been given by the candidate, the moderator shall propose the following questions to the people while they stand, an affirmative answer being given by holding up the right hand:

(1) "Do you, the members of this congregation, still profess your readiness to receive..... to be your pastor, according to the terms of your call?"

(2) Do you promise to receive the Word of truth from his mouth and submit to him in the exercise of his office?

(3) Do you promise to encourage and co-operate with him in his labors for the upbuilding of the Redeemer's Kingdom, and do you engage to give him a competent financial support and do whatever else you may see to be needful for his comfort and usefulness among you?"

The people having answered these questions in the affirmative, the candidate shall kneel. The moderator shall then, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, solemnly ordain him to the holy office of the gospel ministry. Prayer having ended, he shall rise from his knees, and the moderator first, and the other ministers in order, shall take him by the right hand, saying, "We give you the right hand of fellowship to take part in this ministry with us." The moderator shall then say:

"I now pronounce and declare that..... has been regularly elected, ordained, and installed pastor of this congregation, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the constitution of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and that as such he is entitled to all support, encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord."

Appropriate charges, by members of the presby-

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tery previously appointed, shall then be delivered to both pastor and people, wherein they shall be exhorted to persevere in the performance of their mutual duties. After prayer and praise the newly inducted pastor shall pronounce the benediction. Following this, he shall take his place in front of the pulpit, and the people shall be invited to come forward and give him their right hand in token of cordial reception and affectionate regard. His name shall then be entered on the roll of the presbytery.

**149. Ordination and Installation to be Conjoined.** Ordinarily, when a call has been accepted, a probationer should be ordained in connection with his installation in his pastoral charge, not at an earlier time and separate service.

A presbytery may not ordain a probationer to the gospel ministry with a view to his settlement in another presbytery unless with the consent of that presbytery.

**150. Ordination Without a Pastoral Charge.—**There are cases in which it is desirable and necessary that a probationer be ordained to the ministry without reference to a particular pastoral charge—as when he is appointed an evangelist, or a teacher, or a foreign missionary, or a home missionary in frontier or destitute settlements. In such cases, so far as trials and the order of the ordination exercises are concerned, the usual steps shall be taken. Public notice of the presbytery's intention shall be given to give sufficient opportunity for objections to be presented, if there are any, to the life or doctrine of the candidate. Of the preceding questions to be used at ordination, the eighth shall be omitted, and the following substituted for it, viz:

“Do you now undertake the special work of (here name the office or work) to which you have been chosen, dedicating yourself to it without reserve, and do you promise to perform all the duties pertaining to it with faithfulness and singleness of heart, as becomes a minister of the Lord Jesus Christ?”

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**151. Installation of an Ordained Minister.**—In the case of an ordained minister installation shall be performed by the presbytery in the following manner:

A day shall be appointed for the installation, and an edict such as is provided for in section 146 shall be read to the congregation. The presbytery, having met at the time and place appointed, shall proceed as provided for in the first paragraph of section 148. The minister to be installed shall then present himself and give answer to the following questions proposed by the presiding minister:

(1) "Are you willing to take charge of this congregation according to your declaration in accepting its call?"

(2) Do you engage to be diligent in the cultivation of personal piety and to live a holy and circumspect life, so as to adorn your office and be an example to the flock?

(3) Do you promise to perform all the duties of a pastor, preaching the gospel, administering the ordinances and laws of the Church, visiting and exhorting from house to house, ministering to the sick, caring for the young, seeking to reclaim sinners and to build up the disciples of Christ in their faith and life, and doing whatever else is incumbent on you as a minister and pastor?

(4) Do you promise to submit yourself to the authority of the presbytery and the superior courts, and to represent faithfully the interests of this congregation in the presbytery?

(5) Do you make these promises agreeably to your ordination engagements, and in the presence of God, in reliance on His grace, and as you desire to give in your account with joy at the Redeemer's appearance and receive the crown of glory that fadeth not away?"

Satisfactory answers to these questions having been given, the presiding minister shall propose to the people while they stand the questions prescribed

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in section 148. These questions having been answered in the affirmative by holding up their right hands, he shall say:

“I now pronounce and declare that ..... has been regularly elected and installed pastor of this congregation, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the constitution of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and that as such he is entitled to all support, encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord.”

The subsequent procedure shall be the same as that provided for in section 148.

### CHAPTER X

#### OF REMOVING A MINISTER FROM ONE CHARGE TO ANOTHER

**152. Call for ■ Settled Minister.**—A call for a settled minister shall be prepared and prosecuted in the same manner as one for a probationer or for a minister without charge, but before the call is presented due notice shall be given by the presbytery to his congregation, that it may, by committee or letter, make known its objection or its acquiescence. If the congregation fails to take action, it shall be held as consenting to the translation of its pastor. If objection is made, the presbytery shall carefully consider the same. If the presbytery is satisfied with the reasons for the proposed change, it shall present the call and, if this be accepted, shall dissolve the existing relation and arrange for the installation in the new settlement.

When the congregation calling and the minister called belong to different presbyteries, the presbytery which has sustained the call shall transmit it, duly certified, to the presbytery of which the minister is a member, and authorize the congregation to prosecute its call before that presbytery by committee or letter. If the call is presented and accepted, the presbytery having jurisdiction over the minister called shall dissolve the existing pastoral relation and give the departing minister proper

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testimonials. On the receipt of such testimonials the presbytery in charge of the congregation making the call shall enroll the pastor-elect and give order for his installation.

**153. Translation by Act of Presbytery.**—A pastor may, for sufficient reason, be removed from one pastoral charge to another, or to a mission, but not without his consent and the consent of the charge to which he is transferred. Such translation should always be made with great caution and careful reference to the interests of the whole Church. The reason for the translation shall be entered on the minutes of the presbytery, and a copy shall be sent to the congregation from which the pastor has been removed, for entry on its records.

**154. When a Minister Is Called to Other Work.**—A minister who is a pastor may be elected or appointed by the presbytery or the higher courts of the Church to some special office or work. On his acceptance of the office or appointment he shall give notice to his congregation, and the presbytery may then, if necessary, dissolve the pastoral relation without further notice to the congregation.

### CHAPTER XI

#### OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE PASTORAL RELATION

**155. Authority of Presbytery Necessary.**—As the authority of the presbytery is necessary to the formation of the pastoral relation, so it shall be to its dissolution. This authority may be exercised on the petition of the pastor or the people, or on the judgment of the presbytery, without petition.

**156. Dissolution on Petition.**—When application for the dissolution of the pastoral relation is made by the pastor or the people, or by both unitedly, it shall in all cases be accompanied with a statement of the reasons for which it is asked. Whether the application is made by the pastor or the people, the other party shall be given due notice and an opportunity to be heard before the presbytery. If due



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notice of such intention has already been given by the pastor prior to the meeting of the presbytery at which his application is presented, the presbytery may proceed without further delay. The dissolution of the relation shall not be made without serious deliberation.

**157. Dissolution Without Petition.**—When in the judgment of the presbytery the continuance of a pastoral relation is not for the edification of the congregation, it may, without petition, take steps towards the dissolution thereof. Ordinarily, final action should not be taken at the meeting at which the proposition is made, and in no case may it be taken without both parties having been duly notified and opportunity given to be heard. The reasons for the action shall be entered on the minutes of the presbytery.

**158. Procedure Attendant Upon Dissolution.**—When the pastoral relation has been dissolved, official notice shall be given the congregation and the pulpit declared vacant by a minister designated by the presbytery. The presbytery shall appoint a moderator of the session until a new pastor is installed.

**159. A Pastor Emeritus.**—When a pastor resigns his charge on account of age or physical infirmity, the congregation, out of affectionate regard for him, may, at a meeting regularly called, elect him to continue as pastor emeritus, subject to the approval of the presbytery. The relation shall be entirely honorary, without pastoral authority or duty.

## CHAPTER XII

### OF THE DISMISSION OF MINISTERS

**160. Testimonials.**—A minister in good standing who desires to remove from his presbytery is entitled to a certificate of standing and dismission. This certificate shall be issued on the order of the presbytery, and shall be signed by the moderator and the clerk.

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If a minister has been absent from his presbytery for one year or more, and beyond its knowledge, he shall give a satisfactory account of himself before a certificate is granted.

If a presbytery becomes extinct, the synod with which it was connected shall have jurisdiction over its ministers and give them testimonials of standing.

**161. Limitation of Time.**—A certificate of standing and dismissal shall be considered valid for one year only from its date.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### OF THE WITHDRAWAL OF MINISTERIAL ORDINATION

**162. By the Action of the Presbytery.**—It is possible that a minister may have erred in the judgment that he was called of God to the office which he occupies, and that the presbytery likewise may have erred in his ordination. When such a mistake becomes apparent, the presbytery having jurisdiction may, after due hearing, revoke the ordination of the minister, leaving him a private member in the Church. His name shall then be removed from the roll of the presbytery, and he shall be given a letter to any congregation with which he may desire to connect himself. This grave action shall be taken only after the most mature deliberation.

**163. On the Motion of the Minister Himself.**—If a minister in good standing shall make application to be released from the office of the ministry, his application shall be held under advisement for a sufficient length of time to ascertain his motives and reasons for asking such release. When the presbytery is satisfied that his application is justifiable, and that he cannot be useful in the exercise of the ministry, it may release him from his ordination vows and remove his name from its roll. He should then be given a letter to any congregation with which he may desire to connect himself.

There may be cases where such an application is made by a minister whose previous character and record show that he has been called to the ministry

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by the will of God, but who, through neglect to cultivate his talents, or by yielding to worldliness, has grown weary of his office. It is the duty of the presbytery under such circumstances to endeavor to reclaim the minister to the path of duty, or, failing in that, to inflict upon him the censures of the Church.

### CHAPTER XIV

#### OF THE ADMISSION OF MINISTERS AND PROBATIONERS FROM OTHER CHURCHES

**164. From Churches Holding the Same Doctrine and Order.**—Any minister or probationer belonging to a Church which holds the same doctrine, government, and discipline as the United Presbyterian Church may be received by a presbytery on presenting a proper presbyterial certificate of standing and dismissal.

**165. From Evangelical Churches Differing in Doctrine or Order.**—In cases where the Church from which the applicant comes is an evangelical Church, but one differing from the United Presbyterian Church in doctrine or in usage, the applicant shall present documentary evidence of his good standing in that Church, shall give the presbytery his reasons for seeking admission to the United Presbyterian Church, and shall declare himself as to his acceptance of its principles. It shall be discretionary with the presbytery to examine him touching his Christian character, his literary attainments, his qualifications for the ministry, and other particulars. If the presbytery is satisfied, it shall receive him on his answering satisfactorily the following questions: if a minister, questions 1, 2, 3 and 6 in section 148; if a probationer, all the questions in section 130.

**166. From Non-Evangelical Churches.**—In cases where the Church from which the applicant comes is a non-evangelical Church, he shall not only satisfy the requirements of the foregoing section, but shall be subjected to a probation of not less than

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six months. If in ministerial station, and seeking recognition as a minister, he shall be ordained, his former ordination being deemed invalid.

### CHAPTER XV OF EVANGELISTS

**167. Ministerial Evangelists.**—There are cases in which it is desirable and necessary that a probationer be ordained to the gospel ministry as an evangelist, who shall have no pastoral charge, but who shall preach the gospel with special reference to the awakening of the Church and the conversion of sinners. In such cases question eight (8) in the formula of ordination shall be omitted and the special question found in section 150 used instead. A minister thus ordained as an evangelist shall be competent to become a regular pastor whenever, in the judgment of his presbytery, he has been called of the Lord to that new service.

No minister shall undertake the work of an evangelist until he has secured definite authorization therefor from his presbytery. This authorization may be withdrawn at any time at the discretion of the presbytery.

Every ministerial evangelist is responsible to his presbytery. If he is called to assist a pastor in special meetings, he shall be subject to the direction of that pastor; if he is called to labor in vacant congregations, he shall be under the immediate control of the presbytery in charge; if he takes up work beyond the bounds of any presbytery, he shall be under the control of the court which assigned him his duties.

**168. Evangelists Who are not Ministers.**—After careful examination as to personal piety, well-balanced judgment, soundness in the faith, knowledge of the Scriptures, and ability to teach the gospel publicly, it shall be lawful for a presbytery to authorize any member of the Church to serve as an evangelist who is ready to perform such service under the direction of presbytery.

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Such evangelists shall not undertake any of the distinctive duties of the ministry. Their authorization shall require annual renewal, and may be withdrawn at any time. They shall report their faithfulness at least twice every year to their respective presbyteries.

**169. Responsibility of Congregations.**—Congregations shall not employ evangelists who do not have definite presbyterial endorsement for such service, or an equivalent endorsement from the evangelical bodies to which they belong.

### CHAPTER XVI

#### OF THE ELECTION OF RULING ELDERS

**170. When An Election May Be Held.**—An election of ruling elders shall be held when the session decides that this is necessary, or when a majority of the congregation petitions, or at the expiration of appointed terms of office, or when the presbytery so directs.

**171. Previous Notice.**—When an election of ruling elders is to be held, ten days' notice shall be given to the congregation.

**172. Officers of the Meeting.**—At the election of ruling elders the moderator and clerk of the session shall be the officers of the meeting of the congregation. When there is no pastor the moderator appointed by the presbytery shall preside.

**173. Voters.**—In such election none shall be entitled to vote but members of the congregation who are in full communion. No votes by proxy shall be allowed.

