

Review of Session Minutes of 2008 – Preparation Copy

Name of Church _____

Location _____

Reviewed by _____

Don't forget to complete both sides

		Yes	No	N / A	Page where found
1.	Do the minutes record type of meeting, date, time, person moderating? (Roberts– Section #48 - Minutes)				
<p><i>The first paragraph of the minutes should contain the following information . . .</i></p> <p><i>(1) the kind of meeting: regular, special, adjourned regular, or adjourned special</i></p> <p><i>(2) the name of the society or assembly</i></p> <p><i>(3) the date and time of the meeting, and the place, if it is not always the same</i></p> <p><i>(4) the fact that the regular chairman and secretary were present, or in their absence the names of the persons who substituted for them</i></p>					
2.	Do the minutes record that the meeting opened and closed with prayer? (G-9.0301 b)				
<p><i>G-9.0301b. Opened and Closed With Prayer</i></p> <p><i>All meetings of governing bodies shall be opened and closed with prayer.b Presbyteries and synods that meet more often than annually shall designate one stated meeting each year, which shall include preaching the Word and sharing the Lord's Supper. Stated meetings of synods that meet annually or biennially and the General Assembly shall include a time for the preaching of the Word and the celebration of the Lord's Supper.</i></p>					
3.	Is the roll for the session meeting complete with those present, excused or absent?				
<p><i>While not required either by the Book of Order or Roberts Rules of Order it is wise to maintain a record of those present and participating at each meeting as well as the status (absent or excused) of those not present.</i></p>					
4.	Do the minutes record approval of the previous session meeting or of session action to approve minutes of a congregational meeting? (Roberts – Section #48 - Minutes)				
<p><i>The first paragraph of the minutes should contain the following information . . .</i></p> <p><i>(5) whether the minutes of the previous meeting were read and approved . . .</i></p>					
5.	Are all minutes signed by the clerk of session or moderator? (Roberts – Section #48 – Minutes – THE SIGNATURE)				
<p><i>Minutes should be signed by the secretary and can also be signed, if the assembly wishes, by the president.</i></p>					
6.	In the Session minutes, have the rolls been reviewed at least annually? (G-5.0502)				
<p><i>G-5.0502 By the Session</i></p> <p><i>The session shall review the roll of members at least annually, and shall counsel with those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership.</i></p>					

7.	Do the minutes record any changes in the roll, i.e., transfers, deaths, baptisms? (G-10.0302 a)				
<p><i>G-10.0302a. Membership Rolls</i> <i>Membership Rolls. The names of the members shall be placed upon, removed, or deleted from the rolls of the church only by order of the session whenever the session is fully satisfied that such action is justified.</i></p> <p><i>Baptized Members</i> <i>G-10.0302a.(1) Baptized Members' Roll. The baptized members' roll shall list the names of those persons baptized in the particular church who have not made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and children of active members or of ministers of the Word and Sacrament related to the particular church, when such children have been baptized elsewhere.</i></p> <p><i>Active Members</i> <i>G-10.0302a.(2)(a) Active Members' Roll. The active members' roll shall list the names of those who have been received into the membership of the church and who are active in the church's work and worship. The number of members on this roll shall be reported to the General Assembly annually.</i></p> <p><i>Affiliate Members Certified</i> <i>G-10.0302a.(2)(b) An active member who has temporarily moved from the community may become an affiliate member of another church of this denomination or of a denomination in correspondence with the General Assembly, in which case the session may issue a certificate of good standing. (G-15.0201) The certificate shall be directed to a particular church named therein, shall commend the member to its pastoral care, and shall be valid for two years. Upon the issuance of the certificate, the session shall retain the name of the member on the active roll of the church until the person is received into membership in the other church.</i></p> <p><i>When Active Members Move</i> <i>G-10.0302a.(2)(c) When a member moves and can no longer be active in the work and worship of the church of membership, it shall be that person's duty to become an active member of a church in the community where that person is living. The session of the church of membership shall inform the person of this duty as soon as practicable and shall notify a church in the new community and request it to provide pastoral care with a view to membership. In addition, notice shall be sent to either the presbytery office or to the stated clerk of the presbytery, or both.</i></p> <p><i>Inactive Members</i> <i>G-10.0302a.(3)(a) Inactive Members' Roll. The inactive members' roll shall list the names of those who have been removed from the active members' roll because of their failure, in the judgment of the session, to participate in the church's work and worship. No member shall be transferred from the active to the inactive roll until that member shall have failed intentionally to participate in the work and worship of the church for a period of one year and until the session shall have made diligent effort to discover the cause of the member's nonparticipation and to restore the member to activity in the church's work and worship. Any member whose name is so transferred shall be notified of this action.</i></p>					
8.	Does the session conduct an annual review of compensation for the pastor, staff, and employees? (G-10.0102 n)				
<p><i>G-10.0102 Responsibilities</i> <i>The session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church. It therefore has the responsibility and power</i></p> <p><i>G-10.0102n. to provide for the administration of the program of the church, including employment of non-ordained staff, with concern for equal employment opportunity, fair employment practices, personnel policies, and the annual review of the adequacy of compensation for all staff, including all employees;</i></p>					

