

**MEETING 011**

**NEW RIVER PRESBYTERY  
OF THE  
Evangelical Presbyterian Church**

**PACKET**

**6-7 February 2026  
River Oaks Community Church  
Clemmons, North Carolina**

**Working Docket New River Presbytery EPC**  
**011 Stated Meeting – February 6-7, 2026**  
**River Oaks Community Church, Clemmons, North Carolina**

**Friday, February 6**

**River Oaks Church**

- 9:00am      Registration and Committee/Group Meetings
- 11:00am      RE training and nurture – Andy Koesters  
11:00am      Pastor’s Wives Tea
- 12:00pm      Lunch and Learn (CAT)
- 1:00pm      Call to Order  
                  Host Church Welcome –
- 1:05pm      Opening Worship/Prayer – Tom Clymer
- 2:00pm      Preliminary Matters
- Declaration of a quorum & adoption of the docket
  - Approval of the minutes and errata –
  - Communications and referrals
  - Welcome and introduction of first-time commissioners and corresponding members.
- 2:10pm      Moderator’s Report – Marion Blackwell
- 2:15pm      Report of Missional Director – Andy Koesters
- 2:20pm      Report of the Stated Clerk – Rufus Burton
- 2:30pm      Break
- 2:40pm      Church Alive Committee – Chuck Estes  
                  - Church Health Coordinator Report
- 3:05pm      Report of World Outreach Committee - Robert Barnett
- 3:45          Break

- 4:00pm (Order of the Day) Mission Focus
- 4:30pm Ascending Overture to the 46th GA from Rivermont
- 5:30pm Recess for Dinner
- 7:00pm Worship and Celebration of the Lord's Supper  
Preacher – Chuck Estes  
Communion – David Beaty

**Saturday, February 7**

- 8:30am Call to Order  
Morning Worship – Preaching – Shawn Morrison
- 9:00am Report of Ministerial Committee – Powell Sykes  
Examinations of - Jeff Schrage & Shawn Morrison
- 10:30am Break
- 10:45am Descending Overtures from 45th
- 11:15am Report of Stewardship – Andrew Morton
- 11:20am WCF FOCUS – Why focus on WCF? - Ed Pettus
- 11:40am Other matters of importance
- 12:00pm Expression of appreciation to host church
- 12:05pm Adjournment

**Next NRP Meeting – May 1-2, 2026 FEPC, Roanoke, Virginia**

Prayer

Tom Clymer, Chaplain

Previous Meeting Minutes:

010 Stated Meeting New River Presbytery

The Moderator's Report:

Marion Blackwell, Moderator

Notes:

Notes:

### **Clerk's Report**

### **For Information**

#### **Contact Details**

Rufus T Burton  
First Presbyterian Church  
220 S Queen St  
Martinsburg, WV 25401  
304.839.1991 (Mobile)  
304.263.5201 (Study)  
[pastorburtonfpc@comcast.net](mailto:pastorburtonfpc@comcast.net)

#### **Important Due Dates**

First Lord's Day after the first Monday in January:

**Ministerial Reports are Due (11 January 2026)**

“Annual Report on Teaching Elders” <https://epc.org/downloads/>

First Lord's Day in February

**Previous Year Session Minutes are Due (1 February 2026)**

### **Communications Rising from the 010 Meeting**

- 1) Received the Minutes of the Commission to Ordain and Commission TE Timotheus Global-Worker as Missionary to the 10-40 Window, 10/5/2025 (010-20.C2)

### **Communications for the 011 Meeting**

- 1) Received from the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly the descending overtures included in the packet.
- 2) Received from the Session of the Rivermont Church, the overture in the packet regarding the amendment of G9-3A. Included in this packet for action.
- 3) Received from the OGA/NLT & AIC-SSA the proposed changes to the Book of Government to be proposed at the 46<sup>th</sup> General Assembly. Included in this packet for information.

Churches Alive Team (CAC/CDC)

Chuck Estes, Chair

Notes:



**World Outreach Committee of New River Presbytery  
Report for the Eleventh Stated Meeting (February 6-7, 2026)  
River Oaks Community Church, Clemmons, NC**

We serve the mission of New River Presbytery and its member congregations to carry out the Great Commission of Jesus, with a focus on the EPC Gospel Priority of Global Movement.

**EPC ENGAGE (FORMERLY ENGAGE 2025)**

We are committed to a frontier church planting effort as part of the EPC World Outreach Engage vision. To this end, we support the work among two least-reached people groups: a) the Uzbeks and other people groups in Uzbekistan, and b) jointly with the other two presbyteries of the former Presbytery of Mid-Atlantic, the Punjabi in Pakistan.

- a. Through a US-based Home Team, led by RE Rick Peacock, we support current global workers currently serving in Uzbekistan, meeting monthly online for prayer and encouragement. They are engaged in relational evangelism, agriculture, business development, and education.
- b. TE Brown Caldwell and others participate in a similar Home Team, led by the Presbytery of Coastal Mid-Atlantic, to support global workers serving among the Punjabi people through a sports ministry called **Serve Pakistan**, reaching and discipling people through cricket clubs. **Serve Pakistan** began a partnership with **Fellowship of Christian Athletes International**.
- c. To support indigenous global workers in Uzbekistan with pastor training, encouragement, and theological education among native believers, we are developing working relationships with **Frontier Fellowship** and Virginia-based **Advancing Native Missions**. We will hear from Frontier Fellowship and **Tavrizki Christian Institute** on theological education in Central Asia.

**EPC WORLD OUTREACH AND OTHER MISSIONS WORK**

We serve as a liaison with EPC World Outreach, build missional awareness in our churches and inform the Presbytery about mission opportunities and ministries to encourage active support and participation.

1. TE Phil Thrash, representing EPC World Outreach, will provide greetings and a brief update on denominational world mission activities.
2. Global worker Lance L. is with us and will provide a brief update on his ministry with EPC World Outreach in the Middle East.
3. TE Chris Haynes, a member of our Presbytery serving with **Presbyterian Reformed Ministries International**, ministers in the Czech Republic. Signup for his newsletter is at the NRP WO display table.
4. Shown on the attached EPC World Outreach “Hot Sheet” are three Zoom-based online training opportunities that we endorse and strongly recommend: **Hiding in Plain Sight** (Feb 24), **The Unfinished Story for Youth** (weekly, March 3-31) and **Kairos** (weekly, April 7 -June 2)



Take me to your Missions Leader!

**HIDING IN PLAIN SIGHT**  
REACHING THE NATIONS GOD IS BRINGING TO OUR NEIGHBORHOODS

**FEB. 24 2026**  
7PM ET  
6PM CT  
5PM MT  
4PM PT

JOIN VIA ZOOM

In a world of unprecedented global migration, God is bringing the nations to our neighborhoods—often without us fully realizing it. The session will explore simple, practical pathways—moving from neighbor to friend to family—that make cross-cultural engagement accessible for individuals, churches, and mission leaders. **Feb 24** <https://www.epcwo.org/>

# SEND

Would your church consider prayerfully and financially supporting one of our recently appointed EPC WO global workers?