**174. Manner of Election.**—On the day appointed for the election, after public worship, the moderator of the session shall state the object of the meeting. He shall then offer prayer for Divine direction, and shall proceed to call for nominations. Nominations may be made by the session, by any member of the congregation, or by an informal ballot. The voting need not be restricted to the nominees.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

The names of the nominees having been distinctly announced, the vote shall be taken by ballot. No person shall be considered elected who has not a majority of the whole number of votes cast. The result of the election shall be publicly announced and duly recorded in the minutes of the congregational meeting and the minutes of the session.

**175. Term of Office.**—Ruling elders continue ruling elders for life, unless deposed in process of discipline. As regards the exercise of their office in any particular congregation, they may be elected either for life or for a limited term as hereinafter provided.

If any congregation in which hitherto the term of office for the eldership has been for life desires that the ruling elders now in office and any to be elected shall in the future serve for a limited term as members of the session, this shall be decided upon, at a meeting regularly called, by a majority of the votes of members present who are in full communion, provided (a) that the term of office is not less than four years, and does not expire for all the members of the session at the same time, and (b) that ruling elders whose term expires shall be eligible to re-election. This congregational action shall become operative upon the approval of the presbytery. Ruling elders in office when the change is decided upon shall resign, in order that all may be elected upon the same basis, though these resignations shall not become operative until the newly-elected elders have been ordained and installed.

The same procedure and conditions as above shall hold in the case of newly organized congregations where it is desired that the ruling elders shall serve for a limited term.

So, likewise, when it is proposed that a congregation shall change its procedure in regard to the eldership from a limited term of active service to a life term, this shall be decided at a congregational meeting, as above, subject to the approval of the presbytery.

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## CHAPTER XVII

### OF THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF RULING ELDERS

**176. Examination.**—At an early date after the election the session shall meet with the elders-elect and inquire as to their acceptance of office. If they express their willingness to accept, the session shall proceed to examine them in regard to their Christian character, their acquaintance with Divine truth, their knowledge of, and adherence to, the doctrines, government, and discipline of the United Presbyterian Church, and their adaptation to the duties of the eldership. If not approved on examination, their election shall be set aside.

**177. Edict.**—The persons elected having been approved by the session, and a day for their ordination and installation having been appointed, the session shall cause an edict to be read to the congregation at least ten days before the day of installation, to the effect that the session will proceed with their ordination and installation at the time appointed, if no valid objection shall be given in by a specified time.

**178. Objections.**—If objections are presented, the session shall either sustain or overrule them, as its wisdom may direct. Should they be sustained, the election of such person or persons shall be set aside.

**179. Ordination and Installation Service.**—In connection with a devotional service the moderator of the session shall preach a sermon adapted to the occasion. He shall then briefly narrate the previous proceedings, and shall endeavor to impress all present with a proper sense of the solemnity of the ordination act.

The elders-elect shall then present themselves and give answer to the following questions proposed by the moderator:

(1) "Do you believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?"

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(2) Do you believe and acknowledge the doctrines professed by the United Presbyterian Church, contained in the Confession of Faith, the Larger and the Shorter Catechisms, and the Confessional Statement, as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God?

(3) Do you approve the form of church government and the system of worship set forth in the Book of Government and Worship of this Church as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God?

(4) Do you promise to be faithful in maintaining the truths of the Holy Scriptures and the ordinances of the Church of God, and to be diligent in the cultivation of personal piety, endeavoring to adorn your profession by a course of life becoming the gospel and the office to which you have been called?

(5) Do you promise to cultivate the spirit of brotherly love and submission to the authority of the Church and to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace?

(6) Are a conviction of duty, love for God, and a desire to promote His glory and to be useful in edifying the Church of the Lord Jesus the motives which govern you in accepting the office to which you have been called?

(7) Do you now accept the call to the office of ruling elder in this congregation?

(8) Do you promise to be diligent in the discharge of the duties of the office, having an oversight of the flock, helping the weak, visiting the sick, caring for the children and youth, seeking to reclaim the erring, and taking an active part in all the work of the congregation?

(9) Do you promise to be faithful and impartial in the exercise of discipline, and to be punctual in attending the meetings of the session and the superior courts as you may be required?

(10) And these things you profess and promise through grace, as you would give in your account



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with joy at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints, and have an entrance ministered to you abundantly into His everlasting Kingdom?"

Satisfactory answers to the foregoing questions having been given by the elders-elect, the moderator shall propose the following questions to the people while they stand, an affirmative answer being given by holding up the right hand:

(1) "Do you, the members of this congregation, acknowledge and receive these brethren as ruling elders?"

(2) Do you promise to yield them all that honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord to which their office, according to the Word of God, and the constitution of this Church, entitles them?"

The people having answered these questions in the affirmative, the elders-elect shall kneel. The moderator shall then, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the session, solemnly ordain them to the office of ruling elder. Prayer having ended, those ordained shall rise from their knees, and the moderator first, and the other members of the session in order, shall take them by the right hand, saying, "We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us." The moderator shall then say:

"I now pronounce and declare that..... have been regularly elected, ordained, and installed ruling elders in this congregation, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the constitution of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and that as such they are entitled to all encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord."

He shall then address an appropriate charge to the newly installed elders and the people, wherein they shall be exhorted to persevere in the performance of their mutual duties. After prayer and praise, the service shall close with the benediction.

**180. Record of Proceedings and Enrollment.**—A record of the ordination and installation shall be inserted in the minutes of the session, and the names of the newly ordained and installed elders shall be added to its roll. Every ordination of ruling elders shall be reported to the presbytery at its next stated meeting.

**181. Ordination Not to be Repeated.**—A ruling elder removing from his own congregation into another, or returning to a congregation after having been dismissed by certificate, or whose term of official duty has expired, shall, if elected again by the congregation, be installed without a new ordination.

**182. Installation of an Ordained Ruling Elder.**—In the case of an ordained ruling elder installation shall proceed as in sections 176, 177, 178 and 179, excepting the ordination act. The same questions as above shall be asked the elder-elect and the people respectively. The record, enrollment, and report to presbytery shall be the same as in section 180.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE OFFICIAL RELATION OF RULING ELDERS

**183. By the Expiration of Term of Office.**—When a ruling elder holds his membership in the session for a specified term, the expiration of that term shall dissolve his official relation to the congregation, excepting that this relation shall continue until his successor has been duly installed. When a ruling elder, serving for a specified term, succeeds himself without interval, he shall continue the exercise of his office without installation.

**184. By Removal.**—The removal of a ruling elder from a congregation, on certificate or otherwise, shall dissolve his official relation to the congregation, and the session shall make record of the fact.

**185. By the Session or Presbytery.**—The session may dissolve the relation between a ruling elder and a congregation upon the petition of the congregation, or upon its own judgment that the continuance

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of the relation is not for the edification of the congregation; but such action shall not be taken without due notice to the parties and an opportunity being given to appear and be heard. In such cases the session should act with great deliberation and under a sense of the responsibility involved. Of such action and the reasons therefor report shall be made to the presbytery.

The presbytery, also, as the superior court, and as having the oversight of congregations, may, after due hearing, dissolve the relation between a ruling elder and a congregation when in its judgment such action is necessary for the spiritual welfare and prosperity of the congregation. But such action shall not be taken without due notice to the parties, and an opportunity shall be given to appear and be heard.

**186. By Resignation.**—When a ruling elder desires to resign his office, such resignation shall be presented to the session. But no such resignation shall be acted upon until the congregation has been duly notified and given opportunity of making known its objection or its acquiescence.

### CHAPTER XIX

#### OF THE ELECTION OF DEACONS

**187. When an Election May be Held.**—The governing regulations shall be the same as in the case of ruling elders. See section 170.

**188. Previous Notice.**—This shall be the same as in the election of ruling elders. See section 171.

**189. Officers of the Meeting.**—These shall be the same as in the election of ruling elders. See section 172.

**190. Voters.**—The requirement shall be as in section 173.

**191. Manner of Election.**—The procedure shall be the same as in section 174, except, first, that the session shall not have the right of nomination, and, second, that the result of the election shall be re-

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corded in the minutes of the board of deacons as well as in the minutes of the session.

**192. Term of Office.**—Deacons shall be elected to serve for three years, and shall not be eligible for re-election until one year after the expiration of their term of office.

At the introduction of the diaconate into a congregation one-third of the whole number of deacons shall be elected to serve one year, one-third two years, and one-third three years. Thereafter one-third of the whole number shall be elected annually for the full term.

### CHAPTER XX

#### OF THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF DEACONS

**193. Examination.**—At an early date after the election the session shall meet with the deacons-elect and inquire as to their acceptance of office. If they express their willingness to accept, the session shall proceed to examine them as to their Christian character, their adaptation to the duties of the diaconate, their approval of the presbyterian form of church government, and their devotion to the interests of the United Presbyterian Church.

**194. Edict.**—The procedure shall be the same as in section 177.

**195. Objections.**—The procedure shall be the same as in section 178.

**196. Ordination and Installation Service.**—In connection with a devotional service the moderator of the session shall preach a sermon adapted to the occasion. He shall then briefly narrate the previous proceedings, and shall endeavor to impress all present with a proper sense of the solemnity of the ordination act.

The deacons-elect shall then present themselves and give answer to the following questions proposed by the moderator:

(1) "Do you believe the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of the

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living God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?

(2) Do you approve the form of church government set forth in the Book of Government and Worship of this Church as agreeable to, and founded on, the Word of God?

(3) Are a conviction of duty, love for God, and a desire to promote His glory and to be useful in edifying the Church of the Lord Jesus the motives which govern you in accepting the office to which you have been called?

(4) Do you now accept the office of deacon in this congregation, and do you promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, subject to the advice and direction of the session?

(5) Do you promise to study the peace, unity, and purity of the Church?

(6) And these things you profess and promise through grace, as you would give in your account with joy at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ with all His saints, and have an entrance ministered to you abundantly into His everlasting Kingdom?"

The deacons-elect having answered these questions in the affirmative, the moderator shall propose the following questions to the people while they stand, an affirmative answer being given by holding up the right hand:

(1) "Do you, the members of this congregation, acknowledge and receive as deacons these whom you have elected to that office?"

(2) Do you promise to yield them all that honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord to which their office, according to the Word of God and the constitution of this Church, entitles them?"

The people having answered these questions in the affirmative, the deacons-elect shall kneel. The moderator shall then, by prayer and the laying on of the hands of the session, solemnly ordain them to the office of deacon. Prayer having ended, the

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newly ordained deacons shall rise from their knees, and the moderator, the members of the session, and the members of the board of deacons shall take them by the right hand, saying, "We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in the Lord's work with us." The moderator shall then say, "I now pronounce and declare that . . . . . have been regularly elected, ordained, and installed deacons in this congregation, agreeably to the Word of God, and according to the constitution of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, and that as such they are entitled to all honor, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord." The service shall then proceed as in section 179.

**197. Record of Proceedings and Enrollment.**—A record of the ordination and installation shall be inserted in the minutes of the session and of the board of deacons, and the names of the newly ordained and installed deacons shall be added to the roll of the board of deacons.

**198. Ordination Not to be Repeated.**—The same rule shall hold as in the case of ruling elders. See section 181.

**199. Installation of an Ordained Deacon.**—In the case of an ordained deacon installation shall proceed as in sections 193, 194, 195 and 196, excepting the ordination act. The same questions as above shall be asked the deacon-elect and the people respectively. The record and enrollment shall be the same as in section 197.

### CHAPTER XXI

#### OF THE DISSOLUTION OF THE OFFICIAL RELATION OF DEACONS

**200. By the Expiration of Term of Office.**—The expiration of the term of office shall dissolve the official relation of deacons to the congregation.

**201. By Removal.**—The removal of deacons from a congregation, on certificate or otherwise, shall dissolve their official relation to the congregation, and the session and the board of deacons shall make record of the fact.

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**202. By the Session.**—The session may dissolve the relation between a deacon and a congregation upon the petition of the congregation, or upon its own judgment that the continuance of the relation is not for the edification of the congregation; but such action shall not be taken without due notice to the parties and an opportunity being given to appear and be heard. In such cases the session should act with great deliberation and under a sense of the responsibility involved.

**203. By Resignation.**—The procedure shall be the same as in the case of the ruling elder. See section 186.

### CHAPTER XXII

#### OF CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

**204. Notice of Meetings.**—Notice of all congregational meetings shall be given from the pulpit on the two Sabbaths preceding the meeting. If Sabbath services are not held weekly, but at longer intervals, notice of a congregational meeting shall be given from the pulpit on a Sabbath at least ten days before the meeting.

**205. Limitation of Business.**—The purpose or purposes of the meeting shall be distinctly stated in the notice. No business other than that announced shall be transacted at any meeting except stated meetings.

**206. Quorum.**—If the membership of a congregation numbers one hundred or less, one-sixth of the members shall be required as a quorum for the transaction of business. If the membership is more than one hundred, one-tenth shall be sufficient.

**207. Meetings for Ecclesiastical Purposes.**—

(1) All matters other than those which concern the ordinary financial affairs of the congregation shall be dealt with at meetings held for ecclesiastical purposes.

(2) Such meetings shall be called by the session. The moderator shall preside and the clerk of session

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shall act as secretary. In the absence of the moderator any member of the session may be called to preside.

(3) Correct minutes of the proceedings shall be kept and shall become part of the records of the congregation and of the records of the session.