9.	Do the minutes of the annual congregational meeting record the approval of changes in terms of call for the pastor(s)? (G-7.0304 a 3)				
<p><i>G-7.0304 Business</i> <i>G-7.0304a. Business Shall Include</i> <i>Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall include the following:</i> <i>G-7.0304a (3) matters related to the pastoral relationship, such as <u>changing the call</u>, or requesting or consenting or declining to consent to dissolution;</i></p>					
10.	Did the session review property and liability insurance and consider it adequate? (G-10.0102 o)?				
<p><i>G-10.0102 Responsibilities</i> <i>The session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church. It therefore has the responsibility and power</i> <i>G-10.0102o. to provide for the management of the property of the church, including determination of the appropriate use of church buildings and facilities, and to obtain property and liability insurance coverage to protect the facilities, programs, and officers, including members of the session, staff, board of trustees, and deacons;</i></p>					
11.	Do the minutes record the annual election of the treasurer by the session? (G-10.0401)				
<p><i>G-10.0401 Finances</i> <i>The treasurer shall be elected annually by the session, if permitted by the state in which the church is located, and his or her work shall be supervised by the session, or by specific assignment to the board of deacons or trustees. Those in charge of the various funds in the church shall report at least annually to the session, and more often when requested. The following minimum standards of financial procedure shall be observed:</i></p>					
12.	Does the session appoint persons for the counting of offerings? (G 10.0401 a)				
<p><i>G-10.0401a. The counting and recording of all offerings by at least two duly appointed persons, or a fidelity bonded person;</i></p>					
13.	Has the session completed a “full financial review” or audit? (G-10.0401 d)				
<p><i>G-10.0401d. A full financial review of all books and records relating to finances once each year by a public accountant or public accounting firm or a committee of members versed in accounting procedures. Such auditors should not be related to the treasurer (or treasurers). Terminology in this section is meant to provide general guidance and is not intended to require or not require specific audit procedures or practices as understood within the professional accounting community.</i></p>					
14.	Do the minutes record the election of a representative to Presbytery meetings and receive reports from that representative? (G-10.0102)				
<p><i>G-10.0102 Responsibilities</i> <i>The session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church. It therefore has the responsibility and power</i> <i>G-10.0102p. to maintain regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the church, including</i> <i>G-10.0102p.(1) electing commissioners to presbytery and receiving their reports; sessions are encouraged to elect commissioners to the presbytery for at least one year, preferably two or three;</i></p>					

15.	Do the minutes record the Statistical makeup of the session? (G-10.0301)				
<p><i>G-10.0301 Minutes</i> <i>Each session shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings which shall be submitted at least once each year to the presbytery for its general review and control. (G-11.0103x, G-9.0409) <u>The minutes shall state the composition of the session with regard to racial ethnic members, women, men, age groups, and persons with disabilities, and how this corresponds to the composition of the congregation.</u> Minutes and other official records of the session, which shall include minutes of congregational meetings and records of the board of deacons and the board of trustees of the particular church, are the property of the session, and the clerk shall be responsible for their preservation. They shall be available to the presbytery upon request and may be stored with the denomination's historical agency.</i></p>					
16.	If there is a board of deacons, did the session hold an annual joint meeting with the deacons? (G-6.0405)				
<p><i>G-6.0405 Meetings</i> <i>The board shall meet regularly, or upon the call of its moderator, or when directed to meet by the session, but it shall meet at least quarterly. The board shall determine its own quorum. <u>A joint meeting of the session and board of deacons shall be held at least annually to confer on matters of common interest,</u> with the moderator of the session presiding. No binding decision may be reached in such joint meeting, but the session and the board may act separately on matters committed to their care.</i></p>					
17.	Did the Session act to adopt the budget? (G10.0102i)				
<p><i>G-10.0102 Responsibilities</i> <i>The session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church. b It therefore has the responsibility and power</i> <i>G-10.0102i. to establish the annual budget, determine the distribution of the church's benevolences, and order offerings for Christian purposes, providing full information to the congregation of its decisions in such matters;</i></p>					
18.	Did the Session take appropriate action to approve baptisms? (W-2.3011 a 4)				
<p><i>W-2.3011 Responsibility for Baptism</i> <i>W-2.3011a. By Minister or Commissioned Lay Pastor</i> <i>For reasons of order, <u>Baptism shall be authorized by the session, administered by a minister of Word and Sacrament, or commissioned lay pastor when invited by the session and authorized by the presbytery, and accompanied by the reading and proclaiming of the Word.</u> (G-11.0103p; W-3.3602-3608) <u>Baptism is celebrated in a service of public worship. Extraordinary circumstances may call for the administration of Baptism apart from the worship of the whole congregation. In such cases care should be taken that</u></i> <i>W-2.3011a. (1) the congregation be represented by one or more members of the session;</i> <i>W-2.3011a. (2) a proper understanding of the meaning of the Sacrament be offered by the minister;</i> <i>W-2.3011a. (3) the session be consulted when possible;</i> <i>W-2.3011a (4) <u>the Baptism be reported by the officiating minister and recorded by the session.</u></i></p>					