**Nathan & Karen**  
ITEN/S. Asia  
nkallnations@gmail.com

**Jewel**  
Central Asia  
jewel.potter@intervarsity.org

**Rebecca**  
US/Middle East  
rebeccalunceford@gmail.com

**GO**

Are you or someone you know discerning a call to missions? We'd love to walk with you as you discern that call.

Contact Saul and Jesse Huber ([Saul.h@epcwo.org](mailto:Saul.h@epcwo.org)) or visit [epcwo.org/go](https://epcwo.org/go) to get started.

**the unfinished story**  
FOR YOUTH

Through five video-based sessions, this course helps youth discover how they can be part of God's Story and part of His redemptive mission to all the peoples of the world.

**March 3 to March 31**

[epcwo.org/unfinishedstory/](https://epcwo.org/unfinishedstory/)

**Kairos**  
God, the Church and the World

[www.epcwo.org/kairos](https://www.epcwo.org/kairos)

Kairos is a discipleship course about the world Christian movement that aims to educate, inspire, and challenge believers to participate meaningfully in God's heart for all nations.

**April 7 to June 2**  
[epcwo.org/kairos/](https://epcwo.org/kairos/)

**John & Barb**  
Thailand  
[johnbarb91@gmail.com](mailto:johnbarb91@gmail.com)

**Benj & Corrie**  
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[benj.g@epcwo.org](mailto:benj.g@epcwo.org)

**Jared & Abby**  
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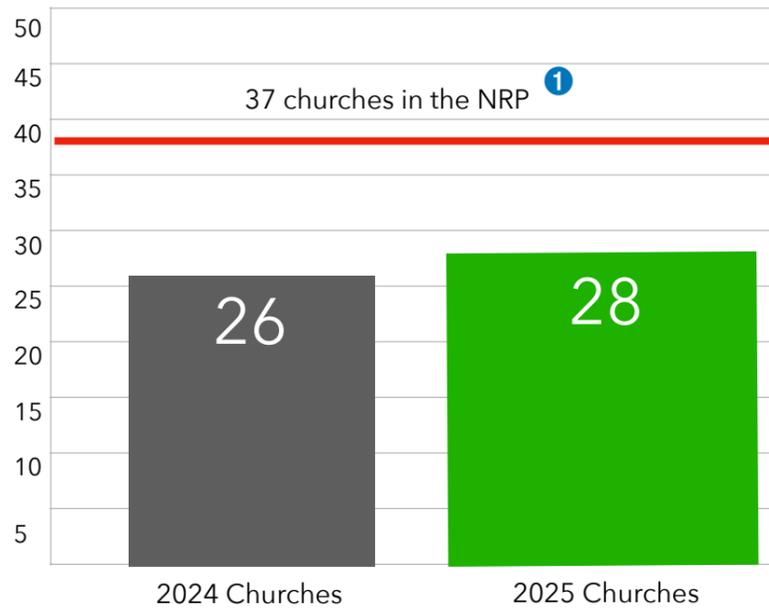
**Stephen**  
Southeast Asia  
[stephen.blum7@gmail.com](mailto:stephen.blum7@gmail.com)

## **World Outreach**

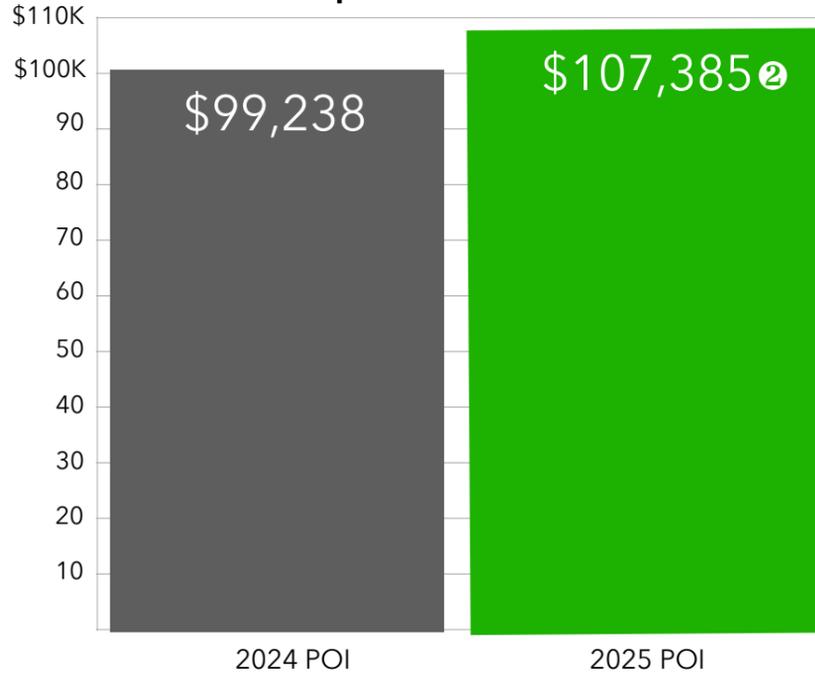
Notes:

# NRP POI Asking Report (through 12/31/25)

**Number of Giving Churches from 2024 vs. 2025 thru 12/31**



**POI Comparison from 2024 vs. 2025**



## PMA/POI FINANCIAL NOTES

- ① Mission Groups/Churches (Christ Reigns & Forge) aren't asked to give towards PMA/POI, so the number of potential giving churches is 37.
- ② We've received POI giving from 28 churches for 2025 totaling \$107,385. Of that amount, \$8,591 has been given in January, 2026.