(4) Any member present at such a congregational meeting may dissent from any part of the proceedings. His dissent shall be entered on the record, and he shall have the right to bring the matter dissented from under the review of presbytery by a complaint transmitted through the session.

(5) The presbytery or other superior court may, when it sees cause, summon a meeting of the congregation by giving notice as above. It shall appoint one of its own members to preside.

**208. Meetings for Business Purposes.**—When a congregation is incorporated, which ordinarily should be the case, its meetings must be held and its business transacted according to the provision of its charter and by-laws. Care, therefore, should be taken that these shall be so framed as not to conflict with the powers and duties belonging to the session or the board of deacons, if such board exists.

When a congregation is not incorporated it shall hold such meetings for business purposes, under the supervision of the session, as its interests may require. It shall choose its own chairman and secretary, and be governed by its own by-laws.



# PART III

## DISCIPLINE

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### CHAPTER I

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES

**209. Definition.**—Discipline is the exercise of that authority and the application of that system of laws which the Lord Jesus Christ has given to His Church for the edification of its members and for its work in the world. In general it embraces the instruction, training, and control of the members and their children for their growth in grace, and the orderly exercise of authority by the officers and courts for the maintenance of the truth and the promotion of the spiritual life of the Church.

**210. How Exercised.**—This discipline is exercised by general pastoral oversight and through established courts. When exercised by the courts it is either administrative or judicial.

**211. Administrative Discipline.**—Administrative discipline has to do with the courts of the Church, and has for its object the preservation of the order of the Church and the proper exercise of its authority, the protection of the rights of members, officers, congregations, and courts of the Church, and, in general, the maintenance of the purity, growth, and spiritual influence of the Church.

**212. Judicial Discipline.**—Judicial discipline relates to persons charged with offense. It is the exercise of that authority which the Lord Jesus has

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vested in His Church to deal with offenses against truth and righteousness or the peace and good order of the Church. Discipline is hereafter used in this book in the more limited sense of administrative and judicial discipline.

**213. Necessity and Objects.**—Discipline in this limited sense is necessary because of the imperfection of the members and officers of the Church, and their liability to depart from the truth and fall into sin, and the possibility that the constituted courts may err in judgment and violate established rules of procedure. Its object is to vindicate the honor and authority of Jesus Christ and advance the glory of God by removing offenses, reclaiming the erring, and advancing the purity and peace of the Church.

**214. Grounds of Discipline.**—Anything in the avowed belief or the life of a minister or member of the Church, or in the proceedings and judgments of a court, which is contrary to the Word of God and to the doctrines and regulations of the Church is a ground of discipline.

### CHAPTER II

#### OF OFFENSES

**215. Different Kinds.**—Offenses which call for judicial proceedings are either personal or general, either private or public, and the procedure will vary accordingly. Some offenses, from their nature and circumstances, are vital in their relation to religion and morality, and should be treated decisively. Others may arise from the weakness of the human understanding, or from personal infirmities, and should be handled accordingly.

**216. Definitions.**—A personal offense is an injury done to a person or persons. A general offense is any heresy or immorality having no personal relation. Private offenses are such as are known only to a few persons. Public offenses are such as are notorious.

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## CHAPTER III OF JURISDICTION

**217. Original Jurisdiction.** — The several courts exercise original jurisdiction within their respective spheres, but in the case of the failure of a lower court to exercise proper discipline, or of its inability from any cause to take action, the superior court shall correct the failure by giving instructions to the lower court, or by taking up the case for adjudication.

Original jurisdiction in relation to ministers belongs to the presbytery, and in relation to members, including elders and deacons, to the session.

**218. Dismissed Members.**—A member dismissed from the congregation shall be considered under its jurisdiction until actually received by another.

**219. Dismissed Ministers.**—A minister, in like manner, shall be considered as under the jurisdiction of the presbytery by which he has been dismissed until he has been received by another.

**220. When a Congregation Becomes Extinct.**—If a congregation becomes extinct, the presbytery with which it was connected shall determine any case of discipline begun by the session and not concluded.

**221. When a Presbytery Becomes Extinct.**—If a presbytery becomes extinct, the synod with which it was connected shall determine any case of discipline begun by the presbytery and not concluded.

## CHAPTER IV

### OF WHEN PROCESS MAY BE COMMENCED

**222. Preventive Measures.** — Before issuing formal process in any case the court shall seek by private conference with the accused to avoid, if possible, the necessity of judicial proceedings. Only when such a course proves ineffectual shall process issue.

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**223. Basis of Process.**—Process against one accused may be commenced only when a responsible person presents a charge or the court is convinced after careful investigation that the interests of religion require judicial proceedings.

When an offense has been committed under such circumstances that it is impossible for the offender to be prosecuted to conviction, process should not be commenced.

**224. Personal Offenses.**—In all cases of personal offenses the injured party, whether the offense be public or private, must use the means prescribed by our Lord in Matthew 18:15, 16 for effecting a reconciliation before he can be admitted as an accuser. If, however, the nature and circumstances of the offense are such that the interests of religion require a judicial investigation, the settlement of the matter between the parties shall not preclude a church court from investigating it.

**225. General Offenses.**—General offenses may be brought before a court by a formal charge, by written information, or by common fame.

**226. Prosecution on Common Fame.**—Great prudence should be exercised by the court in taking up a charge on the ground of common fame. Ordinarily a committee of inquiry should be appointed to ascertain whether the charge is such as calls for judicial proceedings, and whether it is so widely spread and accompanied with such a presumption of truth as to be injurious to the interests of religion.

A person who may consider himself injured by a rumor, more or less current, may request a judicial investigation for his own vindication, and the court shall exercise its discretion in granting the request.

**227. Time Limit.**—Prosecution for an alleged offense shall commence within one year from the time of its alleged commission. But where the offense has not become known until after the expiration of the year, or has not become known a sufficient

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length of time prior to the expiration of the year to permit of proceedings being begun within the year, process may issue at any time within three months from the time the alleged offense became known.

**228. But One Trial for the Same Offense.**—A person who has been tried and acquitted, or convicted, cannot be subjected to another trial for the same offense.

### CHAPTER V

#### OF THE PARTIES IN CASES OF PROCESS

**229. Prosecution on Information or Common Fame.**—In cases of process on the ground of common fame, or by written information, where the informer refuses to appear, the court shall appoint one or more persons under its jurisdiction to conduct the prosecution. The person, or persons, thus appointed shall represent and act in the name of the United Presbyterian Church of North America.

**230. Original Parties.**—The original and only parties to a trial are the accuser and the accused. In cases where the court appoints the prosecutor he shall exercise all the rights of an original party.

These parties shall be known in the appellate courts as appellant and appellee.

In administrative cases, when the final decision of a court is made the basis of an appeal, complaint, or reference, the court becomes an original party, and shall appoint one or more of its members, or other persons under its jurisdiction, to act in its name, and it shall not otherwise appear in the superior courts.

**231. Responsibility of an Accuser.**—If in the trial of a case it shall appear that the accuser has presented his charge in a litigious spirit, or without reasonable grounds for belief that the charge was true, he shall be liable to censure.

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## CHAPTER VI

### OF THE ISSUING OF PROCESS

**232. Form of Charge.**—Every charge must be presented in writing, and must contain a definite statement of the offense, and, as far as practicable, a specification of the time, place, and circumstances of its commission. It shall also be accompanied with the names of the persons who may be called as witnesses and the titles of the records and documents that may be offered.

**233. When More Than One Charge.**—If several charges against a person are presented at the same time, the court may, at its discretion, try all together, but in giving judgment the vote shall be taken on each separately.

**234. Charge Presented and Citations Issued.**—When all other means of removing an offense have failed, the court shall take up the charge for judicial consideration.

At the meeting of the court when a formal charge is presented, no other proceedings shall be had, unless by consent of the parties, than to furnish the accused with a copy of the charge, the names of all the witnesses then known, and the titles of the records and documents that may be offered, and to cite all concerned to appear at a subsequent meeting to be held not less than ten days after the service of the citations.

The citation shall be signed in the name of the court by the moderator or clerk, who shall also issue citations to such witnesses as either party may desire. Citations shall be issued only to members of the Church; other persons can only be requested to attend. The accused shall not be required to disclose the names of his witnesses.

**235. Service of Citations.**—Citations shall be served personally, unless the person to be cited cannot be found, in which case the citation shall be left at his residence. Before proceeding to trial it must appear that the citations have been served.

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If the accused party is absent when the charge is received, and trial appointed, the citation shall be accompanied with notification of time and place of trial. In addition, a copy of the charge, a list of witnesses, and the titles of the records and documents that may be offered shall be put into his hands, or left at his residence, by some suitable person appointed for the purpose.

**236. Second Citation.**—If an accused person or a witness who is a member of the Church fails to obey a citation, a second shall be issued, with a notice that if he does not appear he will be censured for his contumacy. If the accused does not then appear, the court may proceed to trial and judgment, in which case it shall appoint someone to represent him as counsel. The time allowed for appearance on a second citation shall be determined by the court, with due regard to the circumstances of the case.

### CHAPTER VII

#### OF THE TRIAL IN GENERAL

**237. Charge of the Moderator.**—When the trial is about to begin, the moderator shall remind the members of the court of the solemn duty in which they are about to engage and their responsibility as judges of a court of the Lord Jesus, and enjoin them to dismiss from their minds all prejudice and personal considerations.

**238. Objections and Pleas.**—At the time appointed for hearing the case the accused may file objections and be heard on the regularity of the proceedings, on the jurisdiction of the court, on the right of any member to sit in the trial of the case, or on the sufficiency of the charge, to wit, that the charge, if proved, is not censurable. The court shall pass upon the objections, and may dismiss the case or permit amendments to the charge without change in its general nature. If the proceedings are found regular and the charge sufficient, the accused shall be called upon to plead "guilty" or "not guilty." If the plea be "guilty" the court shall proceed to judg-

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ment; but if the plea be "not guilty" the court shall proceed with the trial. If the accused decline to answer, a plea of "not guilty" shall be entered of record and the trial shall proceed.

**239. Presenting Evidence.**—Each party shall have the right to cross-examine the witnesses of the other side. The witnesses shall be examined in presence of the accused, except in cases where the accused fails to appear after due citation.

When all the evidence has been taken in confirmation of the charge, the accused shall introduce whatever evidence he has to offer, after which the prosecutor shall have the opportunity to offer evidence in rebuttal. Evidence discovered during the trial may be admitted in behalf of either party under such restrictions as the court may deem just.

**240. Arguments Heard and Judgment Given.**—When the testimony is closed, the accused shall be heard first, and then the prosecutor. The court shall decide whether either party shall have an opportunity of being further heard in argument. The parties, their counsel, and all other persons not members of the body being removed, the court shall proceed to examine and weigh the evidence and give judgment accordingly.

**241. Burden of Proof.**—It shall rest upon the prosecutor to establish the charge beyond a reasonable doubt.

**242. Who May Vote.**—No member of the court shall be qualified to vote upon any question arising out of the evidence or upon the final judgment who has not been present during the whole of the trial. A record of the attendance of the members of the court shall be kept for the enforcement of this rule.

**243. Records and Copies.**—The charge and specifications, the plea and the judgment, shall be entered on the records of the court. The record shall also contain the evidence, the exceptions taken, the decisions and orders of the court relating to the case, with the reasons therefor and all the circumstances which had an influence on the judgment. In



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the case of the removal of a cause to a higher court, the lower court shall send up a complete authenticated copy of the whole record, and nothing shall be taken into consideration in the higher court which is not contained in the record.

The parties shall be allowed copies of the whole proceedings at their own expense.

**244. Counsel.**—Each of the parties in proceedings in any court shall be entitled to appear and be represented by counsel. No person shall be permitted to act as counsel who is not a member of the Church and subject to the jurisdiction of the court before which he appears, and no person having acted as counsel shall be allowed to sit in judgment on the case.

**245. Questions and Exceptions.**—All questions as to order or evidence, or otherwise, arising in the course of a trial shall be decided by the moderator after the parties have been heard, subject to an appeal to the court, to be determined without debate. All such decisions shall be entered upon the record of the case. Except in the court of final jurisdiction, exceptions to the rulings of the court may be taken and shall be entered on the record.

When an exception is taken to the ruling of the court because of its refusal to admit certain evidence, an offer of what is proposed to be proved shall be made, and the offer, the objections to the admissibility of the facts contained in the offer, and the decision of the court shall be fully entered on the record.

**246. Private Sessions.**—In all cases of judicial proceedings the court may, at any stage thereof, determine to sit with closed doors.

**247. An Offense Not Charged, But Proved.**—If the testimony taken during the trial proves a sin properly denominated by another name than that designated in the charge, while the specific charge must be found not proved, the accused may be found guilty of that which appears in proof; but sentence shall not be passed until further time shall be given

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him for defense, if he demands it and justice requires it.

**248. Temporary Suspension.** — When deemed necessary, the court may withhold the privileges of the Church from the accused until the case shall be tried, provided there is no unreasonable delay in the prosecution.

### CHAPTER VIII

#### OF PROCESS AGAINST MINISTERS

**249. Necessity of Faithfulness.**—As the honor and success of the gospel depend in great measure on the character of its ministers, presbytery ought not on account of their office to screen them from justice or deal lightly with their offenses. On the other hand, charges against them should not be received on slight grounds.

**250. Process Commenced.** — Process against a minister shall be entered before the presbytery to which he belongs, and the rules of procedure laid down in chapters VI and VII shall be observed.