19.	Did session take appropriate action to approve the celebration of the Lord's Supper? (W-2.4012)				
<p><i>W-2.4012a. Session</i> <i>The session is responsible for authorizing all observances of the Lord's Supper in the life of a particular church and shall ensure regular and frequent celebration of the Sacrament, in no case less than quarterly. Any other governing body of the church, also, may appoint times for the celebration of the Lord's Supper during their meetings. A governing body may also authorize the celebration of the Sacrament in connection with the public worship of some gathering of believers which is under its jurisdiction or in institutions where it has a missional witness or authorized ministry. A governing body may delegate the authority to approve the celebration of the Lord's Supper to an appropriate overseeing body in the institutions for which it has responsibility. (Cf. W-3.6205)</i></p>					
20.	Did session approve the annual statistical report and is there a summary in the minutes? (G-10.0102 p 7)				
<p><i>G-10.0102 Responsibilities</i> <i>The session is responsible for the mission and government of the particular church. It therefore has the responsibility and power</i> <i>G-10.0102p. to maintain regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the church, including</i> <i>G-10.0102p.(7) sending annually to the stated clerk of the presbytery statistical and other information according to the requirements of the presbytery.</i></p>					
21.	Do minutes include a summary of all committees, bodies and organizations of the church? (G-9.0407 a)				
<p><i>G-9.0407a. Reporting to Session</i> <i>The congregation of a particular church and the committees, bodies, and organizations of that church shall report annually all proceedings and actions to the session, which shall review and summarize them and incorporate the summary in its minutes.</i></p>					
22.	Do minutes record the election of a Nominating Committee at the congregational meeting? (G-14.0223-0224)				
<p><i>G-14.0223 Nominating Committee</i> <i>Nominations shall be made by a representative nominating committee of active members of the church. The committee shall itself include both women and men, giving fair representation to persons of all age groups, of all racial ethnic members, and of persons with disabilities who are members of that congregation. At least two members of this committee shall be elders designated by the session, one of whom shall be currently on the session and serve as moderator of the committee. At least one member of this committee shall be designated by and from the board of deacons, if the church has deacons. Other members of the committee, in sufficient number to constitute a majority thereof (exclusive of the pastor), shall be chosen by the congregation or by such organizations within the church as the congregation may designate, none of whom may be in active service on the session or in active service on the board of deacons. The pastor shall be a member of this committee, serving ex officio and without vote.</i> <i>G-14.0224 Elected Annually</i> <i>The nominating committee shall be elected by the congregation annually and no member of the committee shall serve more than three years consecutively.</i></p>					

23.	Do minutes of the congregational meeting record the election of officers? (G-14.0204; 14.0230)				
<p><i>G-14.0221 Fair Representation</i> <i>Every congregation shall elect men and women from among its active members, giving fair representation to persons of all ages and of all racial ethnic backgrounds and persons with disabilities who are members of that congregation, to the office of elder and to the office of deacon (if used in the congregation).</i></p> <p><i>G-14.0230 Congregational Meeting</i> <i>The election of elders and deacons shall take place at a meeting of the congregation called for that purpose by the session (G-7.0302).</i></p>					
24.	Do minutes record the completion of a period of study and preparation followed by an examination for all newly elected officers to be ordained? (G-14.0240)				
<p><i>G-14.0240 Preparation and Examination for Office</i> <i>When persons have been elected to the office of elder or deacon, the session shall confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the office. The session shall provide for a period of study and preparation, after which the session shall <u>examine the officers-elect as to their personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the office.</u> If the examination is approved, the session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and installation (see W-4.4000). If the examination is not approved for one or more elected officers, the session shall report its action to the congregation's nominating committee, which shall bring nomination(s) to a meeting of the congregation for any office(s) not filled.</i></p>					
25.	If applicable, do the congregational minutes record actions relative to buying, mortgaging, or selling property? (G-7.0304 a (4); G-8.0500)				
<p><i>G-7.0304 Business</i> <i>G-7.0304a. Business Shall Include</i> <i>Business to be transacted at meetings of the congregation shall include the following:</i> <i>G-7.0304a.(4) matters related to buying, mortgaging, or selling real property (G-8.0500);</i></p>					
26.	Does the session provide for the regular study of the Book of Order? (W-1.4007)				
<p><i>W-1.4007 Session Responsibility for Education</i> <i>In the exercise of its responsibility to encourage the participation of its people in worship, the session should provide for education in Christian worship by means appropriate to the age, interests, and circumstances of the members of the congregation. (W-3.5202; W-6.2000; G-10.0102d, G-10.0102e, G-10.0102f) <u>It shall also provide for the regular study of this directory in the education of church officers.</u> (G-10.0102k, G-10.0102l)</i></p>					
27.	Do the session minutes record a pastor's report, i.e., funerals, weddings, home communions?				
<p><i>While not formally required by the Book of Order, it is wise for the pastor to keep the Session apprised of ministry activities – especially those for which official records are to be kept such as weddings and funerals – but also of activities such as home communions, and participation in the life and ministry of the congregation.</i></p>					