Church	2025 POI YTD	2025 POI GIVEN IN 2026	TOTAL IN 2025
Asbury		\$553.00	\$553.00
Bethel		\$0.00	\$0.00
Bouldin Memorial	\$1,000.00	\$0.00	\$1,000.00
Buffalo	\$4,450.00	\$0.00	\$4,450.00
Christ Reigns (Mission Group)		\$0.00	\$0.00
Cleveland		\$0.00	\$0.00
Elon	\$1,500.00	\$0.00	\$1,500.00
Elkton	\$6,000.00	\$0.00	\$6,000.00
Falling Spring	\$1,296.63	\$0.00	\$1,296.63
First Roanoke		\$5,735.00	\$5,735.00
First Eden		\$0.00	\$0.00
First Martinsburg	\$451.50	\$0.00	\$451.50
Galatia		\$863.67	\$863.67
Greenwood	\$793.76	\$0.00	\$793.76
Hope	\$2,850.00	\$0.00	\$2,850.00
Hurley		\$0.00	\$0.00
Lebanon	\$1,825.00	\$0.00	\$1,825.00
Mary's		\$0.00	\$0.00
Mebane	\$3,600.00	\$0.00	\$3,600.00
Forge (Mission Church)		\$0.00	\$0.00
New Life	\$958.50	\$0.00	\$958.50
Northminster		\$0.00	\$0.00
Norton		\$0.00	\$0.00
Princeton	\$1,850.00	\$0.00	\$1,850.00
Providence		\$0.00	\$0.00
Restoration		\$500.00	\$500.00
Reynolda	\$13,020.96	\$0.00	\$13,020.96
River Oaks	\$25,125.00	\$0.00	\$25,125.00
Rivermont	\$19,471.92	\$0.00	\$19,471.92
Roseann	\$1,050.00	\$0.00	\$1,050.00
Slate Mountain	\$1,425.00	\$0.00	\$1,425.00
Stuart	\$3,150.00	\$0.00	\$3,150.00
Thompson Valley	\$419.03	\$0.00	\$419.03
Walker's	\$1,310.45	\$0.00	\$1,310.45
Warm Springs	\$1,489.93	\$939.08	\$2,429.01
Westminster Bluefield	\$3,806.76	\$0.00	\$3,806.76
Westminster Burlington	\$1,200.00	\$0.00	\$1,200.00
Woodside		\$0.00	\$0.00
Wyliesburg	\$750.00	\$0.00	\$750.00
	\$98,794.44	\$8,590.75	\$107,385.19

# NRP Income Statement (through 12/31/25)

Account	2025 YTD ACTUAL	2024 YTD ACTUAL	VARIANCE
<b>INCOME</b>			
Percentage of Income	\$98,794.44	\$96,523.88	\$2,270.56
POI Rec'd Prior Year 2024	\$2,713.91	\$2,370.19	\$343.72
Presbytery Offering	\$1,734.00	\$2,874.09	-\$1,140.09
Individual Giving	\$300.00	\$945.00	-\$645.00
Church Giving	\$51.80	\$2,750.00	-\$2,698.20
GA Church Health Initiative	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00	\$0.00
Interest Income	\$4,392.54	\$3,607.87	\$784.67
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>\$119,986.69</b>	<b>\$121,071.03</b>	<b>-\$1,084.34</b>
<b>Compensation</b>			
Missional Director Stipend	\$39,000.00	\$39,000.00	\$0.00
Clerk Stipend	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00	\$0.00
IT Stipend	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
Treasurer Stipend	\$6,000.00	\$6,000.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Compensation</b>	<b>\$69,000.00</b>	<b>\$69,000.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>Personnel</b>			
Travel-Missional Director	\$5,864.45	\$5,453.55	\$410.90
Travel-Styled Clerk	\$5,514.99	\$6,138.43	-\$623.44
Office Expense	\$415.80	\$15.77	\$400.03
<b>Total Personnel</b>	<b>\$11,795.24</b>	<b>\$11,607.75</b>	<b>\$187.49</b>
<b>Professional Fees</b>			
IT Expenses	\$1,344.83	\$852.57	\$492.26
Treasurer Expenses	\$1,758.18	\$1,678.79	\$79.39
Liability Insurance (D/O)	\$2,910.53	\$2,869.68	\$40.85
Licenses/Fees	\$872.76	\$1,116.66	-\$243.90
Bank Fees	\$25.80	\$6.11	\$19.69
<b>Total Professional Fees</b>	<b>\$6,912.10</b>	<b>\$6,523.81</b>	<b>\$388.29</b>
<b>Committees/Commissions</b>			
Commissions	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Executive Council	\$2,477.13	\$2,944.55	-\$467.42
Ministerial Committee	\$2,738.82	\$1,626.33	\$1,112.49
Stewardship Committee	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
World Missions	\$6,605.49	\$6,084.70	\$520.79
Presbytery	\$855.11	\$692.02	\$163.09
General Assembly	\$889.81	\$0.00	\$889.81
<b>Total Committees/Commissions</b>	<b>\$13,566.36</b>	<b>\$11,347.60</b>	<b>\$2,218.76</b>
<b>Benevolence</b>			
Minister's Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Presbytery Offering	\$1,735.00	\$2,874.09	-\$1,139.09
Commissioner Assistance	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Benevolence - Other	\$0.00	\$750.00	-\$750.00
<b>Total Benevolence</b>	<b>\$1,735.00</b>	<b>\$3,624.09</b>	<b>-\$1,889.09</b>
<b>Church Development Committee</b>			
New Church Plant Support	\$5,000.00	\$0.00	\$5,000.00
Church Planter Health Insurance	\$3,126.47	\$0.00	\$3,126.47
Church Plant Coordinator	\$5,000.00	\$1,250.00	\$3,750.00
Church Planter Assessment/Coaching	\$200.00	\$3,450.00	-\$3,250.00
CDC Travel	\$1,276.88	\$0.00	\$1,276.88
Church Planting Team Travel	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Church Health Team Travel	\$990.81	\$722.38	\$268.43
Transitional Pastor Coaching/Training	\$493.86	\$3,559.46	-\$3,065.60
Church Revitalization	\$0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
Presbytery Equipping	\$2,504.56	\$1,549.03	\$955.53
<b>Total Church Develop. Comm.</b>	<b>\$18,592.58</b>	<b>\$10,530.87</b>	<b>\$8,061.71</b>
<b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>	<b>\$121,601.28</b>	<b>\$112,634.12</b>	<b>\$8,967.16</b>
<b>NET INCOME/LOSS</b>	<b>-\$1,614.59</b>	<b>\$8,436.91</b>	<b>-\$10,051.50</b>

# NRP Balance Sheet (through 12/31/25)

Account	12/31/25	12/31/24
<b>ASSETS</b>		
<b>Current Assets</b>		
Pinnacle Bank - Checking	\$16,407.85	\$22,414.98
Pinnacle Bank - Money Market	\$41,159.82	\$41,117.32
Pinnacle Bank - CD	\$108,516.22	\$104,166.18
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>\$166,083.89</b>	<b>\$167,698.48</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>		
	\$0.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>	<b>\$0.00</b>
<b>EQUITY</b>		
<b>Unrestricted Net Assets</b>		
General Fund	\$52,408.84	\$61,335.80
<b>Total Unrestricted Net Assets</b>	<b>\$52,408.84</b>	<b>\$61,335.80</b>
<b>Restricted Net Asset</b>		
Pastoral Assistance Fund	\$2,281.23	\$2,281.23
Church Development Committee Fund	\$80,814.82	\$81,018.36
Chaplain Fund	\$575.39	\$575.39
Missions Fund	\$2,808.18	\$5,513.67
Missionary Emergency Fund	\$4,576.62	\$4,576.62
Women's Fund	\$4,352.56	\$4,352.56
Church Health Fund	\$10,766.25	\$8,044.85
Emergency Relief Fund	\$7,500.00	\$0.00
<b>Total Restricted Net Assets</b>	<b>\$113,675.05</b>	<b>\$106,362.68</b>
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>\$166,083.89</b>	<b>\$167,698.48</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Equity</b>	<b>\$166,083.89</b>	<b>\$167,698.48</b>