**251. Offense Committed Beyond His Own Presbytery.**—If a minister is charged with an offense committed outside the bounds of his own presbytery, his presbytery shall send a copy of the charge to the presbytery within whose bounds the offense is said to have been committed, and request it either to cite the witnesses to appear at the place of trial, if within convenient distance, or to examine the witnesses and transmit an authenticated record of the testimony, always giving due notice to the accused person of the time and place of such examination.

**252. Offenses Unknown to His Presbytery.**—When a minister is accused of an offense committed at such a distance from his presbytery that it is not likely to become known to that presbytery, it shall be the duty of the presbytery within whose bounds the alleged offense was committed, after being satisfied that there is sufficient ground for accusation, to send notice thereof to the former, which shall proceed against him, and shall either

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request the latter to take the testimony, as provided for in the preceding section, or shall send a commissioner or commissioners for this purpose. In either case due notice must be given to the accused party.

**253. Contumacy.**—A minister who has been accused of an offense, having been twice duly cited and refusing to appear, shall be immediately suspended from the exercise of his office.

**254. Rights of an Accused Minister.**—A minister under process shall retain unimpaired his right to deliberate and vote in other matters, unless the offense charged is of such a nature that the presbytery considers it necessary to suspend him from the exercise of his ministry until the charge is investigated.

**255. Charges Against a Probationer.**—In case of a charge of heresy, or of conduct unbecoming a minister, the presbytery shall make a careful investigation. If the charge is sustained, the presbytery shall take such steps for the removal of the offense as may be found prudent. If the offense is not removed, his license shall be withdrawn. If the charge is of a personal offense, or of immorality, the session of the congregation to which he belongs shall adjudicate the case without delay.

### CHAPTER IX

#### OF CHALLENGING MEMBERS OF A COURT

**256. Grounds of Challenge.**—No member of a court shall take part in the trial of a case who is personally interested in the issue thereof, or who is closely related to either party, or who has been active for or against either party in the matter embraced in the charge, or who is at personal variance with either party, or who has prejudged the case. Any member so disqualified may be challenged by either party, and the question thus raised shall be determined by the remaining qualified members.

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**257. Want of a Qualified Quorum.**—Should it appear that so many members of the court are thus disqualified to try the case as to leave less than a quorum, the court shall adjourn until a qualified quorum can be obtained, and if it is found that a qualified quorum of said court cannot be obtained, the case shall be certified for trial to the next higher court, which shall then adjudicate the case.

### CHAPTER X

#### OF EXCEPTIONAL CASES

**258. Judgment Without Process.**—There are cases in which the guilt of an individual is manifest, the offense being committed in the presence of the court, or in which a trial is rendered unnecessary by the confession of the party. In such cases judgment may be given without process, but the record must show the nature of the offense, together with the judgment and the reasons therefor, and an appeal may be taken from the judgment as in other cases.

**259. Appeal.**—If an appeal be taken, the court becomes an original party, and shall appoint one or more of its members, or other persons under its jurisdiction, to defend its action in the superior court.

**260. Withdrawal from the Jurisdiction of the Court.**—If a minister or member under process withdraw from the jurisdiction of the court in an irregular manner, on proper evidence thereof the court may erase his name from the roll.

### CHAPTER XI

#### OF EVIDENCE

**261. Admissibility.**—Evidence to be admissible must be competent and logically relevant to the charge at issue. What a witness has heard is not to be received as evidence except statements made by the accused or by some one in the presence and hearing of the accused.

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**262. —Kinds of Evidence.**—Evidence may be direct or circumstantial. Great caution is always to be exercised by the court in admitting circumstantial evidence, especially in the absence of the positive testimony of at least one credible witness.

**263. Proof of Charge.**—A charge may be established by oral testimony, by matters of record, or by other documents duly proved. When the proof of a charge depends entirely upon the testimony of witnesses, two credible witnesses shall be required to establish it, or one credible witness accompanied with proof of corroborating circumstances equal to a second witness.

**264. Competency of Witnesses.**—All persons, including the parties, are competent witnesses except such as do not believe in the existence of God and His dispensation of future rewards and punishments, and such as have not sufficient intelligence to understand the obligation of an oath.

A husband or wife shall be a competent witness for or against the other, but shall not be compelled to testify.

**265. Credibility of Witnesses.**—The credibility of a witness may be affected by relationship to either of the parties, by interest in the result, by want of proper age, by weakness of understanding, by infamy of character, by enmity to the accused, by being under censure, by general rashness, indiscretion, or malignity of character, and by various other circumstances to which courts should carefully attend, and for which they should make due allowance in their decision.

**266. Right of Challenge.**—Either party may challenge a witness on the ground of incompetency, and the court shall decide the question.

**267. Witnesses to be Sworn.**—All witnesses shall be sworn in the following form: "Do you solemnly swear in the presence of the omniscient and heart-searching God that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in the matter in which you are called to testify, as you shall

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answer to the Great Judge of the quick and dead?" If a witness has conscientious scruples against taking an oath, he shall be affirmed in the following form: "Do you solemnly affirm that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in the matter in which you are called to testify, and so you affirm?"

**268. Separate Examination.**—Witnesses to be examined, except members of the court, shall not be present during the examination of other witnesses if either party demands their exclusion.

**269. A Member of the Court as a Witness.**—A member of the court may be called upon to bear testimony in a case which comes before it, but he shall not thereafter act as a member of the court if objected to by either party.

**270. Examination of Witnesses.**—After a witness has qualified he shall be examined by the party introducing him, and may then be cross-examined by the opposite party. After this any member of the court, or either party, may put additional questions. Leading questions by the party introducing a witness shall not be permitted except by consent of the court when necessary to elicit the truth.

**271. Record of Testimony.**—The testimony given by the witnesses shall be faithfully recorded in question and answer form, read to them for correction and approval, and subscribed by them and attested by the moderator or clerk.

**272. Duty of the Court.**—It shall be the duty of the court to weigh the evidence with care and impartiality. No member of a court shall reveal any private knowledge he may have in a matter involved in a trial before the court save as a witness testifying openly, as above provided; neither shall a member of the court, having private knowledge of such matter, allow himself to be influenced thereby in his decision.

**273. Records of a Church Court.**—The records of a church court, or any part of them, whether original or transcribed, attested by the moderator and clerk,

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or either of them, shall, when relevant, be admitted as evidence in every other court. Testimony taken by one church court at the request of another shall be received by the latter as though it had been taken by itself.

**274. Witnesses From Other Jurisdictions.**—When witnesses are needed in the trial of a case who belong to a jurisdiction of other co-ordinate courts of the United Presbyterian Church, those courts shall, on the application of the court trying the case, issue citations to such witnesses to appear at the place of trial and give evidence as may be required by the trial court. Witnesses so cited shall be entitled to receive from the party calling them all necessary expenses incurred in their attendance at the trial.

**275. Testimony Taken by Commissioners.**— In cases where, from distance or any other cause, it is impossible for witnesses to be present, the court may appoint a commissioner or commissioners to take the testimony, giving both parties in the case an opportunity to be present and examine the witnesses. Testimony so taken may be read at the trial, subject to the same objections as might be made if the witnesses were personally present and so testifying before the court.

**276. New Evidence in Appeal.**—If in the prosecution of an appeal new evidence is offered which in the judgment of the appellate court has an important bearing on the case, it may refer the case back to the lower court for a new trial, or, with the consent of the parties, it may admit the evidence and proceed to determine the case. When, however, such evidence, either alone or in connection with other considerations, induces a reversal of the decision of the lower court, this fact should be distinctly stated in the decision of the superior court.

**277. Evidence Discovered After Judgment.**—Any person convicted of an offense may afterwards apply for a new trial on the ground of newly discovered evidence, and the court, if satisfied that the evidence

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proffered is material, and could not with reasonable diligence have been offered sooner, may grant the application. When the new evidence has been taken, the court using the whole evidence in the case shall proceed to judgment as if no former judgment had been given, and the later judgment shall supersede the former.

### CHAPTER XII

#### OF SENTENCES

**278. Definition.**—A sentence is the declaration by a court of the degree of censure to be imposed on a person found guilty of an offense, and shall be reduced to writing. If the charge or complaint contains different specifications, the sentence must be founded only on such as are duly proved or confessed.

**279. Execution of Sentence.**—When sentence has been pronounced and reduced to writing, the court shall proceed at once to the execution thereof, unless in its judgment delay should be granted until such a time as the court may fix.

**280. Degrees of Church Censure.**—There are five degrees of Church censure, namely: admonition, rebuke, suspension, deposition, and excommunication, all of which shall be pronounced by the moderator in the name of the court.

**281. Admonition.**—Admonition is the lowest degree of censure. It consists in tenderly reproving an offender, warning him of his guilt and danger, and exhorting him to be more watchful in the future. Ordinarily it shall be administered in private.

**282. Rebuke.**—Rebuke is a higher degree of censure for an aggravated offense, and consists in setting forth the character of the offense, with a sharp reproof for it. Where the offense is private, or where the public interests of religion will not be injured thereby, the rebuke shall be administered in presence of the court alone. But where the offense is public, or has become a scandal, the rebuke shall be public.

**283. Suspension.**—Suspension is a censure which



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may be inflicted on either a private member or an officer of the Church. In respect to the former, it is temporary exclusion from sealing ordinances; in respect to the latter, it is a temporary exclusion from the exercise of office, and in ordinary cases from sealing ordinances also. In the case of a pastor it may also include the dissolution of the pastoral relation.

This censure becomes necessary when very gross offenses have been committed, or when, notwithstanding admonition or rebuke, an offense is repeated or persisted in, or when probation is necessary to attest repentance and reformation.

Suspension may be for a definite time, but generally it must be indefinite in duration, and its removal must depend upon evidence of repentance.

Suspension may be administered in the absence of the offender, and either in public or in private, at the discretion of the court.

**284. Deposition.**—Deposition is a sentence depriving a church officer of his office, and shall be accompanied with exclusion from sealing ordinances.

The sentence of deposition shall be publicly read to the congregation. In the case of deposition of a pastor, the pastoral relation shall thereby be dissolved, and the congregation shall be declared vacant.

When deposition from the ministry has taken place, the presbytery shall immediately send notice thereof to all the presbyteries of the Church.

**285. Excommunication.**—Excommunication is the judicial excision of an offender from the visible Church.

This sentence should not be passed except for such errors or violation of the law of God as are grossly inconsistent with the Christian profession, or for obstinate persistence in grave offenses, and not even then until all proper measures have failed to reclaim the offender.

A session, if shut up to this step, may refer the matter to the presbytery for advice. A presbytery,

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also, before excommunicating a minister, may consult the synod.

In every case, before this action is taken, due notice must be given to the offender. Thereafter the sentence may be passed by the court, whether he is present or absent.

In the passing of the sentence, which shall be public, the officiating minister shall recount the steps which have been taken in the case, and explain the necessity of the sentence, and, having prayed for the Lord's blessing on His own ordinance, he shall solemnly pronounce the sentence in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### OF THE RESTORATION OF OFFENDERS

**286. Conditions.**—No degree of guilt precludes restoration to church privilege on satisfactory evidence of repentance and reformation.

**287. Jurisdiction.**—The restoration of offenders shall be made by the court which imposed the sentence or by a co-ordinate court to which it may transfer the case.

**288. How Restored.**—When the court having jurisdiction shall be fully satisfied of the reality of the repentance of one under sentence, he shall be restored, either in the presence of the court alone or publicly; but when the sentence was a public one, the restoration also should in ordinary cases be public.

**289. Restoration of Officers.**—When a minister, elder, or deacon has been deposed, he may be restored to church privileges on evidence of repentance, but in no case shall he be restored to the exercise of his office until it shall appear that the restoration can be effected without injury to the cause of religion.

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## CHAPTER XIV

### OF DISSENTS AND PROTESTS

**290. Dissent.**—A dissent is a declaration of disagreement with the decision of a court by one or more members thereof. A dissent must be made immediately after the action dissented from is taken, and it shall be entered on the record.

**291. Protest.**—A protest is a more formal declaration made by one or more members of a court against what is believed to be an irregular proceeding or an erroneous and injurious decision or judgment, accompanied with reasons therefor. A protest shall be entered immediately after the action protested against is taken, and the reasons on which it is founded shall be transmitted to the clerk of the court within ten days, except in the court of last resort, when reasons shall be presented before the final adjournment of the court. If a protest is couched in respectful language it shall be entered on the record.

**292. Right to Dissent or Protest.**—No one may join in a dissent or protest who has not a right to vote on the question decided and who did not vote in the negative.

**293. Answer to Protest.**—The court may prepare an answer, which shall be entered on the record, to any protest which imputes to it principles or reasonings which its action does not import. Leave may then be given to the person or persons protesting, if they desire it, to modify their protest, and the answer of the court may also, in consequence, be modified. This shall end the matter.

**294. What it Implies.**—The admission of a protest by a court implies no more than a recognition of the right of the person protesting to satisfy his conscience; but such protest does not justify the protestor in disobedience and non-submission.

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## CHAPTER XV

### OF THE REMOVAL OF A CASE FROM A LOWER TO A HIGHER COURT

**295. Modes.**—Every decision of any court or commission of a court below the General Assembly shall be subject to the review of a superior court, and it may be brought before it in one or other of the following ways, viz., by review and control, complaint, or appeal. Also a case may be transferred by reference for advice or judgment.