Treasurer's Report

Brett Eubank, Treasurer

Notes:

Ministerial Committee

Powell Sykes, Chair

Notes:

## **NRP Ascending Overture Regarding Same Sex Attraction**

To: Ruling and Teaching Elders of the NRP

From: TE Rufus Burton, Stated Clerk

Re: The Overture from Rivermont Regarding SSA and Officers

At the 44<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in Memphis, the New River Presbytery Leadership Team was instrumental in helping to establish the *Ad Interim Committee on Same Sex Attraction and Ordination Standards*. One of the successes of that work was to put the NRP Stated Clerk onto the AIC. As a part of the overture that the Assembly passed, the EPC made the following resolution:

**Be it further resolved that it is the opinion and wish of the 44th General Assembly that no presbytery shall take action on petitions or matters before them that might touch on these areas of inquiry and exploration until the final report is received and acted upon by the 46th General Assembly.**

Dr. Pettus, the Chair of the NRP Leadership Team, and the NRP Stated Clerk wrote this provision and negotiated for its inclusion in order to free the AIC to complete its work without the specter of a peremptory examination and reception of an SSA officer into the EPC. For its part, the Mid-America Presbytery has kept its good faith pledge.

The overture from the Rivermont Session is in direct and knowing contravention of this resolution.

I would humbly remind the Elders that EPC process always seeks to discern the will of Christ in all matters of faith and life. Respect for each other and our process, as we prayerfully consider each matter, is important to our unified witness and our commitment to the truth and to each other. It is unlikely that the 44<sup>th</sup> Assembly proposed a process of discernment that is without merit.

## Overture to the 46<sup>th</sup> General Assembly

**Whereas**, God created Adam and Eve and ordained the first marriage and family consisting of one man and one woman in sexual union, establishing the context for the biblical sexual ethic (Genesis 1:27-28; 2:24; 4:1); and

**Whereas**, God has established the one flesh union between a husband and wife, as a great mystery in reference to Christ and His Church (Ephesians 5:25; 31-32); and

**Whereas**, the Holy Scriptures declare that the sexual union and desire between one man and one woman, in the covenant of marriage, is righteous and holy, and all other sexual activity is unrighteous and sinful, including homosexuality, which the Holy Scriptures describe as “degrading passions” (Romans 5:18-19; Romans 1:26-27; I Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 5:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; *Westminster Confession of Faith* 24:1; *Westminster Larger Catechism* 138, 139); and

**Whereas**, the application of the Seventh Commandment forbids the sins of homosexuality, unnatural lusts, and unclean affections, affirming that homosexual acts and the desires to commit those acts are both sinful (Matthew 5:27-28; *Westminster Larger Catechism* 139); and

**Whereas**, the Christian’s identity is rooted in Christ so that he is a “new creation” in Him, his identity cannot be defined by sexual and any other experiences, desires or lifestyles that are contrary to the Holy Scriptures; for the Christian there is a clear distinction between self-conception (“this is who I am”) and their remaining indwelling sin (“this is what I must daily mortify”) (Romans 6:1-14; I Corinthians 6:9-11; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Colossians 3:1-5); and

**Whereas**, identification or ongoing experience as “Same Sex Attracted” or any other identification or ongoing experience contrary to the biblical sexual ethic is sinful, is against nature itself, is something God detests, and is not fitting for an officer of the Church of Christ (Leviticus 18:22; I Timothy 3:2; Titus 1:5-6); and

**Whereas**, the biblical qualifications for a church officer require him (or her) to be “above reproach,” officers and candidates for office must conform their lives to biblical sexual ethics, which include denying and mortifying all sexual passions and desires toward anyone to whom they are not married (I Timothy 3:2); and

**Whereas**, for two thousand years the Church of Jesus Christ has at no time doctrinally allowed for the ordination of those engaged in homosexual activity or experiencing homosexual desire and thus has been faithful to the Holy Scriptures teaching on human sexuality, sanctification and the offices of the church, and the Evangelical Presbyterian Church has faithfully followed that teaching since its inception; and

**Whereas**, the *Position Paper on Homosexuality*, adopted by the 16<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the

Evangelical Presbyterian Church in 1996, affirms, “The witness of God’s Word in both the Old and New Testaments is clear, declaring that the practice of homosexuality, including lust, is a grievous sin, and that any who continue to engage in such activity face the consequences of God’s condemning judgment. However, God’s grace offers love, forgiveness, hope and a new life. The necessary response to this offer is true repentance, including turning from homosexual behavior, and commitment to a faithful obedience to the Lord according to His Word;” and

**Whereas**, the *Position Paper on Human Sexuality*, adopted by the 37<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2017, declares, “As repentant and forgiven sinners, we in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church resolve to teach the biblical truths of godly sexuality to our members and to all who will listen, with compassion and with courage, regardless of the cost to ourselves;” and

**Whereas**, the LGBTQ+ movement has infiltrated many quarters of the church, resulting in widespread confusion and controversy and has disrupted the peace and unity of the church; and

**Whereas**, the question of ordination of those who, on an ongoing basis experience homosexual desire, is sufficiently grave so that should any court in the EPC ordain someone who acknowledges ongoing homosexual desire, there is likely to be widespread rejection of the validity of that person’s ordination resulting in significant disruption of the peace and unity of the church; and

**Whereas**, promoting the peace and unity of the church is a vow all church officers of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church make (*Book of Government* 13-2A.9); and

**Whereas**, in response to the consideration of ordained church office for those currently experiencing Same Sex Attraction, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church must take a definitive, constitutional position on this matter;

**Therefore**, be it resolved that The New River Presbytery overtures the 46<sup>th</sup> General Assembly of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church to amend the Book of Government 9-3A. as follows:

**Current Book of Government 9-3A.**

According to Scripture, those who bear office in the Church should exhibit certain characteristics of life. This includes being above reproach, sound in the faith, wise in the things of God, and discreet in all things. Persons who fill this office should exhibit a lifestyle that is an example to all, both in and outside the Church. A congregation preparing to elect persons to this holy office should carefully study appropriate passages of Scripture relating to the Ruling Elder and be very prayerful in selecting persons to this office.

**Proposed Book of Government 9-3A.**

“According to Scripture, those who bear office in the church **shall** exhibit certain characteristics of life. This includes being above reproach, sound in the faith, wise in the things of God, and discreet in all things. Persons who fill **these offices shall** exhibit a lifestyle that is an example to all, both in and outside the Church. **Therefore, persons eligible for church office shall conform in heart, mind, and conduct to God’s design for human sexuality, embracing with gratitude the calling of either chastity in singleness or fidelity within marriage between one man and one woman. Those who profess, persist in, or identify with unnatural desires or affections, contrary to God’s created order and condemned by Scripture as against nature, are disqualified from holding office in Christ’s Church.**<sup>1</sup> A presbytery or congregation preparing to elect persons to **these holy offices shall** carefully study appropriate passages of Scripture relating to the **Teaching Elder, Ruling Elder, and Deacon**, and be very prayerful in **electing** persons to these offices.

*1. See Romans 1:26–27 on desires contrary to God’s created order; Genesis 1–2 on the creation of male and female; Westminster Larger Catechism Q.139 on the moral duties of Christians and the proper ordering of affections.*

## Descending Overtures from the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Evangelical Presbyterian Church

### DESCENDING OVERTURE 45-A

That the *Book of Government* 11-2 be amended.

**Rational:** G.11-2.A - Applicant refers to the one petitioning to become a Candidate. Since church members are subject to the jurisdiction of the Session, the process of seeking the Session’s endorsement is described prior to the Applicant submitting their name to the Presbytery.

G.11-2.C – The Applicant becomes a Candidate under care upon declaration of the Moderator.

G.11-2.D – Since Candidates remain members of the local church during their preparation for ordination, a Liaison between the Candidate and the Session provides fuller care for the Candidate.

G.11-2.E – This provision would give the Presbytery freedom to assign a Candidate’s Pastor as the Advisor when deemed appropriate. It also clarifies that the spiritual nurture and oversight of a Candidate lies with the Session and not solely with the Pastor.

G.11-2.F – The supervision of a Candidate may determine that the Candidate has ceased preparation for ordination or is in some other manner failing in the needed preparation for office. The details for this evaluation are included the Procedural Manual for Ministerial Committees (p. 43).

G.11-2.G – This clarifies that there are two educational pathways toward ordination: a Master of Divinity degree, and education equivalent to a Master of Divinity degree. For a description of “equivalent” see: Acts of Assembly 82-07; 12-12; and 14-08.

Deletion of present G.11-2.I – This would eliminate the ambiguous and often confusing third “extraordinary” pathway toward ordination.

Current Language: G.11-2	Proposed Language: <i>additions</i> , noted in <b><i>bold italics</i></b> , <del>deletions</del>
<p><b>11-2</b> Preparation for ordained ministry as a Teaching Elder</p> <p>Since the office of Teaching Elder is seen as the first office in the Church both for dignity and usefulness, special preparation is required.</p> <p><b>A.</b> A person desiring to become a Teaching Elder shall first become a Candidate under the care of the Presbytery of which that person’s church is a member. That person begins this process by seeking the endorsement of the Session of the local church where the person’s membership has been held for at least six months. When the Session has approved the Candidate, application shall be made to the appropriate Committee of Presbytery.</p> <p><b>B.</b> The Presbytery Committee charged with the oversight of Candidates shall make whatever tests of gifts and abilities, as well as of sincerity of purpose, it deems necessary. If the Candidate is approved, the</p>	<p><b>11-2</b> Preparation for ordained ministry as a Teaching Elder</p> <p>Since the office of Teaching Elder is seen as the first office in the Church both for dignity and usefulness, special preparation is required.</p> <p><b>A.</b> A person desiring to become a Teaching Elder shall first <b><i>seek the endorsement of the Session of the local church where the person’s membership has been held, ordinarily for at least six months. After receiving the endorsement of the Session, the Applicant shall submit their name and record of endorsement to the appropriate Committee of the Presbytery. The Session shall assign an active Ruling Elder to serve as a Liaison between the Applicant and the Session throughout the Applicant’s preparation for office once the Applicant is approved for candidacy.</i></b></p> <p><b>B.</b> The Presbytery Committee charged with the oversight of Candidates shall make whatever tests of gifts and abilities, as well as of sincerity of purpose, it deems necessary. If the <b><i>Applicant</i></b> is approved, the</p>

Committee shall recommend to Presbytery the approval of candidacy.

- C. The Presbytery shall make public examination of the Candidate as to Christian experience and growth, the motive for seeking ordination by a Presbytery of the EPC, and a statement regarding the person's call to the Ministry. If approved, the Presbytery shall proceed as follows.

The Candidate shall respond affirmatively to the following questions to be put by the Moderator of the Presbytery:

1. As you understand God's working in your heart and life, do you continue to believe yourself called to the office of Teaching Elder?
2. Do you now submit yourself to the care and supervision of this Presbytery as you prepare yourself for this office?
3. Do you renew your commitment as a Christian, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, to live as becomes a follower of Jesus?

The Moderator, or someone appointed by the Moderator, shall offer a prayer of thanksgiving and a blessing for the Candidate.

A charge shall be given to the Candidate by someone appointed by the Moderator. The Moderator shall then declare the person received as a Candidate; the person's name shall be placed on the Candidate roll of the Presbytery and welcomed in an appropriate manner.

- D. The Candidate continues to be a member of the local church and subject to the Session. But with regard to the Candidate's training for the ministry, the Candidate is under the oversight of the Presbytery. It is appropriate for the home church of the Candidate to have a service of recognition.
- E. The Presbytery shall assign a Teaching Elder in the Presbytery, ordinarily not the Candidate's Pastor, to serve as advisor to the Candidate. The advisor and the Candidate's Pastor shall submit regular reports to the appropriate committee on the progress of the Candidate.
- E. The Presbytery shall have some Committee to which the oversight of Candidates is assigned. This Committee shall oversee the training of the Candidate, giving encouragement and pastoral attention, and making an annual report to the Presbytery of the progress of the Candidate.

Committee shall recommend to Presbytery the approval of candidacy.

- C. The Presbytery shall make public examination of the Applicant as to Christian experience and growth, the motive for seeking ordination by a Presbytery of the EPC, and a statement regarding the person's call to the Ministry. If approved, the Presbytery shall proceed as follows.

The Applicant shall respond affirmatively to the following questions to be put by the Moderator of the Presbytery:

1. As you understand God's working in your heart and life, do you continue to believe yourself called to the office of Teaching Elder?
2. Do you now submit yourself to the care and supervision of this Presbytery as you prepare yourself for this office?
3. Do you renew your commitment as a Christian, in humble reliance upon the grace of the Holy Spirit, to live as becomes a follower of Jesus?

The Moderator, or someone appointed by the Moderator, shall offer a prayer of thanksgiving and a blessing for the new Applicant.

A charge shall be given to the Applicant by someone appointed by the Moderator. The Moderator shall then declare the person received as a Candidate; the person's name shall be placed on the Candidate roll of the Presbytery and welcomed in an appropriate manner.