An appeal, complaint, or reference shall always be in writing, and shall contain a clear statement of the question involved. The court of appeal shall enter upon its records the appeal, complaint, or reference as presented from the lower court, a clear statement of its own decision, and the grounds upon which it is made.

**296. Jurisdiction.**—In all cases of appeal, complaint, or reference the synod shall be the court of final jurisdiction for the determination of all matters except questions involving doctrine, the regularity of proceedings, or the interpretation of law, which question may be carried on appeal, complaint, or reference to the General Assembly as the court of final jurisdiction, and may be carried direct from the presbytery to the General Assembly, whose judgment shall be for the guidance of the lower court to which the case may be carried on other grounds.

When an appeal, complaint, or reference has been made to the General Assembly on questions involving doctrine, the regularity of proceedings, or the interpretation of law, and made to a lower appellate court on other grounds, the lower appellate court shall defer action on the case until the General Assembly has decided the questions carried to it.

**297. Rights of the Inferior Court.**—When a matter is transferred in any of these ways from an inferior to a superior court, except in cases of reference, the members of the inferior court shall not have the right to take part in the proceedings.

**298. In Cases Before a Commission.**—The right

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of dissent, protest, appeal, and complaint, and the rules of procedure therein, shall be the same in a commission as in the full court. Notice of appeal or complaint shall be given to the commission before its adjournment, and the reasons therefor shall be lodged within ten days with the moderator or clerk of the court appointing it. The commission shall not appear in any subsequent proceedings.

### ARTICLE I

#### OF REVIEW AND CONTROL

**299. General Review.**—It is the duty of every court above a session to review the records of the proceedings of the court next below at least once a year. If any lower court shall neglect to send up its records for this purpose, the higher court may issue an order to produce them, either immediately, or at some specified time.

A higher court may also, at any time, require the next lower court to produce its registers, rolls, or other official documents.

**300. Matters of Review.**—In reviewing the records of an inferior court, the higher court shall examine, first, whether the proceedings have been constitutional and regular; second, whether they have been equitable and prudent; third, whether they have been correctly recorded.

**301. Mode of Review.**—The review may be conducted by a committee, which shall report to the meeting at which it was appointed.

If censure appears necessary, the members of the inferior court present shall be heard in defense, and the judgment of the court reviewing and the reasons therefor shall be entered on the minutes of the superior court and on the book reviewed.

**302. Irregular Proceedings.**—If in the review irregular proceedings are found so injurious as to require correction, the inferior court may be directed to take such action and to report the correction as soon as practicable. No judicial decision, however,

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shall be reversed by the court reviewing, unless it is regularly brought up by appeal or complaint.

If at any time after such review it comes to the knowledge of the higher court that the lower court under its jurisdiction has neglected its duty, or has committed grave irregularities, it may take such cognizance thereof as is deemed necessary.

### ARTICLE II OF REFERENCES

**303. Definition.**—A reference is a judicial representation, made in writing by an inferior court to a superior court having jurisdiction, for advice or judgment in a matter not yet decided.

**304. Proper Subjects.**—Proper subjects of reference are cases that are new or peculiarly delicate or difficult, and the decision of which may establish a precedent of extensive influence, cases on which the members of the court are much divided, and questions of the interpretation of law for the guidance of the lower court.

**305. Objects.**—References are either for advice or for trial and decision of the case by the superior court having jurisdiction.

**306. Effects.**—In case of reference for advice, the effect of the reference is merely to suspend the decision of the court making it; in the case of reference for trial and decision, the effect of the reference is to relinquish the decision and submit the whole case to the judgment of the superior court.

A reference for judgment brings up all the parties before the higher court, and they must be duly notified by the clerk of the lower court of the time and place for hearing the case.

**307. Manner of Reference.**—A reference, as to form, consists of a copy of the resolution to refer, accompanied by so much of the record of the proceedings in the case as shall be necessary for the proper consideration of the matter referred. The

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reference shall be presented in the superior court by commissioners appointed for the purpose.

**308. Duty of a Superior Court.**—Although a superior court ought generally to give advice, yet it is not bound to give a final judgment in a case referred, even when requested to do so, but it may remit the whole case with or without advice to the court referring.

### ARTICLE III OF COMPLAINTS

**309. Definition.**—A complaint is a written representation made to a superior court by one or more members of an inferior court, or parties in interest, respecting a final decision of the inferior court because of some particular delinquency or error, or as being unjust or injurious to the purity of the Church or the interests of truth and righteousness.

In judicial cases a party declining to appeal shall not be allowed to complain.

**310. Notice of Complaint.**—Notice of complaint shall be given to the court during the session at which the action complained of is taken, and the reasons therefor shall be filed with the moderator or clerk within ten days.

**311. Complaint Presented to the Superior Court.** The complainant shall lodge his complaint and the reasons therefor with the superior court at its first stated meeting, or at such time as the court may appoint, and not later than the second session thereof. If the complaint is not presented within the time specified, it shall be considered as abandoned, and the judgment of the lower court shall stand, unless the delay is shown to have been unavoidable.

**312. Duty of the Lower Court.**—The court against whose decision a complaint is made shall likewise lodge with the superior court, within the time specified above, the records and all papers pertaining to the case. If it fails to do this and such delay would work injustice, the superior court may stop further proceedings on the decision of the lower court, or

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may at its discretion take up and try the case *de novo*.

**313. Parties.**—In a complaint the court complained against is an original party, and shall be represented in the higher court by one or more of its members or other persons under its jurisdiction, but shall not otherwise appear in the proceedings. The parties shall be known in the higher courts as the complainant and the respondent.

**314. Effect of Complaint.**—If a complaint is sustained, the superior court may, at its discretion, annul, in whole or in part, the action or decision complained of, and shall, if necessary, give instructions to the lower court as to further proceedings in the case.

The operation of a complaint in cases of administration is to suspend all further proceedings, except in cases where the court complained against deems it advisable or necessary to proceed.

**315. Rules of Procedure.**—The rules of procedure in complaints shall be the same as in appeals.

### ARTICLE IV OF APPEALS

**316. Definition.**—An appeal is the removal from an inferior to a superior court of a judicial case finally decided, or of a final decision rendered in administrative proceedings.

**317. Grounds.**—In judicial cases an appeal may be taken from the final judgment of the court on the following grounds: mistake or injustice in the decision; refusal of reasonable indulgence to the party on trial; receiving improper, or declining to receive proper evidence; hurrying to a decision before the testimony is all taken; and manifestation of prejudice in the case. An appeal may also be taken from the severity of the sentence.

In administrative cases an appeal may be taken from the final decision of the court as irregular, unconstitutional, or injurious to the cause of truth and righteousness.



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**318. Right of Appeal.**—In a judicial case the right of appeal belongs only to the original parties; in administrative cases, to any member of the court who was present when the action was taken.

**319. Notice of Appeal.**—Notice of appeal shall be given to the court before it rises, and the reasons therefor shall be filed with the moderator or clerk within ten days.

**320. Operation of an Appeal.**—The operation of an appeal in a judicial case is to suspend all further proceedings on the judgment appealed from, except that a sentence of suspension or excommunication from church privileges, or deposition from office, shall be in force until the appeal is decided.

The operation of an appeal in cases of administration is to suspend all further proceedings on the decision, except in cases where the court appealed from deems it advisable or necessary to proceed.

**321. Appeal Presented to the Superior Court.**—The appellant shall lodge his appeal and the specifications of error with the court appealed to at its first stated meeting, or at such time as the court may appoint, and not later than the second session thereof, and either party may appear in person or in writing or by a representative. If the appeal is not presented within the time specified, it shall be considered as abandoned, and the judgment of the lower court shall stand, unless the delay is shown to have been unavoidable.

**322. Duty of Lower Court.**—The court from whose judgment an appeal is taken shall likewise lodge with the court appealed to, within the time specified above, the records and all papers pertaining to the case. If it fails to do this, and such delay would work injustice, the superior court may suspend the sentence, or, in administrative cases, stop further proceedings on the decision of the lower court, or may at its discretion take up and try the case *de novo*.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

**323. Procedure in Superior Court.**—In taking up an appeal, after ascertaining that it is within the province of the court, and that it has been regularly conducted, the court shall proceed as follows: first, the appeal and specifications of error shall be read; second, the records and papers in the case shall be read, except so much as may be omitted by consent of the parties; third, the parties shall be heard, the appellant having the opening and closing argument; fourth, opportunity shall be given the members of the appellate court to be heard; fifth, the vote shall be taken without further debate on each specification in this form: "Shall this specification of error be sustained?"

**324. Action of the Appellate Court.**—The decision may be to confirm or to reverse, in whole or in part, the decision of the lower court, or to remit the case for the purpose of amending the record, should it appear incorrect or defective, or for a new trial. In every case a full record shall be made.

If an appeal is sustained, the judgment of the inferior court is reversed; but if not sustained, the judgment is affirmed. If an appeal is sustained, the superior court may close the case, if further proceedings are deemed unnecessary, or try it, or direct the court below how to proceed. But if on appeal a decision of an appellate court affirming a judgment is reversed by a higher appellate court, the case shall be tried by the higher court.

**325. Troublesome Appellants.**—If an appellant manifests a litigious or otherwise unchristian spirit in the prosecution of his appeal, he shall be censured according to the degree of his offense.

# PART IV

## WORSHIP

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### CHAPTER I

#### INTRODUCTORY

**326. Definition of Worship.**—Christian worship is a sincere and reverent outgoing of the spirit to God in silent communion or outward expression.

**327. Object of Worship.**—Worship is due to God alone as He is revealed to us in the Scriptures as the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, and is to be offered in the way of His appointment.

**328. Medium of Worship.**—The Lord Jesus Christ being the only Mediator between God and man, all worship must be offered to God through Him and is acceptable only in His Name.

**329. Necessity and Duty of Worship.**—Inasmuch as the worship of God is essential to the Christian life and to growth in grace, it should be carefully and habitually observed, and the spirit of worship should be cultivated by the study of the Word of God, meditation, and prayer.

**330. Outward and Visible Worship.**—Worship as treated in this book consists in the performance of those acts, rites, and ceremonies appointed of God in which men engage for the honor of God, the enjoyment of His favor, and the edification of His people.

**331. Kinds of Worship.**—Worship in this outward form may be divided into public, private, and family worship.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

**332. A Directory for Worship.**—In order to uniformity in worship and for the comfort of the worshipers, a directory for worship is necessary, to set forth the seasons, ordinances, and order of worship as they are appointed in the Holy Scriptures or authorized by the Church in accordance therewith.

### CHAPTER II

#### OF THE SEASONS OF WORSHIP

**333. Set Times of Worship.**—While a devotional frame of mind should always be maintained, yet set times for Divine worship are specifically recognized in the Word of God.

**334. The Sabbath.**—Under the gospel dispensation God has appointed the first day of the week as the Christian Sabbath, the Lord's Day, to be kept holy and specially devoted to His worship.

**335. Other Times of Worship.**—In addition to the Sabbath, special days of worship may be appointed by the Church or State when circumstances make such an appointment proper or necessary. Congregations and companies of disciples should have stated times other than the Sabbath for prayer and the study of the Scriptures.

**336. Morning and Evening Worship.**—It is especially appropriate that the morning and evening be observed as seasons for private and family worship.

### CHAPTER III

#### OF PLACES OF WORSHIP

**337. Meeting Places Necessary.**—True and acceptable worship may be rendered to God in whatever place offered, but as God has made special promises of His blessings to His people when they unite in His worship, it is necessary that suitable places should be provided where they may gather together in His presence.

**338. Such Places Sacred.**—Buildings set apart to the worship of God should be regarded as His sanctuaries, and nothing should be admitted into them

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

which will tend to destroy that thought in the minds of the people, or beget associations hurtful to spiritual worship.

**339. Suitable.**—The sanctuaries of God should be made as beautiful and suitable as the simplicity of New Testament worship and the circumstances of the people will permit.

**340. Location.**—Houses of worship should be so placed, as to location and surroundings, that they will serve the greatest comfort and convenience of all the people.

### CHAPTER IV

#### OF THE ORDINANCES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

**341. Ordinances of Public Worship.**—The stated ordinances of public worship as set forth in the Holy Scriptures are: prayer and praise; the reading, preaching, and hearing of the Word of God; the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper; Christian giving; and the benediction. To these a formal declaration of Christian faith may be added. Special ordinances are fasting and thanksgiving.

### CHAPTER V

#### OF THE ORDER OF WORSHIP

**342. Order of Worship.**—To maintain the dignity of worship, and that it may be of profit, an order of exercises is usually necessary; but to secure liberty also in worship this order should be subject to such variations as the circumstances of the occasion and the promptings of the Spirit may suggest to the officiating minister. The following order may be observed: doxology, invocation, singing praise, reading the Scriptures, prayer, singing praise, presentation of offerings, preaching the Word, prayer, singing praise, the benediction. To these exercises may be added, if the session so elects, at a suitable point in the service, responsive reading, a formal declaration of belief, and silent prayer by all the people after the benediction.

# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER VI

### OF THE READING OF THE SCRIPTURES

**343. Manner of Reading.**—The reading of the Scriptures is an integral part of public worship, and should have a place in every service. The importance of this ordinance demands studious and prayerful preparation on the part of the minister. With due reverence and thoughtfulness he should so read the Word that the message of the Spirit may be clearly expressed.

**344. Responsive Reading.**—Responsive Scripture reading may be introduced into the devotional part of public worship with profit to the people.