- D. The Candidate continues to be a member of the local church and subject to the Session which shall continue to follow the preparation of the Candidate by means of the Ruling Elder Liaison. ~~But~~ With regard to the Candidate's training for the ministry, the Candidate is under the oversight of the Presbytery. It is appropriate for the home church of the Candidate to have a service of recognition.
- E. The Presbytery shall assign a Teaching Elder in the Presbytery, ~~ordinarily not the Candidate's Pastor~~, to serve as Advisor to the Candidate. The Advisor and the Candidate's ~~Pastor~~ Session shall submit regular reports to the appropriate committee on the progress of the Candidate.
- F. The Presbytery shall have some Committee to which the oversight of Candidates is assigned. This Committee shall oversee the training of the Candidate, giving encouragement and pastoral attention, and making an annual report to the Presbytery of the progress of the Candidate and, if the Candidate fails to make appropriate progress, recommend termination of candidacy.

**G.** A Candidate shall pursue a course of study that leads to a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary approved by the Presbytery, and such other standards as may be determined by Acts of the General Assembly. Academic work that is equivalent to a Master of Divinity degree may be completed by those means designed for Candidates under extraordinary status (G.11-2I).

**H.** Ordinarily, a Candidate must be under care for a minimum of one year prior to ordination. A Candidate, for reasons acceptable to the Presbytery, may request transfer to another Presbytery. The Candidate's membership must also be transferred to an EPC congregation within that Presbytery.

**I.** A Presbytery, for reasons it judges adequate, may receive a Candidate under extraordinary circumstances for whom it may waive part or all of the total educational requirements for ordination. This action requires a two-thirds vote by the Presbytery. When such a Candidate is received, it is appropriate to assign courses of independent study or study under some appropriate person.

**J.** A Candidate from another Reformed denomination who has been under care for at least one year in that denomination, has met EPC educational requirements for ordination, and is pursuing a call from an EPC congregation shall be examined in the manner prescribed in G.12-2. Any Candidates from outside the Reformed Tradition follow the procedures of G.11-2.

**G.** A Candidate shall pursue a course of study that leads to a Master of Divinity degree from an accredited seminary approved by the Presbytery, and such other standards as may be determined by Acts of the General Assembly. **Academic work that is equivalent to a Master of Divinity degree may be completed by those means designed for Candidates under extraordinary status (G.11-2I). For reasons it deems appropriate, the Presbytery may authorize a Candidate's completion of academic work that it deems equivalent to such a Master of Divinity.**

**H.** Ordinarily, a Candidate must be under care for a minimum of one year prior to ordination. A Candidate, for reasons acceptable to the Presbytery, may request transfer to another Presbytery. The Candidate's membership must also be transferred to an EPC congregation within that Presbytery.

~~**I.** A Presbytery, for reasons it judges adequate, may receive a Candidate under extraordinary circumstances for whom it may waive part or all of the total educational requirements for ordination. This action requires a two-thirds vote by the Presbytery. When such a Candidate is received, it is appropriate to assign courses of independent study or study under some appropriate person.~~

~~**J. I.** A Candidate from another Reformed denomination who has been under care for at least one year in that denomination, has met EPC educational requirements for ordination, and is pursuing a call from an EPC congregation shall be examined in the manner prescribed in G.12-2. Any Candidates from outside the Reformed Tradition follow the procedures of G.11-2.~~

# Descending Overtures from the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Evangelical Presbyterian Church

## DESCENDING OVERTURE 45-B

That the *Book of Government* 18-3 be amended.

**Rational:** G.18-3.E - The Session retains immediate jurisdiction over both the Applicant and the Candidate during the ordination process. These three responsibilities expand upon the Session's role in the preparation of Applicant/Candidate for ordination.

Current Language: G.18-3	Proposed Language: <u>additions</u> , noted in <u>bold italics</u> , deletions
<p><b>18-3 Authority and Responsibilities of the Session</b></p> <p>In maintaining the spiritual supervision of the local church, the Session has the following authority and responsibilities:</p> <p>A. To oversee the worship of the congregation in accordance with the Book of Worship, including the time and place of worship, special services, the music program, and the celebration of the sacraments. This shall not infringe on the responsibility of the Pastor in the selection of hymns, Scriptures, sermon, administration of the sacraments, or other duties that are incumbent on the office of Pastor.</p> <p>B. To organize itself within the bounds of this Constitution and lawful acts of the higher Church courts for the advancement of the gospel and the mission of that congregation.</p> <p>C. To initiate the ministry of evangelism as the first business of the Church, and to seek to lead persons to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.</p> <p>D. To oversee the discipleship ministries of the church, leading members to maturity in Christ.</p> <p>E. To monitor the spiritual conduct of the members, and to take action when appropriate according to procedures set forth in <i>The Book of Discipline</i>.</p> <p>F. To remind parents of the responsibility of presenting their children for baptism and to provide instruction as indicated in <i>The Book of Worship</i>, Section 3-2.G. To this end, Sessions should establish and conduct under their authority Sunday schools and Bible classes and adopt such other</p>	<p><b>18-3 Authority and Responsibilities of the Session</b></p> <p>In maintaining the spiritual supervision of the local church, the Session has the following authority and responsibilities:</p> <p>A. To oversee the worship of the congregation in accordance with the Book of Worship, including the time and place of worship, special services, the music program, and the celebration of the sacraments. This shall not infringe on the responsibility of the Pastor in the selection of hymns, Scriptures, sermon, administration of the sacraments, or other duties that are incumbent on the office of Pastor.</p> <p>B. To organize itself within the bounds of this Constitution and lawful acts of the higher Church courts for the advancement of the gospel and the mission of that congregation.</p> <p>C. To initiate the ministry of evangelism as the first business of the Church, and to seek to lead persons to an acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.</p> <p>D. To oversee the discipleship ministries of the church, leading members to maturity in Christ.</p> <p>E. <u>To oversee church members seeking ordination as Teaching Elders.</u></p> <p>1. <u>By examining Applicants prior to endorsing them.</u></p> <p>2. <u>By assigning an active Ruling Elder as Session Liaison to guide and nurture the Applicant throughout Candidacy until ordained as a Teaching Elder or until removed from candidacy.</u></p> <p>3. <u>By submitting a request to the Presbytery to consider the Applicant to come under care as a Candidate.</u></p> <p>F. To monitor the spiritual conduct of the members, and to take action when appropriate according to procedures set forth in <i>The Book of Discipline</i>.</p> <p>G. To remind parents of the responsibility of presenting their children for baptism and to provide instruction as indicated in <i>The Book of Worship</i>,</p>

<p>methods as may be found helpful. The Session shall encourage the parents of the Church to guide their children in the catechizing and disciplining of them in the Christian religion.</p> <p><b>G.</b> To receive, dismiss, restore, grant affiliation, remove members, and keep rolls in accordance with G.8-1, 8-2, and 8-3. The Session may establish a minimum age for the active roll and to vote in congregational meetings.</p> <p><b>H.</b> To determine and oversee the finances of the local church including the budget and the benevolence objectives of the congregation.</p> <p><b>I.</b> To oversee the educational program of the congregation and to approve its literature.</p> <p><b>J.</b> To oversee the work of the Board of Deacons and to review its minutes at least semi- annually unless otherwise provided for by the Session. It is also desirable for the Session to call a joint meeting at least semi-annually to discuss matters of common interest, although each body must act separately on matters under its charge.</p> <p><b>K.</b> To fulfill its obligations to train and examine those elected to the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon as set forth in Sections 12-3 and 13-8, 9, and 10.</p> <p><b>L.</b> To determine policies regarding the use of the property and facilities of the congregation.</p> <p><b>M.</b> When there is no Pastor, to convene the people for worship on the Lord's Day, offering prayers, praise, reading the Scriptures and teaching thereof. It is also appropriate for a Ruling Elder to preach or to read a sermon by some Minister of the Word of the Church.</p> <p><b>N.</b> To overture Presbytery on matters it believes vital or helpful to the whole Church and to observe and carry out the injunctions and instructions of the higher courts. The Session shall elect commissioners to Presbytery and shall hear a subsequent report on that court.</p> <p><b>O.</b> To order special offerings, special days of prayer and fasting, special days of worship, and other matters that benefit the spiritual life of the people.</p> <p><b>P.</b> To do whatever else may be necessary for the spread of the gospel, the edification of the members, the wellbeing of the Church, the advancement of the Kingdom, and the growth in grace of all.</p>	<p>Section 3-2.G. To this end, Sessions should establish and conduct under their authority Sunday schools and Bible classes and adopt such other methods as may be found helpful. The Session shall encourage the parents of the Church to guide their children in the catechizing and disciplining of them in the Christian religion.</p> <p><b>H.</b> To receive, dismiss, restore, grant affiliation, remove members, and keep rolls in accordance with G.8-1, 8-2, and 8-3. The Session may establish a minimum age for the active roll and to vote in congregational meetings.</p> <p><b>I.</b> To determine and oversee the finances of the local church including the budget and the benevolence objectives of the congregation.</p> <p><b>J.</b> To oversee the educational program of the congregation and to approve its literature.</p> <p><b>K.</b> To oversee the work of the Board of Deacons and to review its minutes at least semi- annually unless otherwise provided for by the Session. It is also desirable for the Session to call a joint meeting at least semi-annually to discuss matters of common interest, although each body must act separately on matters under its charge.</p> <p><b>L.</b> To fulfill its obligations to train and examine those elected to the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon as set forth in Sections 12-3 and 13-8, 9, and 10.</p> <p><b>M.</b> To determine policies regarding the use of the property and facilities of the congregation.</p> <p><b>N.</b> When there is no Pastor, to convene the people for worship on the Lord's Day, offering prayers, praise, reading the Scriptures and teaching thereof. It is also appropriate for a Ruling Elder to preach or to read a sermon by some Minister of the Word of the Church.</p> <p><b>O.</b> To overture Presbytery on matters it believes vital or helpful to the whole Church and to observe and carry out the injunctions and instructions of the higher courts. The Session shall elect commissioners to Presbytery and shall hear a subsequent report on that court.</p> <p><b>P.</b> To order special offerings, special days of prayer and fasting, special days of worship, and other matters that benefit the spiritual life of the people.</p> <p><b>Q.</b> To do whatever else may be necessary for the spread of the gospel, the edification of the members, the wellbeing of the Church, the advancement of the Kingdom, and the growth in grace of all.</p>
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## Descending Overtures from the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Evangelical Presbyterian Church

### DESCENDING OVERTURE 45-C

That the *Book of Government* 19-4.B be amended.

**Rational:** These proposed amendments, which emerge from previously proposed amendments to G.11-2 (See: Recommendation 45-10), are offered for the sake of clarity and consistency.

Current Language: G.19-4.B	Proposed Language: <u><b>additions, in bold italics,</b></u> deletions
<p><b>19-4.B With respect to Teaching Elders</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To establish the required Ministerial Committee.</li> <li>2. To examine Ministers and Candidates, to receive and dismiss Ministers and Candidates.</li> <li>3. To ordain and install, to dissolve pastoral relationships, to approve calls, and to grant permission to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery.</li> <li>4. To establish a Ministerial Obligation record to which all Ministers must subscribe before being received into membership. This obligation shall consist of the ordination vows for Ministers to which shall be added a subscription as follows: "I do receive and adopt the above vows as a true statement of my faith, commitment, and obligation, and I do resolve and promise to exercise my calling to the gospel ministry in obedience to those vows."</li> <li>5. To retire and to place on Inactive Status member Ministers.</li> <li>6. To take disciplinary action according to <i>The Book of Discipline</i>.</li> <li>7. To decide judicial cases brought before it in accordance with <i>The Book of Discipline</i>.</li> </ol>	<p><b>19-4.B With respect to Teaching Elders</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. To establish the required Ministerial Committee.</li> <li>2. To examine <u><b>Applicants, Candidates, and Teaching Elders</b></u>, and to receive and dismiss <u><b>Applicants, Candidates, and Teaching Elders</b></u>.</li> <li>3. To ordain and install, to dissolve pastoral relationships, to approve calls, and to grant permission to labor outside the bounds of Presbytery.</li> <li>4. To establish a Ministerial Obligation record to which all <u><b>Teaching Elders</b></u> must subscribe before being received into membership. This obligation shall consist of the ordination vows for <u><b>Teaching Elders</b></u> to which shall be added a subscription as follows: "I do receive and adopt the above vows as a true statement of my faith, commitment, and obligation, and I do resolve and promise to exercise my calling to the gospel ministry in obedience to those vows."</li> <li>5. To retire and to place on Inactive Status member <u><b>Teaching Elders</b></u>.</li> <li>6. To take disciplinary action according to <i>The Book of Discipline</i>.</li> <li>7. To decide judicial cases brought before it in accordance with <i>The Book of Discipline</i>.</li> </ol>

## Descending Overtures from the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly Evangelical Presbyterian Church

### DESCENDING OVERTURE 45-D

That the *Book of Government* 21-2.D.1 be amended.

**Rational:** The Ministerial Committee or other designated Committee of the Presbytery has the responsibility for Applicants seeking to come under Care of the Presbytery. This proposed amendment, which emerges from previously proposed amendments to G.11-2 (See: Recommendation #45-10), is offered for the sake of clarity and consistency.