## CHAPTER VII

### OF THE SINGING OF PRAISE

**345. Matter of Praise.**—Praise as a definite ordinance of worship is expressed in words joined to music. In this ordinance the Psalms of the Bible, by reason of their Divine inspiration, their excellence, and their evident design, are accredited for permanent use. The poetical versions of the Psalms used in praise shall be such as may be authorized from time to time by the Church.

**346. Manner of Praise.**—In praising God we should sing thoughtfully, reverently, fervently, with grace in the heart, as becometh the worship of the High and Holy One. That this service may be rendered in a proper manner, the congregation should carefully cultivate a knowledge of music.

**347. All Should Sing.**—The whole congregation should join in this part of worship. Some suitable person or persons should be employed to lead in the singing, but none should be appointed to this service who are not of known Christian character.

**348. Regulation of Praise.**—It belongs to the session to regulate the singing of praise in the congregation and to see that this important part of public worship is rendered for edification and in the best possible manner.

# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER VIII

### OF THE OFFERING OF PRAYER

**349. Manner of Prayer.**—Prayer, being a near approach to God and an essential channel of blessing, should have a prominent place in every service, and should be offered with the utmost reverence of thought, language, and manner, and with the humility that becomes a worshiper in the presence of the Most Holy God.

**350. Number of Prayers.**—The number of prayers in a service should be governed by the order of worship approved by the Church and the enlightened judgment of the minister. Each prayer should be adapted to its place in the service, and repetitions and injudicious length should be avoided.

**351. Preparation for Prayer.**—The minister should make a careful study of the subjects of prayer for each service and prepare his own heart and mind to lead the people in a manner profitable to them and acceptable to God.

**352. Invocation.**—The introductory prayer should be brief, consisting of adoration and petitions for due preparation of heart on the part of the people, for the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit, and for His blessing on every part of the service.

**353. Prayer Before the Sermon.**—The prayer before the sermon should be comprehensive, consisting of adoration, thanksgiving, confession, supplication, and intercession. It should be adapted to the circumstances and needs of the worshipers, and should include petitions for our own Church, for the Church of God in all its branches, for the extension of the Kingdom of Christ throughout the world, for our own country and for all in places of authority and trust, for all classes and conditions of men, and for the nations of the earth.

**354. The Prayer After the Sermon.**—The prayer after the sermon should be fitted to the close of the service, beseeching God to impress the truth on the hearts of the hearers, to accept the worship that

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

has been offered in the name of Christ, and to bless all with the fulness of grace.

**355. Deportment of Worshipers.**—During all the services the people should maintain a reverent attitude, should avoid all distraction of mind, and should devoutly join with the minister as he leads them in their devotions.

### CHAPTER IX

#### OF THE BENEDICTION

**356. The Benediction.**—The minister should conclude the services of worship with a solemn benediction.

**357. Form.**—The following form of benediction may be used: “The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.”

**358. Occasion.**—The benediction should be employed only in connection with and as a part of worship.

### CHAPTER X

#### OF PREACHING THE WORD

**359. Importance of Preaching.**—As the preaching of the Word is of chief importance as a means of salvation, it should receive special attention, and every minister should prepare for this service with much study, meditation, and prayer.

**360. The Sermon.**—Every sermon should be the unfolding of the truth taught in some portion of Scripture and a close application to the heart and conscience of the hearer.

**361. Purpose and Preparation.** — The minister should seek the aid of the Holy Spirit that he may be enabled to declare all the counsel of God, to present the Word in its variety and application to the different relations of life, and clearly and fully present the Lord Jesus as the Saviour of men.



# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER XI

### OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF BAPTISM

**362. Administrator.**—Baptism is a sacrament of the New Testament Church, and, therefore, may be administered only by an ordained minister of the gospel.

**363. Subjects.**—Baptism, being a seal of the New Covenant, is to be administered to those who make a credible profession of their faith in Christ and to their children.

**364. Mode.**—Baptism is administered by the application of water to the person by sprinkling or pouring. The Church recognizes the validity of baptism by immersion.

**365. Obligations.**—Baptism involves solemn obligations on the part of parents and those to whom the ordinance is administered. These obligations shall be acknowledged by an affirmative answer to the following questions:

#### BAPTISM OF CHILDREN

Parents presenting their children shall answer the following questions:

(1) "Do you now take God as your God in covenant, and as the God of your children?"

(2) Do you renew the profession you made when you were admitted to the Church?

(3) Do you solemnly promise, if God shall spare your life and that of your children, to train them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; to instruct them in regard to their lost condition by nature, and to lead them to the Saviour; to pray with them and for them; to worship God regularly in your family; to set before them an example of piety; and to use all the appointed means for their salvation?"

#### BAPTISM OF ADULTS

Unbaptized adults, having been received by the session, are to be baptized on the public profession of their faith in Christ and their obedience to Him.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

The form of question for the public recognition of church members may be used, viz:

“Do you now in the presence of the congregation make acknowledgment of your faith in Christ and your purpose to live a Christian life, and publicly declare your engagement to cultivate the spirit of Christian fellowship and brotherly love, and to seek the welfare of this congregation while you remain a member thereof?”

**366. Order of Service.**—After a suitable exposition of the ordinance, and the vows having been taken by the parents, the congregation standing, prayer shall be offered for the presence of God in the administration of the ordinance. The minister, pronouncing the name, shall sprinkle water on the head of the child, saying: “I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” He shall then conclude the service with prayer. The same order shall be observed in the baptism of adults.

**367. Place of Administration.**—Baptism should, ordinarily, be administered in the church, or stated place of meeting, in connection with public worship. When administered in any other place it should be with the approval of the session, and in connection with religious exercises.

### CHAPTER XII

#### OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

**368. Administrator and Communicants.** — The Lord's supper, being a sacrament of the New Testament Church, is to be administered under the direction of the session by an ordained minister, and only to those who have confessed their faith in Christ and are leading a Christian life.

**369. Time and Place.**—The Lord's supper should be observed frequently, but how often the session of each congregation must determine. Ordinarily there should be stated times for this sacrament, and notice thereof should be given to the congregation at least two Sabbaths before the time appointed.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

The ordinance should, ordinarily, be administered in the stated place of worship. Being a service for the communion of saints, it may not be administered privately by the minister; but in case of sickness or long-continued inability to attend upon the public service, it may be administered in a private house under the direction of the session.

**370. Preparation.**—The minister should be careful to instruct his people from time to time in the nature and purposes of the sacrament and the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ to observe it regularly. As those who receive the sacrament are required to examine themselves as to their fitness for the solemn act, the ordinance should be preceded by preparatory services carefully arranged to aid them in their preparation for coming to the Lord's table, to commune with one another, to commemorate the Lord's death, and enter into the New Covenant in His blood.

**371. Introductory Services.**—All services in connection with the administration of the Lord's supper should be of great solemnity, as becomes the nature of the ordinance, and should so present the Lord Jesus and His redemption that all will be strengthened in their faith and love, and be inspired to more holy living.

**372. The Administration.**—After the introductory services, the communicants shall reverently take their places for the communion during the singing of an appropriate Psalm. The minister shall then read the words of institution, and, after the example of the Lord, give thanks to God and ask His blessing.

He shall then take the bread, break it, and give it to the communicants, saying: "The Lord Jesus in the night in which He was betrayed took bread; and, when He had given thanks, He brake it, and said: This is My body, which is for you; this do in remembrance of Me."

He shall also take the cup and give it to the communicants, saying: "In like manner also the cup,

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

after supper, saying: This cup is the New Covenant in My blood: this do, as often as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come."

While the elements are being passed by the elders the communicants may be left to their own reflections.

**373. Concluding the Service.**—After all have received the sacrament the minister may appropriately remind the communicants of the grace of God and the love of Christ as exhibited in this ordinance, and of their obligation to live a consistent Christian life. He shall conclude the service with thanksgiving, praise, and the benediction.

**374. Subsequent Services.** — It may be profitable to follow the communion with one or more sermons adapted to the deepening of the impressions of the occasion and the instruction of the people in the obligations and privileges of the Christian life.

### CHAPTER XIII

#### OF PRAYER MEETINGS

**375. Congregational Prayer Meeting.**—A meeting of the congregation for prayer should be held, if possible, at least once during the week. This service being an important means of grace, every member should make earnest effort to be present and have part in it.

**376. Control and Order.**—This service shall be under the control of the session, and shall consist of prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, exposition, exhortation, and testimony, in such order as shall conduce to edification.

A like service should be held on any Sabbath when there is no stated preaching of the gospel.

**377. Sessional Prayer Meetings.**—Sessions should frequently meet for conference and prayer, when they should consider the spiritual condition of their congregations, and implore Divine guidance in all that pertains to their office.

# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER XIV

### OF FAMILY WORSHIP

**378. Time.**—Family worship is essential to the development of household religion, and its daily observance should be faithfully maintained in every Christian home. Parents, and children, and servants should be present at this service.

**379. Leader.**—The head of the family should ordinarily conduct the service. If the husband is absent or disqualified, the believing wife or other competent person should perform the duty.

**380. Order.**—Family worship should consist of praise, reading the Scriptures, prayer and such exercises as may be conducive to spiritual life in the home.

## CHAPTER XV

### OF PRIVATE WORSHIP

**381. Its Necessity.**—In private worship the believing soul is alone with God. This is essential to growth in grace and the realization of holiness in character and life. Because of the tendency of the human heart to depart from God, and the constant temptations of the world, private worship should be a daily practice.

## CHAPTER XVI

### OF THANKSGIVING

**382. Occasion.**—When God gives special tokens of His favor to a nation or the Church, men should unite in public thanksgiving. An annual thanksgiving day by the nation in recognition of Divine mercies bestowed is highly appropriate, and should be observed.

**383. Observance.**—A convenient portion of the day appointed for thanksgiving should be spent in the exercises of ordinary public worship; the mercies of the past and present should specially be remembered, and all the services should tend to develop a grateful spirit. It is recommended that an

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

offering be made for some benevolent object and that a portion of the day be spent in works of Christian charity.

### CHAPTER XVII

#### OF THE SABBATH SCHOOL

**384. A Service for All.**—The Sabbath school is distinctively a teaching service of the Church, and, because of its importance as an evangelizing and training agency, it should have the recognized place of a church service—all the members of the church being connected with it as scholars, teachers, or officers. For those who may be unable to attend the exercises of the school a home department should be maintained.

**385. Superintendent and His Duties.**—The superintendent shall be a person of known piety, and, if practicable, a member of the session. Under the direction of the session, he is the executive officer of the school, and should do whatever is necessary for its good order, efficiency, and success. He should also make provision for teachers' meetings, as may be found practicable.

**386. Teachers.**—The teachers should be members of the church, of earnest piety, and qualified to teach. They should make careful preparation for their work, be regular in their attendance, diligent in securing the attendance of the scholars and in instructing them, faithful in their efforts to lead them to a knowledge of the truth and to a personal faith in Christ, and should visit them in their homes.

**387. Devotional Exercises.**—The singing of appropriate Psalms should have prominence in the devotional services. These services should be so directed and conducted as to inspire reverence and the spirit of worship, fittingly introduce the exercises of the lesson period, and in the closing part impress the lessons taught.

**388. Offerings.**—Instruction should be given on the subject of beneficence and the school trained in the practice of giving to the Lord for the support

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

of the Church and for the evangelization of the world, as a part of worship. The offerings, so far as practicable, should be devoted to these purposes.

**389. Mission Schools.**—In destitute neighborhoods mission Sabbath schools should be organized. In such cases established congregations should aid in furnishing teachers and necessary appliances for the work.

### CHAPTER XVIII

#### OF PASTORAL VISITATION

**390. Duty of Pastors and Elders.**—Ministers and elders of the Church should frequently visit the families and members of the flock over which the Holy Spirit has made them overseers; to pray with, instruct, comfort, encourage, and admonish the people, especially in times of unusual affliction or temptation, to assist them in the study of the Scriptures and doctrinal standards of the Church, and to stimulate them to family religion and fidelity in all Christian duty.

**391. Duty of the People.**—The people should receive the minister and elders with due recognition of their official station and authority and give good heed to their counsels.

### CHAPTER XIX

#### OF SYSTEMATIC BENEFICENCE

**392. A Christian Obligation.**—The Scriptures make it an imperative duty to give a portion of our worldly substance to the Lord. Every member of the Church should reduce the duty of beneficence to a system.

**393. Spirit and Measure.**—The Word of God requires all to give cheerfully, regularly, liberally, and according as God has prospered them.

**394. Duty of Instruction.**—Ministers and elders should frequently instruct their people in regard to the important duty and privilege of supporting the ordinances of the Church and general Christian

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

charities. They should particularly explain the design of the different missionary agencies and educational institutions of the Church, and the character and necessity of the work which they have in charge.

**395. Neglect of the Duty.**—If any person of known pecuniary ability fails in this duty, the session should point out his obligation as revealed in the Word of God, the importance of the duty, and the reward attending its faithful discharge. If he still withholds from the treasury of the Lord, it is the duty of the session to deal with him as an offender.

### CHAPTER XX

#### OF THE SOLEMNIZATION OF MARRIAGE

**396. Marriage.**—Marriage is a solemn contract between one man and one woman, instituted by God, and sanctioned and acknowledged by the civil law. Marriage is not peculiar to the Church of Christ; yet it is the duty of Christians to marry only in the Lord, and it is becoming to have the marriage solemnized with a religious service and by an ordained minister of the gospel.

**397. Parties in Marriage.**—The parties in marriage must not be within the degrees of consanguinity or affinity prohibited by the Word of God, nor persons divorced on unscriptural grounds. They must be of years of discretion and capable of making their own choice. If they are under age, the consent of their parents or guardians should be obtained by the minister before solemnizing the marriage.

**398. Ceremony.**—The minister, having satisfied himself that the parties have complied with the forms required by the laws of the State, shall cause the parties to stand together in the presence of a proper number of witnesses, and shall briefly address them in regard to the institution of marriage and the obligations they are about to assume. They having joined their right hands, he shall address this marriage vow to the man: "Do you, A. B., take



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this woman whom you now hold by the hand to be your wedded wife; and do you solemnly promise, in the presence of God and these witnesses, to be a loving and faithful husband unto her till God shall separate you by death?" When this question is answered in the affirmative, he shall address this similar vow to the woman: "Do you, C. D., take this man, whom you now hold by the hand, to be your wedded husband; and do you solemnly promise, in the presence of God and these witnesses, to be a loving and faithful wife unto him till God shall separate you by death?" When this question is answered in the affirmative, the minister shall say: "I pronounce you husband and wife; what, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." He shall then conclude the ceremony with a prayer for the Divine blessing to rest upon the newly-constituted family.

**399. When Solemnized.** — Ordinarily marriage should not be solemnized on the Sabbath.

### CHAPTER XXI

#### OF MINISTERING TO THE SICK

**400. Duty.**—Attention to the sick is an important part of pastoral service, and should be faithfully discharged by ministers and elders.

**401. Manner.**—All the tender and delicate proprieties of the sick room should be discreetly observed, and the conversation and devotional services of the occasion should be so conducted as to instruct, comfort, and inspire faith and hope in Jesus Christ, and resignation to God's will.

**402. Private Conversation.**—As the presence of friends and strangers may prevent a full statement of feelings and views, conversations with the sick should, when practicable, be in private.

**403. Information.**—When sickness occurs of such a nature as to call for the services of a minister or an elder, information thereof should be immediately given by the family or friends of the sick.

# GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

## CHAPTER XXII

### OF THE BURIAL OF THE DEAD

**404. Time.**—No funeral should take place on the Sabbath except in cases of absolute necessity.

**405. Simplicity.**—Everything which savors of vain display or fulsome eulogy should be avoided.

**406. Service.**—Before removing the body to the grave the minister should conduct brief and suitable religious exercises. After interment appropriate words of Scripture may be spoken, followed by prayer and the benediction.

## ORDER OF BUSINESS

### In The General Assembly, The Synods, and The Presbyteries

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The order of business at every session, unless suspended by a vote of two-thirds, shall be as follows:

1. Calling the roll and marking absentees.
2. Reading and approving the minutes.
3. The presentation of letters, papers, petitions, or matters requiring reference.
4. The presentation of reports from standing and select committees.
5. Unfinished business.
6. New business, in the order in which it was put on the docket.

## FORMS

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### 1. CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP AND DISMISSAL

It is hereby certified that ..... is a member in full communion of the ..... United Presbyterian Church of ....., and is, at..... own request, dismissed to unite with the ..... United Presbyterian Church of ....., or any other Church of Christ where God in His providence may direct, and when so received all responsibility to this Session shall cease.

By order of Session,  
Given at ..... Moderator  
this .. day of ....., 19.. ..... Clerk

### 2. CERTIFICATE FOR A MEMBER WHO HAS BEEN SOME TIME ABSENT

It is hereby certified that ..... was a member in full communion of the ..... United Presbyterian Church of ..... up to ..... 19...., when ..... removed from the bounds thereof, and that, as far as known to this Session, ..... may be received into the membership of any Church of Christ.

By order of Session,  
Given at ..... Moderator  
this .. day of ....., 19.. ..... Clerk

### 3. CERTIFICATE OF MEMBERSHIP FOR ONE ABSENT FROM HOME

I hereby certify that ..... is a member in full communion in the ..... United Presbyterian Church of ....., and is entitled to Christian fellowship wherever ..... may be during ..... absence from us.

Given at .....  
this .. day of ....., 19..  
..... Pastor

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### 4. CERTIFICATE FOR A MEMBER WHO HAS NEGLECTED THE ORDINANCES

It is hereby certified that ..... was a member in full communion of the ..... United Presbyterian Church of ..... up to ..... 19.., when ..... ceased attendance upon the ordinances of worship.

Given at ..... Moderator  
this .. day of .., 19.. Clerk

### 5. FORM OF APPLICATION FOR THE MODERATION OF A CALL

The United Presbyterian congregation of ..... being at present without a pastor, the Session hereby petitions the presbytery of ..... for the appointment of a minister to preside in the moderation of a call at a convenient date.

Done at ..... the .... day of .., 19..  
..... Moderator  
..... Clerk

### 6. FORM OF A CALL FOR A MINISTER

We, the elders, members, and adherents of the ..... United Presbyterian congregation of ....., taking into consideration the great loss we suffer through the want of a fixed gospel ministry among us, and being satisfied, from opportunities of enjoying your public ministrations, that the Great Head of the Church has bestowed upon you, A. B., such ministerial gifts as, through the Divine blessing, may be profitable for our edification, do hereby call and beseech you to take the charge and oversight of this congregation, to labor in it, and watch over it, as our fixed pastor; and on your acceptance of this our call we promise you all due respect, encouragement, and obedience in the Lord, and an annual salary of ..... Dollars and the payment of an amount equal to seven and one-half per cent of the salary in monthly or quarterly payments to the Pension Fund.

In testimony whereof we have subscribed this

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

our call this . . . . . day of . . . . . , 19 . . . , before these witnesses.

Witness:

.....  
.....

Note.—The call should be signed first by the elders, and then by the members of the congregation. Adherents, also, properly designated as such, may sign the call.

### 7. FORM OF ATTESTATION OF A CALL

I hereby certify that, under presbyterial appointment, I preached on the .. day of . . . . . , 19 . . . , in the . . . . . congregation of . . . . . , under the jurisdiction of the presbytery of . . . . , and presided in the moderation of a call for a pastor, which was made out for . . . . , under the jurisdiction of the presbytery of . . . . .

....., 19 . . .

.....Minister

### 8. FORM OF CERTIFICATE OF LICENSURE

The . . . . . Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, having taken A. B., a student of theology, on trial for licensure, and having sustained him in his trials and examinations, did, at its meeting at . . . . . , State of . . . . . , on the . . . . . day of . . . . . , 19 . . . , license him to preach the gospel of Christ as a probationer for the holy ministry, and does hereby certify that he is authorized to preach the gospel wherever in the providence of God he may be called.

By order of Presbytery,

Given at . . . . this . . . . . day of . . . . . 19 . . .

..... Moderator

..... Clerk

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

### 9. FORM OF EDICT FOR THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF A PROBATIONER

The Presbytery of . . . . ., of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, having received a call from the . . . . . congregation of . . . . . to A. B., a probationer, to be its minister, and having sustained the same, and the said A. B. having accepted the call and undergone trials for ordination, and the Presbytery judging him qualified for the ministry of the gospel and the pastoral care of this congregation, has resolved to proceed to his ordination and installation on the . . . . day of . . . . . 19. . . , unless somewhat may appear which would lawfully impede this action. Notice is therefore hereby given to all concerned that if reasons exist why the said A. B. should not be installed as pastor of this congregation, they should be presented to the Presbytery, which is to meet at . . . . . , on the . . . . day of . . . . . , 19. . . . If no objection is then made, the Presbytery will proceed without further delay.

By order of Presbytery,

.....Moderator

.....Clerk

.....19. . .

### 10. FORM OF EDICT FOR THE INSTALLATION OF AN ORDAINED MINISTER

The Presbytery of . . . . ., of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, having received and sustained a call from the . . . . . congregation of . . . . . for A. B., a member of the Presbytery of . . . . . , and this call having been accepted by him, has resolved to proceed to his installation as pastor of the said congregation on the . . . . . day of . . . . . , 19. . . , unless something may appear which would lawfully impede it. Notice is therefore hereby given to all concerned that if reasons exist why the said A. B. should not be installed as pastor of this congregation, they should be presented to the Presbytery, which will meet at the time above men-

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

tioned for the installation. If no objection is then made, the Presbytery will proceed without further delay.

By order of the Presbytery,

.....Moderator  
.....Clerk

....., 19...

### 11. FORM OF CERTIFICATE OF ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF A PROBATIONER

The Presbytery of ....., of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, having received a call from the ..... congregation of ..... to A. B., probationer, to be its minister, which it sustained and which he accepted, and having sustained his examination and trials for ordination, and having judged him qualified for the office of the gospel ministry and for the pastoral care of said congregation, did, on the .... day of ....., 19.., solemnly set him apart to, and invest him with the authority and powers of, the holy ministry, install him as pastor of the said congregation, and receive him into ministerial fellowship as a member of the Presbytery.

By order of the Presbytery,

..... Moderator  
..... Clerk

Given on the ..... day of ....., 19...

### 12. FORM OF CERTIFICATE OF INSTALLATION OF AN ORDAINED MINISTER

The Presbytery of ....., of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, having received a call from the ..... congregation of ..... for A. B., a member of the Presbytery of ....., which it sustained and presented, and which he accepted,



## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

did, on the .... day of ....., 19.., meet with the said congregation and formally install A. B. as its pastor, according to the regulations of the United Presbyterian Church.

By order of the Presbytery,

.....Moderator  
..... Clerk

Given on the ..... day of ....., 19...

### 13. FORM OF TRANSFER IN CASE OF A CALL FROM ONE PRESBYTERY TO ANOTHER

The Presbytery of ..... of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, having received from the Presbytery of ..... a call, duly sustained, for A. B., a member (or probationer under the care) of this Presbytery, to the pastoral charge of the ..... congregation of ....., and said call having been presented to him and accepted by him, does hereby dismiss and transfer A. B. to the said Presbytery of ..... for installation (or ordination and installation) as pastor of the said congregation, and commends him to the fellowship of the said Presbytery.

By order of the Presbytery,

.....Moderator  
..... Clerk

Given on the ..... day of ....., 19...

### 14. FORM OF CERTIFICATE OF STANDING AND DISMISSAL FOR A MINISTER REMOVING FROM HIS PRESBYTERY

It is hereby certified that ..... is a minister of the United Presbyterian Church in good standing and a member of the Presbytery of ....., and that he is, at his own request, dismissed to unite with the Presbytery of ....., to the Christian fellowship of which he is cordially commended.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

When received by that Presbytery all responsibility to this court shall cease.

By order of the Presbytery,

.....Moderator

.....Clerk

Given on the ..... day of ....., 19...

### 15. FORM OF EDICT FOR THE ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION OF RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS

The ..... congregation of ....., having elected A. B., C. D., and E. F. to the office of ruling elder (or deacon) in the congregation, and the Session having judged them qualified and adapted to the duties of the office, notice is hereby given to all concerned that the Session will meet on the .... day of ....., 19.., for their ordination and installation. If any one has objection thereto, it shall be presented to the Session in writing on or before that date. If no objection is made, the Session will proceed without delay.

By order of Session,

.....Moderator

.....Clerk

Given on the ..... day of ....., 19...

### 16. FORM OF CHARGE AGAINST A MINISTER OR PROBATIONER

TO THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN PRESBYTERY OF.....

Your informant respectfully represents that ....  
....., a minister (or probationer) under your jurisdiction, in violation of his Christian profession and official vows, has been guilty of a heinous sin and scandal, contrary to the Word of God and the profession of this Church, and injurious to the religion of Christ, and ought to be censured in this, that the said ..... on or about the .... day of ....., 19.., was guilty of the sin of ....., and ought to be proceeded against and tried by your court to determine whether or not the said charge is true.

Date.....

Name.....

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

### 17. FORM OF CHARGE AGAINST A CHURCH MEMBER

TO THE SESSION OF THE UNITED PRESBYTERIAN CONGREGATION OF.....

Your informant respectfully represents that ....  
....., a member of the United Presbyterian  
Congregation of ....., in violation of his Chris-  
tian profession, has been guilty of a heinous sin and  
scandal, contrary to the Word of God and to the pro-  
fession of this Church, and injurious to the religion  
of Christ, and ought to be censured in this, that the  
said ....., on or about the .... day of  
....., 19.., was guilty of the sin of ....., and  
ought to be proceeded against and tried by your  
court to determine whether or not the said charge  
is true.

Date..... Name.....

### 18. FORM OF CITATION TO ACCUSED

By order of the United Presbyterian ..... of  
....., you, A. B., are summoned to appear be-  
fore said ..... and answer to the charge here-  
with presented, at ....., on the ..... day of  
....., 19.., at .... o'clock ...M., and bring any  
witnesses with you which you may have.

By order of the .... of .... Moderator  
Given on the .... day of .... 19.. Clerk

### 19. FORM OF CITATION FOR A WITNESS

Mr. .... You are hereby sum-  
moned by the ..... of ..... to appear at  
..... on the ..... day of ....., 19.., to  
give testimony in the case pending between .....  
and ..... Lay aside all excuses and fail not  
to attend.

By order of the .... of .... Moderator  
Given on the .... day of .... 19.. Clerk

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

### 20. FORM OF CITATION FROM ONE COURT TO A WITNESS UNDER ITS JURISDICTION TO APPEAR IN A CAUSE BEFORE ANOTHER COURT OF CO-ORDINATE JURISDICTION

Mr. . . . . . You are hereby summoned by the (Session, Presbytery, or Synod) of . . . . ., on application of the (Session, Presbytery, or Synod) of . . . . ., made to this court, to appear at . . . . . on the . . . . . day of . . . . ., 19.., to give testimony in the cause pending between . . . . . and . . . . . By order of the . . . . of . . . . . Moderator  
Given on the . . . . day of . . . . 19.. . . . . Clerk

### 21. FORM OF OATH TO BE ADMINISTERED TO A WITNESS

Do you solemnly swear in the presence of the omniscient and heart-searching God that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in the matter in which you are called to testify, as you shall answer to the Great Judge of the quick and the dead?

### 22. FORM OF AFFIRMATION

Do you solemnly affirm that you will declare the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth in the matter in which you are called to testify, and so you affirm?

### 23. FORM OF PRONOUNCING JUDGMENT

Whereas, you, A. B., have, after due process of trial, been convicted by this court of Christ's House of the sin of . . . . ., the judgment of the court is that you are deserving of the penalty of . . . . . Now, therefore, for the good of your own soul and the purity and peace of the Church of Christ, you are required to stand up and receive the pronouncement of this penalty.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

### 24. FORM OF ADMONITION

You, A. B., by this sin which you have committed have made yourself a disturber of the peace and purity of the Church of Christ, and have exposed yourself to the danger of being led still further into sin. This court, therefore, solemnly admonishes you to put away from you the evil of your doings, to watch and pray that you enter not into temptation, and to avoid the very appearance of evil. As your strongest safeguard against future transgression, you are also admonished to be so steadfast and earnest in the service of your Lord that there will be no opportunity for sin to have dominion over you.

### 25. FORM OF REBUKE

You, A. B., by this great sin which you have committed have broken your solemn vows to Christ, brought reproach on your Christian profession, and provoked the enemies of your Master to scoff at His holy religion. With sadness this court of Christ's House expresses its unsparing condemnation of your sin and rebukes you therefor. As one overtaken in a trespass you are enjoined to be more watchful in the future against departing from the path of faithfulness to your Divine Lord, to use diligently the means of grace as your safeguard, and to give the Church proofs of your unfeigned repentance.

### 26. FORM OF SUSPENSION FOR A MEMBER

You, A. B., by the great sin which you have committed have shown yourself unworthy of the fellowship of the people of God and of participation in the holy sacraments of the Church of Christ. You are therefore hereby suspended and excluded from these privileges until by your contrition of heart and reformation of conduct you have given sufficient evidence of your true repentance and have been restored to regular standing by this Session.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

### 27. FORM OF SUSPENSION FOR A RULING ELDER OR DEACON

You, A. B., by the great sin you have committed have shown yourself unworthy to exercise the office of Ruling Elder (or Deacon) and to participate in the sealing ordinances of the Church of Christ. You are therefore forbidden the performance of all official duties as a Ruling Elder (or Deacon), in this congregation or elsewhere, and are excluded from the sealing ordinances of the Church until by your contrition of heart and reformation of conduct you have given sufficient evidence of your true repentance and have been restored by this Session.

### 28. FORM OF SUSPENSION FOR A MINISTER

You, A. B., by the great sin which you have committed have shown yourself unworthy to exercise the office of the ministry and to participate in the sealing ordinances of the Church of Christ. You are therefore forbidden the performance of all official duties as a minister of the gospel and are excluded from the sealing ordinances of the Church until by your contrition of heart and reformation of conduct you have given sufficient evidence of your true repentance and have been restored by this court.

### 29. FORM OF DEPOSITION OF A RULING ELDER OR A DEACON

You, A. B., having been convicted of a great sin, and having been adjudged deserving of the penalty of deposition from your office, now, therefore, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, Who by His Spirit has said, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord," you are hereby deposed and excluded from the office of . . . . ., which you have held in this congregation, and you are forbidden to exercise any of the powers or duties of that office anywhere in the Church of Christ. You are also excluded from the sacraments of the Church until such time as by

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

your penitence and new obedience you have shown your fitness for membership in the Church of Christ and have been restored by this Session.

### 30. FORM OF DEPOSITION OF A MINISTER

You, A. B., on the day of your ordination to the gospel ministry, were placed under the holy vows of an ambassador of Jesus Christ, but by your sin and unfaithfulness you have brought reproach on the cause of your Master, and caused His holy Name to be blasphemed by His enemies. Now, therefore, this Presbytery, acting under the authority of Jesus Christ, does hereby depose and exclude you from the office of a minister of the gospel, and forbids you to exercise henceforth any of the powers and duties of that office anywhere in the Church of Christ. You are also excluded from the sacraments of the Church until such time as you have given sufficient proof of your sincere repentance and reformation of life and of your fitness for those privileges.

### 31. FORM OF EXCOMMUNICATION

You, A. B., having been convicted of such sins as were adjudged to be deserving of the extreme penalty of excommunication, now, therefore, this court, constituted in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and acting under His authority, hereby excommunicates you by cutting you off from the fellowship of the people of God and the sacraments of the visible Church, and reckoning you as belonging to those who are the enemies of God and strangers from the covenants of the promise. May God have mercy upon you by awakening you to righteousness and bringing you to repentance, so that your spirit may be saved in the Day of the Lord Jesus.

### 32. FORM OF PUBLIC NOTICE OF SUSPENSION

Notice is hereby given that A. B., a member of this congregation, has been found guilty of the sin of . . . . . As a vindication of the holiness of the

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

gospel and of the ordinances of Christ, and in order to impress upon the offender a due sense of his sin, the penalty of suspension from sealing ordinances has been laid upon him. He is tenderly commended to your pity, and your prayers are besought on his behalf that grace may be speedily given whereby he may be brought back to the paths of Christian faithfulness and to the privileges of the House of God.

### 33. FORM OF PUBLIC NOTICE OF EXCOMMUNICATION

Notice is hereby given that A. B., once a member of this congregation, has been found guilty of sins so great and so persistent that the Session has been compelled to inflict upon him the extreme penalty of excommunication from membership in the visible Church of Jesus Christ. This action has been taken with the earnest hope that the subject of this deplorable sentence may yet, by the infinite mercy of God, be brought to that repentance which is unto salvation.

### 34. FORM OF COMMISSION TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

It is hereby certified that the United Presbyterian Presbytery of ....., in the State of ....., at a meeting on the .... day of ....., appointed ..... a commissioner to the next General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church of North America, to meet at ..... on the .... day of ....., or when and where it shall happen to meet, enjoining him to repair thither, and attend at all the sittings thereof, and there to consult, vote, and determine in all matters that come before the Assembly, according to the Word of God and the standards of this Church, as he will be answerable, and that he report diligence herein on his return.

By order of Presbytery,

.....Moderator  
.....Clerk

Given at ..... this .... day of ..... 19..



# RULES OF ORDER

## OF THE

### GENERAL ASSEMBLY

---

#### MOTIONS

**1. No Action or Speaking Without a Motion.** The Assembly cannot act but in virtue of a motion regularly in its possession; and no speaking shall be allowed without a formal motion, unless it is for explanation, or on questions of privilege.

**2. Motion Must be Seconded and Announced.** No motion shall be in possession of the Assembly until it is seconded and announced by the moderator in the words of the motion.

**3. Motions Reduced to Writing.** Every motion and amendment shall be reduced to writing, if the moderator or any member desires it.

**4. Name of Mover and Secunder Recorded.** The names of the person who moves and of the person who seconds a motion may be entered upon the minutes, at the discretion of the clerk.

**5. Withdrawing a Motion.** Any member who makes a motion shall have the liberty to withdraw it, with the consent of his second, before any debate has taken place thereon, but not afterwards without the leave of the Assembly.

**6. Privileged Questions.** When a question is under consideration, no motion shall be received except "to adjourn," "to lay on the table," "for the previous question," "to postpone indefinitely," "to postpone to a time certain," "to commit," or "to

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

amend;" and these motions shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged.

**7. Use to be Made of Privileged Questions.** These privileged questions are not designed to separate amendments or appendages from the main question, and consequently cannot be moved on each other, but upon the main question; except "to adjourn" and "to postpone to a time certain" may be amended as to the time; and "to commit" may be amended in the question of the committee, and instructions.

**8. Motion to Adjourn.** A motion to adjourn is always in order, except when the Assembly is taking a vote, or when a member is speaking.

**9. Previous Question.** Any two members may call for the previous question, which shall be put in this form: "Shall the main question now be put?" If seconded by a majority of the members present, all debate shall cease, and the Assembly shall vote, first on pending amendments, if any, and then upon the main question.

**10. No Debate After Previous Question is Called.** All incidental questions of order arising after a motion is made for the previous question, and pending such, shall be decided, whether on appeal or otherwise, without debate.

**11. Motion to Lay on the Table.** The motion "to lay on the table" has for its object the temporary removal of business from the consideration of the Assembly, and if decided in the affirmative, on the main question or on the amendment, removes the whole subject from before the Assembly until it is taken up again.

**12. Indefinite Postponement.** When any question is postponed indefinitely, the same shall not be acted upon again during the entire meeting of the Assembly, except by a vote of two-thirds of the Assembly.

**13. Order of the Day.** When a question is postponed to a "time certain," it becomes the "order of the day" for that time, and takes precedence of all other business.

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

**14. Amendments.** Motions are always open to amendment, even to the complete alteration of the motion.

**15. Number of Amendments.** An amendment may itself be amended, but no further complication in this way shall be permitted; and this last amendment shall be considered first.

**16. Substitutes.** Substitutes for motions or resolutions may, with the consent of the Assembly, be admitted instead of the original motion and its appendages; but the effect of a substitute is to supersede the original motion altogether.

**17. Division of Question.** If the question in debate contains several points, any two members may have the same divided, provided the division called for embodies a distinct principle or statement of fact.

**18. Questions not Debatable.** All motions "to put on the docket," "to adjourn," "for the previous question," "to lay on the table," "to take up business," in relation to the priority of business, and the admission of substitutes, shall be decided without debate.

**19. Reconsideration.** A motion for reconsideration can be made only by a member who voted with the majority, and, unless by consent of two-thirds of the members present, can be entertained only when offered at the same or next subsequent sitting of the Assembly.

**20. Notice of Motion.** A motion on any subject connected with the doctrine, discipline, government, or order of the Church shall not be considered until the second sitting after the one at which it is offered.

### DEBATE

**21. Obtaining the Floor.** When a member desires to address the Assembly, he must rise and address the moderator, and he may not proceed until the moderator recognizes him and announces his name. The moderator shall always give the floor to the

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

member who first addresses him, or to the one farthest from the chair when two or more address him at the same time.

**22. Decorum of Members.** Every member when speaking shall address himself to the moderator, and to no other person, except through the moderator; he shall treat his fellow members, and especially the moderator, with decorum and respect, and shall attend closely in his speech to the question under consideration.

**23. Calls to Order.** If any speaker acts in any respect in a disorderly manner, it shall be the privilege of any member, and the duty of the moderator, to call him to order; and a member thus called to order shall immediately take his seat, until it is determined whether he was out of order or not, or until leave is given him by the Assembly to proceed.

**24. Number of Speeches.** On questions of order, postponement, commitment, or matters which have been discussed in committee of the whole, no member shall speak more than once, without the express leave of the Assembly. On all other questions, each member may speak twice.

**25. End of Debate.** When the moderator has risen to take the vote, no further debate or remark shall be admitted, unless there has evidently been a mistake; in this case the mistake shall be rectified, and he shall recommence taking the vote.

### VOTING

**26. Taking the Vote.** Before taking the vote, the motion shall be repeated by the moderator, who shall put the question in the following form: "As many as are in favor of the motion will say, Aye." After the affirmative is expressed: "As many as are opposed will say, No."

**27. Division.** If there is any doubt as to the result of the vote, the moderator, or any member, may call for a division of the house; the moderator shall then repeat the motion, and shall require the ayes to rise and be counted, and the nays to rise and be

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

counted in like manner, and shall pronounce accordingly.

**28. Ayes and Nays.** One-fourth of the members present may demand the ayes and nays on any question. The roll shall then be called, and the vote of each member recorded in the minutes.

**29. Non-Voters.** Members, without weighty reasons, are not to decline voting. Silent members, unless excused from voting, are reckoned with the majority.

**30. Interested Parties.** No member shall have the privilege of voting on a question in which he is personally interested, or in any case where he was not present when the question was put, unless with the consent of the Assembly.

**31. Filling Blanks.** When various propositions are made with respect to filling blanks with particular numbers, sums, or times, the question shall always be on the highest number, the largest sum, and the longest or remotest time.

**32. Appeals.** Any two members feeling aggrieved by a decision of the moderator may appeal to the Assembly, whose determination of the matter shall be final. The question shall be put in this form: "Shall the decision of the moderator be sustained?"

### MISCELLANEOUS

**33. Leave of Absence.** No member may absent himself from the sessions of the Assembly without its consent.

**34. Private Sessions.** The Assembly has the right to sit with closed doors on business which, in its judgment, ought not to be made a matter of public notoriety.

**35. Final Adjournment.** The Assembly shall close its meeting with prayer, singing, and the benediction.

**36. Printing Minutes.** The minutes of the Assembly shall be published by the Board of Publica-

## GOVERNMENT AND WORSHIP

tion and Bible School Work, under the direction of the clerk, as soon as possible after the adjournment.

**37. Amendments.** These rules of order may be suspended or amended by a vote of two-thirds of the members of the Assembly.

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