Current Language: G.21-2.D.1	Proposed Language: <u><i>additions, in bold italics</i></u> deletions
<p><b>21-2 The Ministerial Committee</b></p> <p><b>D.1 Authority and Responsibilities</b></p> <p>1. With regard to Teaching Elders and Candidates</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. It shall have the oversight of Candidates for the gospel ministry of the Presbytery, although the Presbytery may assign this function to some other committee.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. It shall confer with each Teaching Elder desiring to become a member of the Presbytery or Candidate desiring ordination.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c. It shall conduct any examination and assessment it deems necessary in order to make a decision for its recommendation to the Presbytery concerning the application.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">d. It shall conduct the examination by the Presbytery of the applicant according to the Book of Government.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">e. It shall report annually on the work of the Teaching Elders to the Presbytery, along with any recommendations it might have. This includes an annual report from those Teaching Elders approved for labor outside the bounds of Presbytery.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">f. The Committee shall be responsible for an annual review of the remuneration of Teaching Elders, shall consult with Sessions if deemed necessary concerning such remuneration, and may recommend to the Presbytery minimum terms for the call of Teaching Elders. Requests to the Presbytery for a change in the terms of call shall come through this committee.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">g. It shall review each request for dissolution of a pastoral relationship and make a recommendation to Presbytery.</p>	<p><b>21-2 The Ministerial Committee</b></p> <p><b>D.1 Authority and Responsibilities</b></p> <p><i>1. With regard to <u><i>Applicants, Candidates, and Teaching Elders</i></u></i></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">a. It shall have the oversight of Candidates for the gospel ministry of the Presbytery, although the Presbytery may assign this function to some other committee.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">b. It shall confer with each Teaching Elder desiring to become a member of the Presbytery <u><i>as well as Applicants</i></u> or Candidates desiring ordination.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">c. It shall conduct any examination and assessment it deems necessary in order to make a decision for its recommendation to the Presbytery concerning the application.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">d. It shall conduct the examination by the Presbytery of the applicant according to the Book of Government.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">e. It shall report annually on the work of the Teaching Elders to the Presbytery, along with any recommendations it might have. This includes an annual report from those Teaching Elders approved for labor outside the bounds of Presbytery.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">f. The Committee shall be responsible for an annual review of the remuneration of Teaching Elders, shall consult with Sessions if deemed necessary concerning such remuneration, and may recommend to the Presbytery minimum terms for the call of Teaching Elders. Requests to the Presbytery for a change in the terms of call shall come through this committee.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;">g. It shall review each request for dissolution of a pastoral relationship and make a recommendation to Presbytery.</p>

Current Wording	Proposed Amendments (12/17/25)
<p>BoG 12-2.B (examination of candidates for ordination as a Teaching Elder):</p> <p>The Candidate shall be examined in Christian experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth</p>	<p>BoG 12-2.B (examination of candidates for ordination as a Teaching Elder):</p> <p>Candidates shall be examined in Christian experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ, <b>faithful conformity to his character, obedience to him as Lord, and steady</b> progress in spiritual growth. <b>(See also D.1-10)</b></p>
<p>BoG 12-3.A (examination of an EPC TE transferring into another EPC Presbytery)</p> <p>EPC Teaching Elders shall be examined on views of the areas indicated in G.12-2 and they shall relate their experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth</p>	<p>BoG 12-3.A (examination of an EPC TE transferring into another EPC Presbytery)</p> <p>EPC Teaching Elders shall be examined on views of the areas indicated in G.12-2, shall relate experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ, <b>faithful conformity to his character, obedience to him as Lord, and steady</b> progress in spiritual growth. <b>(See also D.1-10)</b></p>
<p>BoG 12-3.B.1 (examination of a Reformed Minister transferring into an EPC Presbytery)</p> <p><b>The</b> Minister shall be examined on views and beliefs and may be examined on knowledge</p>	<p>BoG 12-3.B.1 (examination of a Reformed Minister transferring into an EPC Presbytery)</p> <p>Ministers shall be examined on views and beliefs, may be examined on knowledge, and shall relate experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ, <b>faithful conformity to his character, obedience to him as Lord, and steady</b> progress in spiritual growth. <b>(See also D.1-10)</b></p>
<p>BoG 12-6 (examination of candidates for RE and Deacon)</p> <p>The Session shall confer with each person <b>elected</b> to office in the local church to determine if that person feels called to office and is willing to serve faithfully. The Session shall examine candidates for ordination to the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon on 1) personal experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ and progress in spiritual growth, 2) theology and Sacraments of the Church, 3) the government, discipline, worship, and</p>	<p>BoG 12-6 (examination of candidates for RE and Deacon)</p> <p>The Session shall confer with each person <b>nominated</b> to office in the local church to determine if that person feels called to office and is willing to serve faithfully. The Session shall examine candidates for ordination to the office of Ruling Elder or Deacon on 1) personal experience of the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ, <b>their faithful conformity to his character, obedience to him as Lord, and steady</b> progress in spiritual growth <b>(See also</b></p>

<p>history of the Church, and 4) an understanding of the office to which one is elected.</p>	<p><b>D.1-10</b>), 2) theology and Sacraments of the Church, 3) the government, discipline, worship, and history of the Church, and 4) an understanding of the office to which one is elected.</p>
<p>BoG 9-3.A (Life and Character of Officers)</p> <p>According to Scripture, those who bear office in the Church should exhibit certain characteristics of life. This includes being above reproach, sound in the faith, wise in the things of God, and discreet in all things. Persons who fill this office should exhibit a lifestyle that is an example to all, both in and outside the Church. A congregation preparing to elect persons to <b>this</b> holy office should carefully study appropriate passages of Scripture relating to <b>the Ruling Elder</b> and be very prayerful in selecting persons to <b>this office</b>.</p>	<p>BoG 9-3.A (Life and Character of Officers)</p> <p>According to Scripture, those who bear office in the Church should exhibit certain characteristics of life. This includes being above reproach, sound in the faith, wise in the things of God, and discreet in all things. Persons who fill this office should exhibit a lifestyle that is an example to all, both in and outside the Church. <b>Officers must conform to the biblical requirement of chastity and sexual purity (see Westminster Larger Catechism Q&amp;A 138-139; D.1-10) in their descriptions of themselves, their convictions, character, and conduct.</b> A congregation preparing to elect persons to <b>these</b> holy offices should carefully study appropriate passages of Scripture relating <b>to these offices</b> and be very prayerful in selecting persons <b>to them</b>.</p>
<p>BoG 9-3.B (Life and Character of Officers)</p> <p>As the law of love places certain duties upon each Christian, Church Officers are especially bound by their calling to fulfill them and to be an example to all.</p>	<p>BoG 9-3.B (Life and Character of Officers)</p> <p>As the law of love places certain duties upon each Christian, Church Officers are especially bound by their calling to fulfill them and to be an example to all. <b>Officers in the Evangelical Presbyterian Church must be above reproach in their walk and Christlike in their character. While office bearers will see spiritual perfection only in glory, they will continue in this life to confess and to mortify remaining sins in light of God’s work of progressive sanctification. Therefore, to be qualified for office, they must affirm the sinfulness of fallen desires, the reality and hope of progressive sanctification, and be committed to the pursuit of Spirit-</b></p>

	<b>empowered victory over their sinful temptations, inclinations, and actions.</b>
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Notes for the report to the session: