

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

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INTRODUCTORY NOTES

On this edition of the Practice and Procedure as presented by
The Board of Faith and Order, Presbyterian Church of Nigeria

THIS EDITION

This edition of the Practice and Procedures is the product of a draft copy presented to the Board of Faith and Order early in 1988, which was revised by the Board and then presented to the General Assembly in August of 1988. The Assembly had copies sent to all the Presbyteries for study, and from the comments received by the Board a special meeting was held in June 1989 to incorporate such comments and suggestions as were consistent with the ideas of Presbyterian polity.

PROPOSED CONTENTS OF THE ENTIRE BOOK:

This edition is laid out on the premise that there will be a total of three major sections to the Practice and Procedure. They will be:-

Section "G" -- Form of Government

Section "D" -- Book of Discipline

Section "W" -- The Work and Worship of the Church.

This edition covers only section "G" (Form of Government), although at certain points there are references to section "D" and "WH. The other two sections are still to come, and are in fact partially ready. Pages 70-94 of the old "P & P" will be enlarged and included in section "D" (Book of Discipline).

See the next page for a Table of Contents according to sections.

CROSS-REFERENCES AND APPENDIXES:

There are many cross-references included in the text. Their primary purpose is to make it easy for the reader to find similar and/or related sections.

The Appendixes are included to provide useful information in certain areas usually an expansion of what is mentioned in briefer terms in the Practice and Procedure itself or combining relevant information from various sections so as to aid persons who are not familiar with the entire Practice and Procedure. In the course of time, certainly more appendixes will be added.

SYSTEM OF NUMBERING:

The system of numbering is that found in many larger organizations who amend their books of rules and procedures from time to time. It allows for General Assembly decisions to be added to the Practice and Procedure at any time, without requiring a whole new book to be printed. By reprinting only the changes in the relevant sections, the membership of the Church can much more easily keep up

with any changes, rather than having to wait for a reprinting only after many, many, years. Moreover, there will be a considerable savings of finance.

The numbering system is quite simple. Take the following for example:

"G-10.0203 3. Frequency of Meetings

"G - 10" refers to chapter number 10 Form of Government, which happens to be entitled "The Session,

"0203" is actually two numbers, viz. "02" + "03". The "02" refers to the subject of "Meetings and Procedure" of the Session, while the "03" gives the regulations regarding "Frequency of Meetings" of the Session. There are always four digits behind the first period, and they always can be divided evenly, therefore G-10.0203 is the same as saying "Form of Government, Chapter Ten, Section Two, Sub-section Three."

In some places, a number in parenthesis like (1982-2179) can be seen. This number is the Synod or General Assembly decision and means the year of 1982, minutes no, 2179,

TEACHING VALUE

Probably the greatest value of this Practice and Procedure lies not in the sense that it is a book of rules, and regulations (which indeed it certainly is!); but in its value as a source of instruction on Presbyterianism. Therefore, the Board highly encourages Presbyterian members, and especially its Ministers, Elders, and theological students to study this volume which is our Church's primary document on Presbyterian polity.

FUTURE EDITIONS:

The Board of Propagation and Publication which is responsible for publishing this document, regrets the present economic situation which, for austerity reasons, has forced this mimeographed edition rather than a properly printed edition. However, as soon as possible a loose-leaf edition will become available with the advantage that the entire Practice and Procedure will not need to be reprinted after every amendment, but only relevant pages replaced at a minimal cost.

CONTRADICTIONS:

The writers of this edition have tried not to allow any contradictions to find their way into the text. However, since the drafts and their revisions were made over many weeks and months of writing, it is very possible that contradictions can be found. The Board trusts that the sharp, minds of the ministers and members of the Presbyterian Church will be quick to point them out.

SOURCES AND RESOURCES:

The sources and reference points for this edition of the Practice and Procedure are as follows:

1. The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria,
2. The existing Practice and Procedure
3. Decision which have been recorded in the Synod and General Assembly Minutes,
4. The Practice and Procedure of the Church of Scotland
5. The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA)
6. The books of Presbyterian polity in other Presbyterian denominations.
7. The writers' understanding of what Presbyterian polity is when no other definitive statement can be found in the above list.

Date: June 9, 1989

Rev Emory VanGerpen, editor,

on behalf of the Board Chairman, the Rev C. Mmahi, and

the Board Secretary, the Rev. C. West

PRACTICE AND PROCEDURE

FORM OF GOVERNMENT

Preliminary Principles

Christ, The Head Of The Church

All power in heaven and earth is given to Jesus Christ¹ by Almighty God.² who raised Christ

from the dead³ and set Him above all rule and authority,⁴ above all power and dominion,⁵ and above every name that is named,⁶ not only in this age but also in that which is to come.⁷ God has put all things under the Lordship of Jesus Christ⁸ and has made Christ Head of the Church, which is His body.⁹

It is Christ who calls the church into being.¹⁰ Who gives it all that is necessary for its mission to the world.¹¹ for its building¹² and for its service to God.¹³ Christ is present with the church in both Spirit and Word.¹⁴ It belongs to Christ alone to rule, to teach, to call, and to use the church as He wills,¹⁵ exercising His authority by the ministry of women and men for the establishment and extension of His Kingdom.¹⁶

Church gives to His church its faith and life,¹⁷ its unity and mission,¹⁸ Its officials and ordinances.¹⁹ Insofar as Christ's will for the church is set forth in Scripture, it is to be obeyed.²⁰ In the worship and service of God and the government of the church, matters are to be ordered according to the Word by reason and sound judgement.²¹ under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.²²

In affirming with the earliest Christian that Jesus is Lord,²³ the church confesses that He is its hopes²⁴ and that the church, as Christ's body, is bound to His church and thus free to live in the lively, joyous reality of the grace of God.²⁵

The great Purposes For Which The Church Exists:

The great ends of the Church are:

- a. the proclamation of the gospel for the salvation of humankind.
- b. the shelter, nurture and spiritual fellowship of the children of God.
- c. the maintenance of divine worship.
- d. the preservation of the truth.
- e. the promotion of social righteousness.
- f. the exhibition of the kingdom of Heaven to the World.

The Historic Principles of Presbyterian Church Order

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria recognizes the following principles of church government as basic to the Presbyterian Tradition.

1. RIGHT OF JUDGEMENT

That "God alone is Lord of the conscience and hath left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are in anything contrary to His Word, or besides it, in matters of faith or worship." (from Westminster Confession of Faith, 6.109).

Therefore we consider the rights of private judgment, in all matters that respect religion, as universal and unalienable: We do not even wish to see any religious constitution aided by the civil power, further than may be necessary for protection and security, and at the same time, be equal and common to all others.

2. CORPORATE JUDGMENT

That, in perfect consistency with the above principles of common right, every Christian church, or union or association of particular churches, is entitled to declare the terms of admission into its communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government which Christ hath appointed; that in the exercise of this right they may, notwithstanding, err, in making the terms of communion either too lax or too narrow; yet, even in this case, they do not infringe upon the liberty or

the rights of others, but only make an improper use of their own.

3. OFFICERS

That our blessed Saviour, for the edification of the visible church, which is His body, hath appointed officers, not only to preach the gospel and administer the Sacraments but also to exercise discipline, for the preservation of both truth and duty; and that it is incumbent upon these officers, and upon the whole church, in whose name they act, to censure or cast out the erroneous and scandalous, observing in all cases, the rules contained in the Word of God.

4. TRUTH AND GOODNESS

That truth is in order (exists) to (bring about) goodness; and the great touchstone of truth, (is) its tendency to promote holiness, according to our Saviour's rule "By their fruits ye shall know them." And that no opinion can be either more pernicious or more absurd than that which brings truth and falsehood upon a level, and represents it as of no consequence what a man's opinions are. On one contrary, we are persuaded that there is an inseparable connection between faith and practice, truth and duty. Otherwise, it would be of no consequence either to discover truth or to embrace it.

5. DIFFERENCES OF VIEWS

That while under the conviction of the above principles we think it necessary to make effectual provision that all who are admitted as teachers be sound in the faith, we also believe that there are truths and forms with respect to which men of good characters and principles may differ. And in all these we think it is the duty both of private Christians and the public to exercise mutual forbearance toward each other.

6. ELECTION BY THE PEOPLE

That though the character, qualifications, and authority of Church officers are laid down in the Holy Scriptures, as well as the proper method of their investiture and institution, yet the election of the persons to the exercise of this authority, in any particular organization, is in that organization.

7. CHURCH POWER

That all church power, whether exercise by the body in general or in the way of representation by delegated authority, is only ministerial and declarative; that is to say, that the Holy Scripture are the only rule of faith and manners; that no church governing body ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience in virtue of their own authority; and that all their decisions should be founded upon the revealed will of God. Now though it will easily be admitted that all synods and councils may err, through the frailty inseparable from humanity, yet there is much greater danger from the usurped claim of making laws

than from the right of judging upon laws already made, and common to all who profess the gospel, although this right, as necessity requires in the present state, be lodged with fallible men.

8 CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Lastly, that if the preceding scriptural and rational principles be steadfastly adhered to, the vigour and strictness of its discipline will contribute to the glory and happiness of any church. Since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral or spiritual in its objects, and not attended with civil effects, it can derive no force whatever but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the approval and blessing of the great Head of the church universal.

The Basic Principles of Presbyterian Church Government: xxx

1. That the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically the Church;
2. That a larger part of the church, or a representation of it, should govern a smaller, or determine matters of controversy which arise therein;
3. That in like manner, a representation of the whole should govern and determine in regard to every, and to all the parts united: that is a majority shall govern.
4. That consequently, appeals may be carried from lower to higher governing bodies, till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole Church.
5. For these principles and this procedure, the example of the apostles and the practice of the primitive church are considered as an authority.

The Constitution Defined:

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is that document adopted by the

Synod of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria on the 7th day of January 1971, together with any subsequent amendments or alterations as may have been constitutionally passed.

A part of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria (paragraph 3) are the Declaratory Articles - a confessional statement - adopted on 19 October, 1945.

The Subordinates Standards Defined:

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria further accepts as its standard the following creeds and confessional statements: (see G-02.0100-0200).

1. Confessions:

The Apostle's Creed

The Nicene Creed

The Westminster Confession of Faith

The Larger Westminster Catechism

The Shorter Westminster Catechism

2. The Practice and Procedure:

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria accepts as its standard of church polity, this Practice and Procedure together with any amendments which may have been passed by the General Assembly. The Practice and Procedure consists of three parts, including:

The Form of Government

The Rules of Discipline

The Directory for the Worship and Service of God.

3. Guiding Principles:

In matters where sufficient guidance may not be obtained from this Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria together with its subsequent amendments and/or alterations, the Practice and Procedure of the Church of Scotland in

its most recent edition shall be considered the prime source for further enlightenment along with the rules and regulations of other reformed churches.

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Footnotes.

1. Matt 28 v 18; Rom 1 v 4
2. Acts 10 v 38
3. Rom 10 v 9; Eph 1 v 20
4. 1 Pet 3 v 22; Phil 2 v 9-11
5. Heb 1 v 4; Rom 14 v 9
6. Phil 2 v 0-11; Isa 9 v 6; Rev 19 v 6
7. Isa 9 v 6-7
8. Luke 6 v 5; Acts 2 v 36; 1 Pet 3 v 22
9. Col 1 V 18; Eph 1 v 22-23, 4 v 15, 5 v 23
10. Eph 2 v 20
11. Matt 28 vv 18-20; John 20 vv 21-23
12. Eph 2 vv 19-22; Matt 16 v 18
13. Eph 4 vv 11-16
14. Spirit: Eph 1 vv 11-14; 2 vv 19-22 Rom 1vv 3-5; Acts 20 v 28
15. Word: Eph 6 v 17
15. Rule: Matt 16 vv 18-19; Eph 1 vv 20-23
- Teach: John 13 v 13
- Call: Eph 4 vv 4-5
- Use: 2 Tim 1 vv 13-14; Eph 1 v 10; Matt 20 vv 25-2616
16. Luke 22 v 29; Acts 2: 30-36
17. Faith Heb 12 v 2
18. Unity: John 17 v 11; Eph 1 v 10
- Mission:

19. Officers: Acts 14:23; 1 Tim 5:17; 1 Cor 12 v 28

Ordinances: Baptism: Matt 28 v 19

Lord's Supper 1 Cor 11 vv 23-26

20. John 14 v 15; 1 John 5 v 3 1

21. Cor 14 vv 33,40; Acts 15 vv 2, 6

22. Acts 13 vv 2-3

23. Acts 2 v 36; 1 Cor 12 v 3; Phil 2 v 11

24. Col 1 vv 21-23, 27; Heb 10v23; 1 Pet 1 v 3

25. Rom 3 v 24; 5 v 15

Note: These famous Eight Articles were adopted by the Synod of New York and Philadelphia in 1788

when the first General Assembly in the USA was formed. They have been slightly edited for purposes of modern English usage.

The purpose of Confessional Statements

A Declaration:

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, being a “confessional church” in keeping with traditional Presbyterianism around the world, states its faith and bears witness to God's grace in Jesus Christ in various creeds and confessions. By means of these creeds and confessional statements, the church declares to its own members as well as to the world at large.

- a. Who and what it is,
- b. What it believes, and
- c. What it resolves to do.

Confessional Statements and Creeds:

- a. They identify the church as a community of people known by its convictions as well as by

its actions.

- b. They guide the church in its study and interpretation of the Scriptures.
- c. They summarize the essence of Christian tradition.
- d. They guide the church in maintaining sound doctrine.
- e. They equip the church for its work of proclamation.

The Position of Confessional Statements:

Subordinates Standards: (See G-01.0600)

Creeds and confessional statements are subordinate to the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Word of God, and to whom the Scripture known as the Bible, bear witness.

Similarly, creeds and confessional statements are subordinates to the Scriptures, written by "holy men of God as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." (2 Pet 1:20-21)

Determinants Standards:

Although subordinate to the Scriptures, creeds and confessional statements are, nonetheless, standards by virtue of the fact that they have not only been formally adopted by the church at its highest level, but also because for the most part they have withstood the passage of time. Therefore, the process of changing any part of a confessional statement or creed, or creating a new one, is even more difficult than changing the Practice and Procedure, for example.

For this reason, an ordained officers of the church who rejects the faith contained in the confessions is liable to be counseled, and even disciplined when necessary.

A confessional statement, basic to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is that one adopted on 19 October, 1945, and which may be found in paragraph three of the Constitution, (see also G-01.0500 & G-02. 0600)

Reformable Standards:

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, being historically reformed in character affirms

“Ecclesia reformata, semper reformanda,” which means “The church reformed, always reforming.” Such reformation comes through the light of the Word of God, and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. (See G.16.0101)

The Church Universal

In its confessions, along with Churches worldwide, the Presbyterian church of Nigeria acknowledges herself to be a part of the “one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church,” which church (universal) recognizes the canonical Scriptures as God's revelation of himself to mankind, and the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed in particular as the church's understanding of the triune God and of the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus Christ.

The Church of the Protestant Reformation

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, as part of a worldwide Presbyterianism which was born through the struggles of the Protestant Reformation, accepts the Protestant watchwords “sola gratia, sola fide, sola Scriptura” - grace alone, faith alone, Scripture alone - as principles for directing the Christian's life of faith, (i.e sola Christus - Christ alone).

The Church and Reformed Tradition

In the expression of its faith through creeds and confessional statement, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria remains true to the basic affirmations of the Reformed tradition, which include the affirmation of the majesty, holiness and providence of God who create, sustain rules, and redeems the world in the freedom of sovereign righteousness and love.

Other great themes of the Reformation include:

- a. The election of the people of God for service as well as for salvation.
- b. Covenant life marked by a disciplined concern for order in the church according to the Word of God.
- c. A faithful stewardship that shuns ostentation and seeks proper use of the gifts of God's creation.
- d. The recognition of the human tendency to idolatry and tyranny, which calls the people of

God to work for the transformation of society by seeking justice and living in obedience to the Word of God.

The Church and its African Tradition

While noting that the Presbyterian Church was born out of the Protestant Reformation, notably in Europe, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria also confesses to its own African Christian heritage.

The Church reminds itself that Christianity is not an European or Western import into African, but that Christianity was prevalent in Africa from the earliest time. Joseph's wife was an Egyptian (Gen. 41:45), Moses' wife was an Ethiopian (Num. 12:1), the eunuch whom the evangelist Philip met (Acts 8:26-39) was an Ethiopian, and Simeon Niger (Acts 13:1) may well have come from North Africa. Simon of Cyrene, who carried Jesus's cross (Matt.27:32), was most likely a man from Libya, Cyrene being a city on the Libyan coast.

As many as seventy bishops attended the Carthage Council in about 220 A.D. Tertullian and Augustine were early African theologians. Most certainly there were thousands of Christian Churches destroyed in North Africa in the early seventh century A.D, when Islam spread towards the west.

evidence that Christianity entered Nigeria at an early time are suggested by the Coptic influence in the cross of Momadu Maigiche (i.e. Mohadu of -the-Cross. Momadu was a Gobir king living in Northern Nigeria who used a cross as a talisman. The Bachama people of Numan area in Gongola State are said to have come from the Gobir and have a cross as their sacred symbol. Ibn Batuta, who lived in the fourteenth century, wrote about Gobir as "the country of black infidels." Infidels, in Islamic writing, usually refers to Christians.

The Church and Its Mission

How The Church's Mission is Formed:

1. God's activity

God created the heaven and the earth and made human beings in His image, charging them to care for all that lives; God made men and women to live in community, responding to the Creator with grateful obedience. Even when the human race broke community with its Maker and with one another, God did not forsake it, but out of grace chose one family for the sake of all, to be pilgrims of promise, God's own Israel.

God liberated the people of Israel from oppression; God covenanted with Israel to be their God and they to be God's people, that they might do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with the Lord, God confronted Israel with the responsibilities of this covenant, judging the people because of their unfaithfulness while sustaining them by divine grace.

2. God in Christ

God was incarnate in Jesus Christ, who announced good news to the poor, proclaimed release for prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, let the broken victims go free, and proclaimed the year of the Lord's favour. Jesus came to seek and to save the lost; in His life

and death for others God's redeeming love for all people was made visible; and in the

resurrection of Jesus Christ there is the assurance of God's victory over sin and death and the promise of God's continuing presence in the world.

3. The Holy Spirit

God's redeeming and reconciling activity in the world continues through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, who confronts individuals and societies with Christ's Lordship of life

and calls them to repentance and to obedience to the will of God.

The Church as the Body of Christ

The Church of Jesus Christ is the provisional demonstration of what God intends for all of humanity. As such, the Church is called to be a sign in and for the world of the new reality

which God has made available to people in Jesus Christ. The new humanity, a new creation, a new beginning for human life in the world:

Sin is forgiven.

Reconciliation is accomplished.

The dividing walls of hostility are torn down.

The Church is the body of Christ, both in its corporate life and in the lives of its individual members, and is called to give shapes and substance to this truth.

The Church's calling:

The church is called to tell the good news of salvation by the grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ as the only Saviour and Lord, proclaiming in Word and Sacraments:

1. The new age has dawned.
2. God who creates life, frees those in bondage, forgives sin, reconciles brokenness, makes all things new, is still at work in the world.

The Church is called to present the claims of Jesus Christ, leading persons to repentance, to acceptance of Him as Saviour and Lord, and to living a new life as His disciples. The Church is called to be Christ's faithful evangelist:

1. going into the world, making disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all He has commanded.
2. demonstrating by the love of its members for one another and by the quality of its common life the new reality in Christ; sharing in worship, fellowship, and nurture, practicing a deepened life of prayer and service under the guidance of the Holy Spirit;
3. Participating in God's activity in the world through its life for others by:

- a. healing and reconciling and binding up wounds,
- b. ministering to the needs of the poor, the sick, the lonely, and the powerless.
- c. engaging in the struggle to free people from sin, fear, oppression, hunger, and injustice,
- d. giving itself and its substance to the service of those who suffer,
- e. sharing with Christ in the establishing of His just, peaceful, and loving rule in the world.

A Calling to Risk and Trust

The Church is called to undertake this mission even at the risk of losing its life,,
trusting in God alone as the Author and Giver of life, sharing the gospel the gospel,
and doing those deeds in the world that point beyond themselves to the new reality in
Christ.

A Calling to New Openness

1. The Church is called to a new openness to the presence of God in both the Church and in the world, to a more fundamental obedience, and to a more joyous celebration in worship and work.
2. The Church is called to a new openness to its own membership, by affirming itself as a community of diversity, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races and conditions, and by providing for inclusiveness as a visible sign of the new humanity.
3. The Church is called to a new openness to the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God's activity in the world.

4. The Church is called to a new openness to God's continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, and of the Church Presbyterian in particular, that it might be a more effective instrument of mission in the world.

The Church and its Unity

The Church Universal, and the Individual Church

1. The Church Universal:

The church universal consists of all persons in every nation, together with their children, who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and commit themselves to live in a fellowship under his rule. Since the Church Universal cannot all meet in one place to worship and serve, it is therefore divided into congregation - some large and some small.

2. The Individual Congregation

An individual congregation consists of those persons in a particular place, along with their children, who profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and who have been gathered for the service of God as set forth in Scripture, subject to a certain form of church government.

3. The Individual Presbyterian Parish

Each individual church of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall be governed by the Constitution and the Practice and Procedure of the said Church. Its officers are teaching elders (Ministers of the Word and Sacrament) ordained and inducted into office, and ruling elders, elected by the congregation, ordained by a Minister, and installed into

office. (See G-06.0103), 0201, 0302 & G-10.0101). The Session of the individual Presbyterian Parish is responsible for government and guidance at the local (parish) level, and promoting the mission of the church for the glory of God at the local level.

For administrative purposes, several congregations may be administered as a single unit, and collectively are known as a Parish. (See G-07.0203)

The Unity of the Church

1. Unity in Mission

The unity of the church is gift of its Lord and finds expression in its faithfulness to the mission to which Christ calls it. The church is a fellowship of believers which seeks the enlargement of the circle of faith to include all people and is never content to enjoy the benefits of Christian community for itself alone.

2. Oneness

There is one church. As the Bible speaks of the one body which is the church living under the one spirit of God known through Christ, it reminds us that we have “one Lord, one faith and baptism, one God and Father of us all,” (Ephesians 4:5-6)

3. Visible oneness

Visible oneness, by which a diversity of persons, gifts, and understandings is brought together, is an important sign of the unity of God's people. It is also a means by which that unity is achieved. Further, while division into different denominations do not destroy this unity they do obscure it for both the church and the world. The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is therefore willing to seek and to maintain communion and community with all other branches of the one, catholic (universal) church, (cf G-15).

Principles of Presbyterian Government

1. Presbyterian Polity

The basic principles of Presbyterian polity are:-

- a. That individual congregations and parishes of the Presbyterian church of Nigeria, wherever they are, taken collectively, constitute one church.
- b. The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall be governed by presbyters (Ruling Elders of Church and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament).
- c. These presbyters shall come together in governing bodies (traditionally known as the "courts of the Church"), which are established in a certain hierarchy,
- d. Presbyters are not simply to reflect the will of the people, but rather to seek together to find and represent the will of Christ.
- e. Decision shall be reached in governing bodies by vote, following opportunity for discussion, and a majority shall govern.
- f. A higher governing body shall have the right of review and control over a lower one, and shall have power to determine matters of controversy upon reference, complaint, or appeal.
- g. Presbyters are ordained only by the authority of governing body.
- h. Ecclesiastical jurisdiction is a shared power, to be exercised jointly by presbyters gathered in governing bodies, otherwise called "courts of the Church," namely, the Session, Presbytery, Regional Synod, and General Assembly.

2. Presbyterian Unity

The nature of Presbyterian order is such that it shares power and responsibility. The system of governing bodies sustains such mutual relationship within the structures as to express the unity of the church.

3. Historical Awareness

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is aware of its origins in the Reformation, especially for the enlightening ministries of John Calvin in Switzerland and John Knox in Scotland.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is also indebted to the Presbyterian Church in Jamaica and the Jamaican Missionary Board for West Indies and Africa for taking the

Initiative to send five Jamaicans and the Rev Hope Masterdon Waddel to Calabar in 1846

at the invitation of King Eyamba V and King Eyo II and other chiefs of Calabar. The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is also grateful to the Church of Scotland Mission for its generous support of further mission personnel bringing in the light of the gospel.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria remembers the creation of the Presbytery of Biafra for the oversight of the congregations formed and Creek Town and Duke Town on September 1, 1858, and to be known as "The Presbyterian Church in Biafra." The Church gives thanks to God for the memory of its first indigenous Nigerian minister, the Rev.

Esien Esien Ukpabio, ordained to the holy ministry by the Presbytery of Biafra on April 9,

1872. The Church still rejoices when on May 4, 1921 the Synod of Biafra was formed, comprised of two Presbyteries. The Synod became "The Presbyterian Church of Eastern Nigeria" in June 1952, and in recognition of its own national character and mission, in

June 1960 changed its name to "The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria."

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria gives glory to God and expresses its everlasting gratitude to the Church of Scotland, who already in 1945 began a plan of handing-over to indigenous Nigerians that part of its Church established on Nigerian soil, to become a self-governing and independent Nigeria counterpart to the Church of Scotland. This handing-over was completed by 1960.

Not to be forgotten is this Church's strong determination to remain a single entity, even through the ravages of the Nigerian civil War of 1967, and hence, on the 7th of January, 1971, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria resolved that for "the furtherance of evangelism and its mission in the nation, to adopt a new structure which includes a General Assembly as the supreme court of the Church, as well as Synods, Presbyteries, and Sessions."

In the light of this historical context, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria remains faithful to its origin, yet equally faithful to the leading of God through His Holy Spirit in adapting itself to contemporary situations.

4. An Ecumenical Awareness

The Presbyterian form of government is established in the light of Scripture to give order to this church, although it is not regarded as essential to the existence of the church of Jesus Christ, nor to be required of all Christians. The Church recognizes the existence of other form of church government - episcopal or congregational, for example.

Diversity and Inclusiveness

1. Variety of forms

The church in its witness to the uniqueness of the Christian faith is called to mission and must be responsive to diversity in both the church and the world. Thus the fellowship of Christians as it gathers for worship and as it orders its corporate life will display a rich variety of form, practice, language, programme, nurture, and service to suit culture and need, but always remaining faithful to the revealed will of God as found in the Scriptures.

2. Openness to others

Our unity in Christ enables and requires the church to be open to all persons and to the varieties of talents and gifts of God's people.

3. Full Participation

This Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall give full expression to the rich diversity within its membership and shall provide means which will assure a greater inclusiveness leading to wholeness in its emerging life. Persons of all races, ethnic groups, ages, both sexes, various disabilities. Diverse geographical areas, and different theological positions consistent with the Reformed tradition shall be guaranteed full participation and access to representation in the decision making process of the various courts of the church, (see G-09).

The Church and its Members

The Meaning of Membership

1. Membership through faith

The incarnation of God in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ gives to

the church not only its mission but also its understanding of membership. One becomes a communicant member of the church universal through faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and acceptance of his Lordship in all of life. Baptism and a public profession of faith in Jesus

as Lord are the visible signs of entrance into the communicant membership of the church.

2. Membership in a particular Parish

A “congregation” is a company of persons (members, adherents, and their children) associated together in a particular locality for Christian worship, instruction, fellowship, and work, (see G-04.0102.)

A Parish is, for administrative purposes, one or several congregations administered as a single unit. (See G-4.0103)

The members of the congregation in full communion are those persons who have been admitted as such by the Session on profession of faith, on presentation of a Transfer Certificate from another Presbyterian Parish, or by special resolution (see G-10.0305-a).

The name of all members of the Parish are placed in a Church Register for Registers) which must be kept by every Session (see G-10.0305a.) A Lord's Super Attendance Roll is also kept. The names of those removed from the Communion Roll but who continue to reside in the parish or district must be entered on a Supplementary Roll. The maintenance of such a Supplementary Roll is obligatory upon all Sessions.

3. Duties of Members

It is the duty of members:-

- a. to-give faithful attendance on Gospel ordinances;
- b. to give their minister all due honour and respect in the Lord;
- c. to submit to the Session as over them in the Lord;
- d. to cherish to the brotherly spirit among themselves;
- e. to promote the peace and prosperity of the congregation;
- f. to share with their Minister the responsibility for Christian witness and Christian service;

- g. to take a lively interest in all that concerns the welfare of the whole Church;
- h. to give of their means, as the Lord shall prosper them, for the maintenance of the Christian Ministry and the furtherance of the of the Gospel at home and abroad;
- i. and to manifest a Christian spirit in all relationship of life. (See App. G-05:02 for question for reception of new members.)

4. Membership as Ministry

A faithful member accepts Christ's call to be involved responsibly in the ministry of his church. Such involvement includes;

- proclaiming the good news;
- taking part in the common life and worship of a particular church (congregation);
- praying and studying Scripture and the faith of the Christian church;
- supporting the work of the Church through giving of money, time, talents;
- participating in the governing responsibilities of the Church;
- demonstrating a new quality of life within and through the Church;
- responding to God's activity in the world through service to others;
- living responsibly in the personal, family, vocational, political, culture, and social relationship of life.
- working in the world for peace, justice, freedom, and human fulfillment

5. Any person may become a member

The congregation shall welcome all persons who respond in trust and obedience to God's grace in Jesus Christ and desire to become part of the membership and ministry of his church. No persons shall be denied membership because of race, ethnic origin, worldly-condition, or any other reason not related to profession of faith and Christian character of life. Each member must seek the grace of openness in extending the fellowship of Christ to all persons. (G-09.0104.) Failure to do so constitutes a rejection of

Christ himself and causes a scandal to the gospel.

Categories of membership

The membership of any Parish of the Presbyterian church of Nigeria includes Baptized Members, Communicant Members, Members on the Supplementary Roll, and Visiting Members.

1. Baptized Members or (Those not in communicant Status)

A baptized member of any congregation is a person who has received the sacrament of baptism and who has been enrolled as a baptized member by the Parish Session but who has not made a profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour- i.e. confirmation - or, any person who has made profession of faith as in adult baptism but who has not yet been received into full communicant membership. Such baptized members, though not in full communion, are entitled to the pastoral care and instruction of the church and other benefits as befitting his or her status, and are under the care and oversight of the Session.

2. Communicant Members

A communicant member of a parish is a person who has made a profession of faith in Christ has been baptized, is not less than 16 years of age, has been received into membership of the church, has voluntarily submitted to the government of this church, and is active in the Church's work and worship. A communicant member is entitled to all rights and privileges of the church, including the right to participate in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, to present children for baptism, to take part in meetings of the congregation, and to vote and hold office. Other conditions of communicant membership that meet the needs of the particular church and are consistent with the order and confessions of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria may be adopted by the session after careful study and discussion with the congregation.

3. Member on the Supplementary Roll

A member on the Supplementary Roll is a member under discipline and entitled to full pastoral care

4. Visiting Members (Communicant status members and Baptized members)

A visiting member of a particular Parish is a communicant or baptized member of another Parish of this denomination or of another denomination or Christian body which is officially recognized by the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, who has temporarily moved from the community where the church of communicant membership is situated, and has presented a certificate of good standing from the Session or appropriate governing body of that church, and has been received by the Session as a Visiting Member. A Visiting Member is entitled to all the rights and privileges of membership as defined under G-05.0201 and G-05.0202, except the right to vote and hold office, his or her name is kept on a separate roll and is removed from that roll when he or she requests it, or when he or she has not attended a worship service for a period of three months without informing the Session of his or her inability to attend.

Non-member Privileges

Persons not members of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria are entitled to the following privileges:

1. All persons are welcome to attend and participate in the public worship and fellowship of the church
2. All baptized persons, whether children or adults, even though they have made no profession of their faith in Christ, are entitled to pastoral care and instruction of the Church.
3. Persons in good standing in other Christian denominations may partake of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper.
4. Persons enrolled as catechumens are entitled to the pastoral care and other benefits as befitting their status.

Preparation for Membership

1. Session's Duty

Although the Minister shall have the responsibility of training candidates for Church membership, the session shall have the responsibility of examining those who would become members of the congregation. (See G-06.0209)

2. Profession

While the preparation is a part of the continuing nurture of the congregation, particular care shall be taken to prepare children of members for public profession of faith in Jesus Christ. Instruction shall be given in the meaning of this profession, the responsibilities of membership, and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Similar instruction shall be given to others who make a profession of faith. This instruction shall be given before attaining Communicant Member status. See App. G-05.01 for the minimum standards of instruction for confirmation and membership.

3. Reaffirmation, Transfer

Appropriate instruction shall be offered to those who unite with a particular Parish by reaffirmation of faith or by transfer certificate of church membership from another denomination.

Review of Membership

1. By the Member

Accepting the privilege and responsibility of membership in the church is a commitment to Jesus Christ that binds the individual to fulfillment of the obligations of membership. Members shall regularly review and evaluate the integrity with which they are involved in the ministry of the church and consider ways in which their participation in the worship and service of the church may be increased and made more meaningful. The

Session shall encourage this review.

2. By the Session

The Session shall review the roll of members once a year by December 31 (preferably during the months of October - December), and shall notify in writing those who have neglected the responsibilities of membership.

Membership Records and Rolls

A Parish Register shall be kept, containing the names and addresses of all Communicant Members. Such roll shall include date of enrollment whether:-

- a. by profession of faith as First Communicants (Confirmation),
- b. by receipt of Transfer Certificate
- c. by special resolution of the Session, as in restoration from Supplementary Roll or

in affirmation of faith, or other valid reason.

The Parish Register shall also include the date of termination, whether:-

- a. by death,
- b. by issue of Transfer Certificate,
- c. by special resolution of the Session, as in removal to the Supplementary Roll.
- d. or struck off.

The Minister's name is not entered in this Register since his or her name is enrolled in the membership of a Presbytery.

A Lord's Supper Roll is also kept, listing the names and addresses of the Communicant Members (including Ministers, and Visiting Members), along with the dates on which those persons partook of the Lord's Supper.

Persons who have been found to have been absent from the Lord's Supper for three full consecutive years without a sufficient reason known to the Session, shall be deemed not to be in full communion, and shall have their name struck off in the Church Register. However, after two full consecutive years, such persons shall be moved to the Supplementary Roll, and they shall be notified of their removal to the supplementary Roll. After one year on the Supplementary Roll, persons showing no further interest in the life and work of the Church shall be struck off. Persons removed to the supplementary Roll due to Church discipline, upon a resolution by the Session to that effect shall be returned to Full Communicant status and at the end of their period of discipline, unless they show no further interest in the life of the Church and in which case after a period of one year the termination of their discipline, shall be struck off. (For degrees of discipline, see D-XX.)

The Church and its Officers

Offices of Ministry

1. The Example of Church's Ministry

All ministry in the church is a gift from Jesus Christ. Members and officers alike serve mutually under the mandates of Christ who is the chief minister of all. His ministry is the basis of all ministries; the standard for all offices is the pattern of one who came "not to be served, but to serve." (Matt 20:26).

2. Offices of Ministry

One responsibility of membership in the church is the election of officers who are ordained to fulfill particular functions. The existence of these offices in no way diminishes the importance of the commitment of all members to the total ministry of the church. These ordained officers differ from other members in function only.

3. Offices named

The offices of church government mentioned in the New Testament which the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria maintains and into which person may be ordained include

those of presbyters (Ministers of the Word and Sacrament, Ruling elders). Evangelists,

Teachers (Catechists), and Deacons, or Deaconesses. While also mentioned in the New Testament (of Eph 4v11;1 Cor. 12v28) and maintained by the Presbyterian Church of

Nigeria, are not offices of church government in themselves, and do not require ordination

4 Ministry in a Variety of Forms

While the ministry is one, specific forms of ministry may emphasize special task and skills and the ordering of the offices of ministry shall reflect this variety. There may be forms of ministry in which primary emphasis is given:

- to proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments, (the pastorate)
- forms that stress deeds of love and mercy (the diaconate)
- forms that are primarily educational (theological tutors, Christian educators, etc)
- forms that are primarily administrative (officers of the courts of the Church)
- forms that are primarily legislative and judicial (the Courts of the Church)
- forms that are primarily prophetic (evangelism). ("Prophecy", in this context means prophecy in the Biblical sense of calling people and persons to an awareness of God to repentance and to a renunciation of idolatry and witchcraft)

The above list is not to be considered as inclusive, for there may be other ways in which the Holy Spirit ministers to persons.

5. The Calling to Ministry

Both men women shall be eligible to hold church offices. When women and men, by God's providence and gracious gifts, are called by the church to undertake particular forms of ministry, the church shall help them to interpret their call and to be sensitive to the judgments and needs of others. As persons discover the forms of ministry to which

they are called, and as they are called to new forms, they and the church shall pray for the presence and guidance of the Holy Spirit upon them and upon the mission of the church.

6. Gifts and Requirements for the Ministry:

To those called to exercise special functions in the church. God gives suitable gifts for their various duties. In addition to possessing the necessary gifts and abilities, natural and acquired, those who undertake particular ministries should be persons of strong faith, dedicated discipleship, and possessing a strong love of Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel in the church and in the world. They must have approval of God's people and the concurring judgement of a governing body of the church.

7. Election by the people

The government of this church is representative, and the right of God's people to elect their officers is inalienable. Therefore, no person can be placed in any permanent office in a congregation or governing body of the church except by election of that body (see G-01.0306), and except in such cases where this Practice and Procedure allows otherwise.

8. Freedom of conscience - Individual and Corporate

It is necessary to the integrity and health of the church that the persons who serve in it as officers shall adhere to the essentials of the Reformed faith and polity as expressed in the Creeds, the confessional statements to which the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria subscribes, and the Practice and Procedure. So far as may be possible without serious department from these standards, without infringing on the rights and view of others and without obstructing the constitutional governance of the church, freedom of conscience with respect to the interpretation of Scripture is to be maintained.

It is to be recognized, however, that in becoming a candidate or officer of the

Presbyterian Church of Nigeria one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek or hold often in that body. The decision as to whether a person has departed from the essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned, but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the governing body in which he or she serves. (G-01.0301, G-01.0302). In such cases where a person cannot actively concur, or passively submit to the pronouncement of the church on Reformed faith and polity, that person should respectfully withdraw from the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Persons seeking to be receive as candidates for ministry in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall have their attention drawn to the constitutional documents of the church including its statement on freedom of conscience.

Ministers of the Word and Sacrament (Teaching Elders)

1. Pastoral offices (Ministers and Associate Ministers)
 - a. The permanent pastoral offices of Ministers of the Word and Sacraments are Ministers, and Associate Ministers.
 - b. A Minister is inducted into his or Parish by the Presbytery and is directly accountable to it for the discharge of his or her office.
 - c. The office of Associate Minister is that of an ordained Minister inducted into a Parish where a pastor already exists, but where the work load is too much for the existing pastor to accomplish alone. Such an office exists by the decision of a higher judicatory. The duties of an Associate Minister are distinct from those of the regular Minister, are fixed by the Presbytery who alone can amend them, and the Associate Minister is directly responsible to the Presbytery for the executive of such duties.

2. The Minister and the Presbytery

As the Lord has set aside through calling and training certain members to perform a special ministry of the Word and Sacrament and has committed to them a variety of work to do, the ministry through the Presbytery calls them to the responsibility and office of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament. Such Ministers shall be members of Presbytery which shall appoint and induct them to such work as may be helpful to the church in mission, in the performance of which they shall be accountable to the Presbytery. They shall be responsible for participation in the larger ministry of the church in addition to the duties to which they are called and inducted by the Presbytery. Ministers of the Word and Sacrament have membership in Presbytery by action of the General Assembly itself (through the Board of Church Ministry), and maintain their membership in accordance with G-11.0201).

3. Minister and the Parish

A charge is the sphere of pastoral duty to which a Minister or Ministers are appointed by the General Assembly. It usual includes only one parish. In addition to his or her own parish, a Minister may be appointed by the Presbytery be the Interim Moderator of a neighbouring Parish.

A Minister should not refuse to perform ministerial functions for a person resident in his or her Parish without a sufficient reason such as will be acceptable to the Presbytery.

4 Induction into Charge

A Minister is induced to his or her charge by the Presbytery, certified intimation of the ordination and/or induction shall be sent by the Presbytery Clerk to the Session Clerk to be engrossed in the Minutes of the Minutes of the first meeting of the Session thereafter. The name of the newly inducted Minister is recorded on the roll of Presbytery as a member of that Presbytery. The Minister's name is not recorded in the Parish Register as a member, but it is included on the Parish Communion Roll.

5. Entry into Another's Charge

A Minister's field of Ministerial work and responsibility lies within and does not extend beyond his or her own charge. A Minister shall not be at liberty to overstep his or her own bounds and enter those of another to perform Ministerial functions without the previous consent of the Minister within the bounds of whose charge he or she proposes to enter, unless he or she be acting under special co commission or order of the Presbytery of the bounds, or of a superior court having jurisdiction; provided always that a Minister may enter the bounds of a charge other than his or her own for the purpose of ministering to members and adherents of his or her own congregation or parish, or to officiate at a marriage or funeral by private invitation. It is expected, however, that Ministers performing weddings and funerals under such circumstances will co-operate with the Minister of the Parish, especially as concerns the use of church buildings.

A Minister is allowed to accept an invitation to conduct a service of worship in a church of another denomination.

6. Residence

When a manse is provided, the Minister shall reside in it unless with the express consent of the Presbytery to reside elsewhere. In all cases the Presbytery shall require him or her to reside within a reasonable distance of the Church and sphere of ministry.

7. Access to and use of Church Buildings

The place of worship and other ecclesiastical building connected with the charge are at the disposal of the Minister for the purposes of his or her office. He may use them and grant permission to others to use them for all purposes connected with the congregation or any of its organizations, and also for all purposes of an ecclesiastical, religious, or charitable nature, even if they are not connected with the congregation - all subject to the control of the Presbytery. The Minister shall not use the buildings nor grant the use of them for any other purpose other than ecclesiastical without the consent of the Session.

8. The Duties of a Minister Include:

- a. He or she is responsible for a personal quality of life and relationship that commend the gospel to all persons and that communicate its joy and its justice.
- b. The Minister is responsible for studying, teaching, and preaching the Word, for administering Baptism and Lord's Supper, for praying with and for the congregation.
- c. With the elders, the Minister is to encourage the people in the worship and service of God; to equip and enable them for their tasks within the church and their mission in the world; to exercise pastoral care, devoting special attention to the poor, the sick, the troubled, and the dying.
- d. The Minister shall participate in governing responsibilities, including leadership of the congregation in implementing the principles of participation and inclusiveness in the decision making of the church.
- e. With the elders in their districts, he or she is to share in the ministries of sympathy, witness, and service.
- f. The Minister is responsible for sharing in the duties of governing bodies higher than the Session.

9. Public Worship: Administration of the Ordinances and the use of innovations:

The ministry of the Word, the conduct of public worship, the dispensing of the Sacraments, the instruction of the young, and the preparation of first communicants belong to the Minister, subject to the control and direction of the Presbytery.

Innovative ideas in the conduct of public worship must be used, must conform with the ideals of Presbyterianism, particularly as laid down by the Board of Faith and Order and may not be used simply because they are popular in some other denomination or church group. Innovative ideas which are liable to be a cause of division are prohibited.

10. Public worship: those authorised to conduct

The persons who are authorized to conduct public worship are Ministers, Probationers and regular Students of Theology. Others may be allowed to preach, but only on the express permission of the Moderator of the Parish who must first of all approve the content of the sermon and the order of worship. Ministers have the responsibility of properly training those elders who may, under special circumstances, be asked to preach. All Minister(s) inducted into parishes are expected to be in the pulpit at least 75% of the Sundays in each month except during his or her normal leave.

11. The Baptism of infants

The regulations for the administration of baptism to infants and children are as follows:

- a. Baptism ought to be administered to a child:-
 - i. Whose parents, one or both, have themselves been baptized, and who are in full communion with the church, and who undertake the Christian upbringing of the child:
 - ii. Whose parents, one or both, having been baptized but not in full communion, are such that the Session is satisfied that he or she is an adherent permanently connected with the Parish and supporting the work and worship of the Church and will undertake the Christian upbringing of the child.
 - iii. Who, being of unknown parentage, or otherwise separated from his or her parents, is in the view of the Session under long-term Christian care and guardianship.
- b. Baptism may be administered only by ordained Ministers in good standing in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- c. Baptism may be administered only after the parents or guardian have received such instruction in its meaning as laid down by the Board of Faith and Order.
- d. No Minister shall baptize a child resident outside the bounds of the parish, whose parents are not members or adherents of his or her own Parish, without the consent of the Minister of that Parish where the child is resident.

- e. Without the consent of the Presbytery, no Minister may administer Baptism in a case where to his or her knowledge another Minister has declined to do so.
- f. Baptism shall normally be administered at a regular worship serves of the congregation of which the parents or guidance are members or adherents.
- g. Baptism shall be administered in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, with water; by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Other elements may not be used.
- h. In all cases, a signed Certificate of Baptism shall be given by the Minister, and the child's name shall be entered into the Roll of Baptized Infants.
- i. The baptism of infants, whose parents are active members or adherents, shall normally occur within three months of the infant's birth. However, when baptism is not possible within the first three months after birth, children may be baptized up and including the age of seven, and their names registered in the Roll of Baptized Infants.
- j. The practice of lavish and costly celebrations in connection with the Sacrament of Baptism is to be discouraged in so far as it detracts from the meaning and witness of the Sacrament, and the conduct of public worship.

The Minister is to use such words of instruction respecting this sacrament and of exhortation to the parent or sponsor as shall be for edification, requiring his or her promise for the fulfillment of his or her duty, and after prayer, is to call the child by his or her name (not including the surname), and say, "I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" This done, the Minister is to give thanks and pray.

12. The Baptism of Adults

Baptism may also be administered to adults upon their profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him. (Shorter Catechism, 0 95). Every communicant member must be baptized. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper does not supercede or include that

of baptism.

Baptism shall be with water, by sprinkling, pouring or immersion and in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Upon being baptized, the person shall be given a certificate of baptism by the Minister, and his or her name shall be entered into the Register of Adult Baptisms.

No person shall be baptized as an adult who has been previously baptized with water and in the name of the Trinity (See G-15.0205), except such baptisms as are not acceptable to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

The Registers of Baptisms, whether of infants or adults, are usually maintained by the Minister. It is, however, a Session record and must be kept in the Parish, except when called for by the Presbytery. The Session is responsible for its preservation, accuracy, and completeness.

13. The Lord's Supper

The Lord's Supper is a Ministerial, not a Sessional act, although the Session appoints and intimates the time and place for the observance of the Lord's Supper. The elders, under the direction of the Minister, assist the Minister in the distribution of the elements.

Only members in full communion are entitled to participate. It is usual, however for an ecumenical invitation to be made, and, subject to any regulation made by the General Assembly, occasional communion may be given to members of other churches who desire to participate, when nothing is known concerning them inconsistent with their profession as members of the universal church of Christ.

Where feasible, a Preparatory Service shall be held prior to the Lord's Supper, Lord's Supper Attendance cards, useful for maintaining the communion roll and subsequently determining membership status, may be distributed. No charge may be made for the issuance of Lord's Supper Attendance cards, whether to visitors or to Communicants. (Min.483-1953). No dues or any other revenue may be collected at the

same time Lord's Supper Cards are issued (Min. 700-1956), because the Presbyterian understanding of the Lord's Supper is that it is a "Means of grace," freely given by God

and which cannot be bought or sold. The Minister must take care so as not to bring in confusion by associating the payment of money or kind with the free gift of the grace of God.

A Minister may not administer the Lord's Supper in the Parish without the consent of the Session. A Minister may, upon invitation, join any other Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

With the consent of the Session, a Minister may administer the Lord's Supper in the home of any member of the Parish who is in good standing, and who by reason of age, prolonged or serious illness, is consistently unable to attend public worship. In such circumstances, there should be a short communion service in the house, conducted by the Minister, who should normally be accompanied by at least one elder. The service must include a prayer of consecration and the reading of the Word. In order to ensure serious preparation by the member concerned, his or her communion card should be given to him some days beforehand, and his or her participation in the Lord's Supper must be recorded on the Communion Roll, as in the case of other members. It is recognized that it will not often be possible for the sick to receive the Lord's Supper on the same day as it is administered in the church. (Min. 698-1955).

It is forbidden for the Minister to send Elders to carry consecrated elements to the sick or aged in their homes. (Min. 697-1955). This Minister, joined by an Elder, must go personally.

A Minister, with the approval of the Session and the Presbytery of the bounds, may invite a Minister of another denomination whose orders are in accordance with the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, to administer the Lord's Supper.

14 The Minister and Marriage

Legal marriage, according to the Nigerian Marriage Ordinance may be either of two types, (1) by Registry, or (2) by Native Law and Custom. In either case, certain regulations apply, and the Minister must be certain that all of the necessary requirements

have been met, lest the marriage be declared invalid.

For marriage regulations according to the Marriage Ordinance of Nigeria, Cap. 115, see Appendix G-05.01.

For guideline concerning celebrating marriage according to Native Law and Custom, see Appendix G-06.02.

In addition to the above civil regulations for marriage by Registry, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria also requires the following ecclesiastical limitations to be observed:

- re: polygamous parties to marriage DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: remarriage of divorced persons DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: pregnant brides DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: use of sanctuary and/or church hall DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: when one party is not a member of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: when one party is under church discipline DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: fees and expenditure DETAILS YET TO COME

Marriage according to Native Law & Custom may or may not be celebrated in the church or church hall. However, since Marriage according to Native Law & Custom is legally recognized and may be contracted by members of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, the following ecclesiastical limitations are to be observed:

- re: a. DETAILS YET TO COME
- re: b. DETAILS YET TO COME

Marriage celebrated in a church or church hall carries with it the solemn implication that God is witness to the vows and promises made. Nothing, therefore, shall be allowed in the celebration which is either contrary to the established use of church property, or which shall detract from recognized presence of God on the occasion.

15. The Minister and his or her Spouse

For the sake of setting an example before the congregation, and for the sake of preventing unnecessary suspicion, and for the sake of providing an additional safeguard against immorality, as well as for providing the Minister with a source of comfort and support, and a proper setting for the training of his or her children, it is required that Minister and his or her spouse live together.

In cases where such living together is not possible, as due to her continuing education, or health, for example, the Minister shall make application to the Presbytery of the bounds for an exemption to the rule. If the Presbytery see fit support the application, it shall be passed to the Board of Church Ministry (through the Regional Synod) for final decision. The application for exemption shall be reviewed annually, and may be denied when the absence of the spouse proves detrimental to the overall witness of the Minister.

A Minister's spouse is free to take up any employment which is not hindrance to the witness and work of minister in his or her parish. Remuneration from such Employment remains the property of the spouse, and may not be seized upon by the Parish for any reason. When a Minister's spouse is an employee of the Church, the normal regulations regarding Church employees shall apply

16. The Minister and Civil Duties

In the pursuit of his or her Ministerial duties, the Minister, because he or she is a public figure, may be called upon to do certain things not directly related to the spiritual ministry. As a general rule, a Minister ought not to be unnecessarily encumbered with secular affairs, particularly when such interests impair his or her ability to complete his or her Parish work, or even work contrary to the interests of the Church.

- a. The Minister is responsible for signing the certificate of marriage, when celebrated by himself or herself.
- b. In the making of a last will and testament, a Minister is sometime called upon to sign as witness to the signature; he or she should willingly do so.

- c. The Minister should participate in public events sponsored by the government or other organizations, when called upon to do so (e.g. Independence Day celebrations), and when his or her presence does not violate the official position of the Church.
- d. A Minister may be called upon to give evidence, as in a court case or in a government panel of inquiry concerning some religious question.
- e. A minister may not be a candidate for an elected public office except with the express permission of the Board of Church Ministry.
- f. A Minister may not take up outside employment in the interest of civic responsibility-e.g. mayor, justice of the peace, secretary, etc,- whether part-time or full-time, and whether with financial remuneration or not, without the express permission of the Board of Church Ministry.
- g. Before a Ministry may accept a chieftaincy title which involves ruling a group of people, whether part-time or full time, he or she must have the approval of the Board of Church Ministry.
- h. A Ministry must pay his or her own tax where so required.
- i. A Minister should set an example for his or her Parish, by casting his or her ballot in national, state, and/or local elections.

17. The Minister and Remunerative Employment

Ministers are free to take up remunerative employment, however, no Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall undertake any contract for remuneration employment either inside or outside the jurisdiction of the Church without previously having obtained the approval of the Presbytery of the bounds or of a higher Court of the Church.

The General Assembly enjoins Presbyteries to exercise the utmost care in dealing with applications from Ministers for permission to undertake contracts for remunerative employment, to obtain the opinion of the Parish Session concerned, to satisfy themselves as to the number of hours involved and the suitability of the proposed employment, and to ensure that a Minister will be free at any hour when pastoral duties

are required, and that he or she will have adequate time for the proper discharge of all his or her Ministerial responsibilities, including visitation, study and preparation for the pulpit, oversight of congregational organizations, and attendance at Church courts.

Ministers who take up remunerative employment without the approval of the General Assembly or its Board of Church Ministry, will be considered to have absconded, and will consequently be disciplined. (See G-11.0404.d.iv).

18. Ministers on Secondment

Ministers who wish to go on Secondment to some other organization not inconsistent with the ethos of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, shall make application to the Board of Church Ministry through his or her Presbytery, who after inquiry may grant permission and report the same to the General Assembly.

19 Teachers, Chaplains, and others

When Ministers are designated as educators, chaplains, missionaries, evangelists, administrators, social workers, consultants or in other specific tasks appropriate to the ministry of the church, they shall evidence a quality of life which helps to share the good news. They shall exercise pastoral care of those for whom they are responsible and shall seek to fulfill their ministry by serving Christ and their fellow men and women, strengthening the church and equipping it for concern and service to the life of the human community. In addition to fulfilling the particular responsibilities to which they are called, they shall participate in a congregation, in the Presbytery, and in ecumenical relationships, and shall be eligible for election to the higher governing bodies of the church and to the boards and agencies of those governing bodies.

20. The Minister and Retirement

The age for retirement of Ministers is age 60. A retired Minister may apply for contract service. Retirement benefits shall be those granted by the General Assembly, the particulars of which shall be found in the most recent revision of the "Conditions of Service."

21. The Minister and Other Societies

- a. The Minister is free to take up membership in any organization into which he or she may be invited, provided that membership in such an organization is not a hindrance to his or her work or Christian witness, and provided that such membership will not be an embarrassment to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- a. A Minister may not take up membership in any Lodge. If he or she does accept such membership, the Minister shall be liable to be depose from the Ministry of Word and Sacrament.
- b. A Minister may not become a member of a secret society. If he or she does accept such membership, the Minister shall be liable to be deposed from the Ministry of Word and Sacrament.

Ruling Elders

1. Scriptural basis

As there were in Old Testament times Elders for the government of the people, so the New Testament church provided persons with particular gifts to share in governing and ministry. These were known in the Greek language as “presbyters”, the word from which “Presbyterian” is derived. (Acts 14v17; 1 Tim. 5v17, 19; Titus 1v51. The early Church, already in New Testament times was Presbyterian in form of government.

2. Teaching Elders and Ruling Elders

The distinction between the two types of Elders is usually based on 1 Tim 5v17, which indicates that one group both rule and labour in word and doctrine, while the other group only rules. (See G-10.0101)

Other references to the teaching elder (minister) are found in Eph. 4:11 (“pastors and teachers”), and presumably to the “yoke-fellow” or Phi. 4:3. The office of Teaching

Elder appears to be the highest of the offices mentioned in the Scripture and from Acts 20:17,28 we concluded it to be the same as bishop ("overseer"). Every Teaching Elder was apparently of equal rank with every other Teaching Elder. Ruling Elders are referred to in

Rom. 12:8 ("ruleth" [JV]; "give aid" [RSV]), 1 Cor. 12:28 (referred to "administrators"), and in Heb. 13:7,17 ("leaders... watch over your souls")

3. Government responsibilities

Elders are chosen by the people. Together with ministers of the Word, they exercise leadership, government, and discipline and have responsibilities for the life of a particular church as well as the church at large, including ecumenical relationships. They shall serve faithfully as members of the session. (See G.-10.0301ff) when elected as commissioners to higher governing bodies. Elders participate and vote with the same authority as ministers of the Word and Sacrament, and they are eligible for any office except that of Moderator of any court or clerk of General Assembly or Regional Synod.

4. Gifts and requirements (character)

Elders should be persons of faith, dedication, and good judgement. Their manner of life should be a demonstration of the Christian gospel, both within the church and in the world. (See G-06.0106). It is required of one who is to be set apart to the office of Elder that he or she be of good life and godly conversation, tender and circumspect in his walk, punctual in attending on ordinance, strict in his observance of the Lord's Day and in keeping up the worship of God in his family; and one who will be careful of the flock, an example of sobriety, meekness, holiness, abstaining from all appearance of evil.

5. The duty (specific responsibilities) of Elders

It is the duty of Elders, individually and jointly, to strengthen and nurture the faith and life of the congregation committed to their care. Together with the pastor, they should encourage the people in the worship and service of God, equip and renew them for their tasks within the church and for their mission in the world, visit and comfort and care for the people, with special attention to the poor, the sick, the lonely, and those who are oppressed. They should inform the pastor and session of those persons and structures which may need special attention. They should cultivate their ability to teach the Bible and

may be authorized to supply places which are without the regular ministry of the word. Those duties which all Christians are bound to perform by the law of love are especially incumbent upon Elders because of their calling to office and are to be fulfilled by them as official responsibilities.

5. Number of Elders required

The Session shall determine the number of Elders required for the oversight of the Parish, but preferably within the ratio of one elder for every fifteen to twenty five communicants. Their election will normally will take place in connection with the Stated Annual Meeting, the date for which is fixed by the Session. (See G-06.0308)

An Elder may not be member of two Session at the same time, except in the case of a Provisional Session of an Extension charge. (See G-11.0404-1)

7. Ordained only once

A person, when elected to the eldership, is known as an “elder-elect” until the time of his ordination. His ordination is for life. An Elder who transfers his or her membership to a church other than the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and subsequently transfers back, and is again elected to the active eldership, is not re-ordained. Neither is an Elder who has been suspended or disciplined and subsequently reinstated into full communicant status, re-ordained should he or she again be elected to another term of service as an active Elder.

The ordination of persons into the office of Elder in other denominations than the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, and who subsequently transfer their membership into a parish of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, shall not be recognized except by a decision of the Board of Faith and Order to that effect. (See G-15.0203)

8. Tenure of office

The tenure of an Elder is for life.

9. Active and Inactive Elders

Active Elders are ordained persons who have been duly elected at a Parish meeting (see G-07.0402.a), and who are actively serving a specified term on the Session.

Inactive Elders are ordained persons who have honourably retired from the Session due to ill-health, old age, or voluntary retirement.

The category of Inactive Elders holds equal honour with that of Active Elders, even when the Elder may have honourably resigned his or her office.

Inactive Elders may assist in the distribution of the Lord's Supper.

Removal or Resignation from Office

1. Renunciation of Jurisdiction

When a church officer, whether a minister or Elder, renounces the jurisdiction of this church in writing to the clerk or Principal Clerk of the governing body of jurisdiction, the renunciation shall be effective upon receipt of the resignation and appropriate deliberation by the governing body. Renunciation of jurisdiction shall remove the officer from membership and ordained office and shall terminate the exercise of office.

2. Persistence in disapproved work

When a church officer, after consultation and notice, persists in a work disapproved by the governing body having jurisdiction, the governing body may presume that the officer has renounced the jurisdiction of this church.

3. Effect of renunciation

The renunciation shall be reported by the clerk or stated clerk at the next meeting of the governing body, which shall record the renunciation, delete the officer's name from the appropriate roll, and take such other actions of an administrative character as may be required by the Constitution.

The Parish

Organization, Ministry, Government

1. Organisation

Although the church is universal, it is nevertheless divided into congregations and for administrative reasons, into parishes, (See G-04.0101) A Parish may consist of only one congregation, or of many congregations, (See G-04.0104) but a parish may have only one Session. It is the Regional Synod, upon Presbytery recommendation, that must give approval for the formation of, or any alterations to, any Parish and/or the bounds thereof. (See G-07.0202 & .0203)

For changes in status or organization of a Parish, see G-11.0404.n.

2. Mission and Ministry

It is at the local level that worship, preaching, sharing of the Sacraments, evangelism, Christian training, fellowship, etc. occurs. Without this basic ministry to persons and neighbourhoods, and the support given at the congregational level through prayers, personnel, and money, any other significant ministry of the Church becomes impossible. Congregations, especially as united in a Parish, serve as the essential mission arms of the Presbytery, Synod and General Assembly.

3. Government

The members of an individual Congregation and/or Parish voluntarily put themselves under the leadership of their officers, whom they elect. The Session is the basic unit of government, and consists of the Minister (pastor) when inducted by the Presbytery, any Associate Ministers, and the Elders in active service, the law and government of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria presupposes the fellowship of men and women with their children in a voluntary covenanted relationship with each other, and with God through Jesus Christ. The organization rests upon the fellowship and is not designed to work without love and trust.

Status and Definitions

1. A Mission Station

A Mission Station (formerly “Outstation”) is an elementary Congregation; it has no constitution of its own, but is under the charge and supervision of the parent Congregation. A mission Station becomes a Congregation by an act of Presbytery, in which the Constituting Covenant is accepted and congregational status authorized (See G-07.0300; G-11.0404.k.)

2. A Congregation

A Congregation is a company of persons, together with their children, associated in a particular locality for Christian worship, fellowship, and work. There may be one or more congregations in a Parish. Each congregation must have at least one resident Elder, not counting any Synod or General Assembly evangelists. A congregation, or congregations, becomes a Parish by recommendation of the Presbytery to Regional Synod whose approval is required, and who will notify the General Assembly. The Presbytery will fix its name and a date for its inauguration.

3. A Parish

A Parish is composed of one or more congregations, and is treated as a single unit. Whether one or many congregations, it has but one Session - the lowest court of the church. The Parish is responsible to Presbytery for all congregations within its bounds, both financial and otherwise.

4. A Charge

A “Charge” is the sphere of pastoral duty to which a Minister or Ministers may be appointed. An Extension charge differs from a Mission Station or Congregation in that it is created by an act of the General Assembly. An Extension Charge has the status of a

Parish, is financially supported by the Synod or General Assembly which administers their responsibility and oversight through the Presbytery of the bounds. (See G-11.0404.1)

Organizing A Particular Church (i.e. A Congregation)

1. Constituting Covenant

In organizing a new Congregation, whether under the encouragement of the Parish Session, or the Presbytery, Synod or General Assembly, the intending members of the new Congregation (whether they come by profession of faith by reaffirmation of faith, or by transfer from another Congregation or Parish, shall covenant together as follows:

“We, the undersigned, in response to the grace of God, desire to be constituted and organized as a Congregation within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, and known as We promise and covenant to live together in unity and to work together in ministry as disciples of Jesus Christ, bound to him and to one another as part of the body of Christ in this place according to the principles of faith, mission, and order of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

(Signatures)

(Date)

The Minister of the Parish in the area shall have a free hand in promoting the development of the new Congregation and shall report the same to Presbytery.

2. Presbytery Relationship

Presbytery, after due consideration and satisfaction concerning the intending Congregation’s intentions, shall declare the Congregation constituted, and in cooperation with the existing Parish, or on its own, shall proceed to the election of a Management Committee.

In the case of an Extension Charge, the Presbytery shall proceed to establish a Provisional Session (see G-11.0404.1.) and a Management Committee.

Presbytery shall continue to work closely with the Congregation in securing/providing pastoral leadership, in plans for the service and witness of the particular church, in co-ordinating its work with other churches, in counseling concerning the Constitution and the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and in giving other forms of support and encouragement that will strengthen the mission of the Congregation in the larger life of the denomination.

Meeting of the Parish

1. Membership and Voting

The Parish is made up of all members on the Communicant Roll (see G-05.0600) of the entire Parish regardless of the number of congregations. All such members who are present at the Parish meeting are entitled to vote.

2. The Nature of Parish Meetings

Parish Congregational Meetings may be of two types: (1) Ecclesiastical, and Temporal, of which the Stated Annual Meeting is one type.

- a. Ecclesiastical meetings concern the election of Elders as required in G--6.0300 and G-14.0201, and/or the erection or substantial alteration of the church, church hall, manse or other buildings or the installation of an organ, sanctuary furniture or fittings, or choir robes. The financing and construction of such items may be delegated to the Parish Board and reported upon at the Stated Annual Meeting.

Meetings for ecclesiastical purposes are called by the Session; the Moderator of Session presides, and the Session clerk acts as clerk. The minutes of the said

meeting are inscribed in the Session Minute Book. In the absence of the Moderator or Interim Moderator, any other Minister of the church who is appointed by the Minister

in writing or who is appointed by the Presbytery, presides.

A Parish meeting of an ecclesiastical nature for the purpose of election of Elders, may conveniently take place on the same day, but just prior to, the Stated Annual Meeting, (see G-07.0403).

in such cases, when the Parish meeting (ecclesiastical) adjourns, the Parish meeting (temporal) immediately convenes with only a change of

record books, of Session Clerk to Board Secretary, and in some cases, the Chair.

- b. Temporal meetings of the Parish are concerned with the financial affairs and the care of church property. The Stated Annual Meeting is required annually (See G-07.0403 below). Other Temporal Meetings may be called as deemed necessary.

Meetings for Temporal purposes are called by the Board; the moderator of Parish presides, and the Parish Board Secretary takes minutes. The minutes of the meeting

are inscribed in the minute book of the Board. In the absence of the Moderator or Interim Moderator any other minister of the church who is designated by the Moderator or interim Moderator in writing or who is appointed by the Presbytery presides.

3. The Stated Annual Meeting

The Parish shall hold a Stated Annual Meeting in January of each year, and not later than February 14. In the even of any such meeting not being held within the said appointed times, the Parish may, on application to the Presbytery to that effect, request that such meeting be called and held at a specified, but not too distant late date. The Parish shall state its reasons. The Presbytery is not bound to comply if insufficient reasons are given.

The business shall include:

- a. The consideration and adoption of the audited financial statement for the previous calendar year.
- b. A budget for the current year as submitted by the Parish Board, and
- c. The election of members to the Parish Board as required by section G-07.0501.a,b,c.
- d. In addition, if so desired, the Stated Annual Meeting may review any other plans of the Board for the coming year. Review reports from other organizations within

the church, and transact any other business as may be appropriate.

The said accounts, after submission to and approval by the Congregation, are laid before the Presbytery within one month thereafter, for examination and attestation to the effect that the accounts are correct and are in accordance with the terms Of the Constitution, and the same must also be recorded by the Presbytery.

Special meetings of the Parish may be called for any business deriving from the previous Stated Annual Meeting of the Parish. The business to be transacted shall be limited to the items specifically listed in the call for the meeting.

4. Call of any Parish Meeting
 - a. By the Parish Session whenever it determines such a meeting is necessary (see below), or
 - b. By the Parish Board, as in the case temporal meetings or the Stated Annual Meeting (see G-07.0402.b), or
 - c. By the Presbytery whenever it determines, such a meeting is necessary, (see below) or
 - d. By the Session and within one month's time, when requested in writing by at least one -fourth of the members on the active roll of the Parish.

Public notice of the meeting shall be made from the pulpit on two Sundays immediately proceeding the date of the meeting, and with the exception of the Stated Annual Meeting, the business to be considered must be specified in the notice calling the meeting.

Meetings of the Parish shall be held in the Church or the Church Hall.

The Presbytery or any higher court may, when it sees cause, summon a meeting of the Parish, and appoint one of its own Minister members to preside. When a Presbytery appoints a Commission to confer with a Parish on any matter, the Convener of such Committee or Commission has the power to summon a meeting of the Parish in the name of the Presbytery to deal with the remit received.

5. Quorum

The quorum of a meeting of the Parish shall be as follows:

- a. If the number of communicant members is 100 or less, a quorum is one-fourth of the number on the active roll, but never less than ten, and provided that all Congregations in the Parish are fairly represented (based on membership) or
- b. If the number of full communicant members is more than 100, a quorum is one—tenth of the number on the active roll, but never less than twenty-five and provided that all Congregations in the Parish are fairly represented (based on membership).

6. Moderator

The Moderator of the Parish Meeting shall be the Moderator or Interim Moderator of the Session, whom failing, a Minister of the Presbytery specially appointed for this purpose.

7. Clerk

For Parish meetings of an ecclesiastical nature, the clerk of Session shall be the clerk, and the minutes thereof inscribed in the minute book of the Session. (See G-2.402. a.)

For Parish meetings of a temporal nature, the clerk of Session shall be the clerk, and the minutes thereof inscribed in the minute book of the Parish Board. (See G-07.402. b.)

8. In case of a tie

Since the Minister (Moderator) is not a member of the Congregation or Parish but holds membership in a Presbytery, he or she may not vote in the meeting of the Parish.

However, in case of a tie, the Moderator shall have a casting vote.

9. Dissent

Any member present at Parish meeting may enter his or her dissent from any part of the proceedings of which he or she disapproves. Members also have the right to bring any decision or resolution of a Parish meeting from which they have dissented, under the review of the Presbytery by petition.

10. Opening, Closing, and Minutes

All Parish meetings are opened with prayer, after which the object of the meeting is stated by the chairman, and the intimation calling it is read. Draft minutes of the proceedings are taken, and if approved of, are initiated by the Chairman and the Secretary before the close of the meeting, and afterwards engrossed in the permanent record of the appropriate Session or Board, and signed by the chairman and Secretary. The meeting is closed with prayer, and is so recorded.

The Parish Board

In all parishes there shall be a Parish Board for the administration of finance.

1. Membership and Composition

a. Membership

The Parish Board consists of the Minister, the Elders currently holding office on the Session, and a certain numbers of members in full communion over 21 years of age elected by the Parish. The number so to be elected is determined by the Parish, and must be the same as the number of Elders on the Session at the date of such election.

In parishes composed of more than one congregation, care shall be taken that each individual Congregation shall be proportionately represented on the Parish Board according to the numerical proportion of communicant strength.

Membership on the Parish Board is open to men and women alike; and a person shall not be debarred on the ground of his or her sex or ethnic identity, from performing any of the duties proper to the said office.

b. Election of Board Members

The election of members to the Parish Board shall be done at the Stated Annual meeting of the Parish. (See G-07.0403)

c. One third retire annually

One third of the members of the Board so elected retire annually, but they are individually eligible for re-election. The order of retirement is according to the order of their election; but when a Parish is newly created or when for any other reason the order of retirement must be re-established, the order of retirement is fixed by the Board.

d. Filling of vacancies

In the event of any member of the Board who has been elected by the Parish, dying or resigning, or becoming incapacitated to act, or having his or her name removed from the Communion Roll of the Parish, or being suspended from Communion during the currency of his or her term of office, the Board may appoint a duly qualified person to fill the vacancy, and the person thus appointed holds office for the remainder of the period for which such predecessor was elected, subject to confirmation at the next Stated Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

e. Chairman

The Minister is "ex officio," (by office) the chairman of the board, but in the event of his or her dedicating to accept office the Board elect one of

their own number as chairman for not more than one year. If the chairman (either 'ex office' or elected) be absent from any meeting, the members of the Board present elect one of their own number as chairman for that meeting. The election is minuted. The chairman has a casting vote only.

f. The offices of Board of Clerk and Treasurer

It is duty of the Board at their first meeting to elect a secretary and treasurer. The person or persons so appointed hold office during the pleasure of the Board. The Board also appoints annually an auditor or auditors of the accounts of the Board, who may or may not be their own number.

g. Duties of the Board Clerk

It is the duty of the clerk to keep regular minutes of the proceedings of the Board and also of the proceedings at the Stated Annual Meeting of the Parish, and to engross these in a permanent record, in which each set of minutes when later approved shall be signed by the chairman and the clerk.

The Secretary of the Board shall also be responsible for keeping an up-to-date register of the property of the Parish.

h. Duties of the Treasurer

It is the duty of the treasurer to keep a separate banking account in the name of the Parish Board, and all cheques thereon must be signed by the treasurer and by one member to be authorized by the Board from time to time. Two or more members may be authorized to sign in

addition to the Treasurer, but it is only necessary for one of them to sign in addition to the Treasurer. The Board may, when deemed necessary, require two signatures in addition to the Treasurer.

The Treasurer (and Financial Secretary, where so engaged) shall balance his or her books at the end of every calendar year, and hand them over for auditing in sufficient time for an audited statement to be presented to the Stated Annual Meeting.

The Treasurer shall give a brief statement of Account (income, expenditure, balance) at each regular meeting of the Parish Board.

The treasurer shall hold in trust any funds entrusted to him or her by any arm of the church, and shall release the same to the arm from which they were received upon application from that arm and with the approval of the Parish Board, which approval shall not normally be withheld. Such funds may not be converted to any other purpose by either the Treasurer, the Financial Secretary, or the Board.

j. The Financial Secretary

The Board may also elect a Financial Secretary if it so desires. The duties of the Financial Secretary usually include:

- i. Issuing receipts for funds received. All Church monies (but not necessarily that of the arms of the Church) being handed over to the Treasurer must pass through the Financial Secretary's hands.
- ii. Getting authorization for payment vouchers signed by the Board Chairman after any such decision of the Board.
- iii. Keeps track of, and reports regularly to the Board, on the

remaining amounts in the budget categories, and which categories have been overspent.

- iv. Balances his or her books at least quarterly with the Treasurer.

2. Meetings and Procedure

a. Meetings

The Board shall meet regularly, bi-monthly, quarterly) according to its own pre-determined schedule which is fixed at the first meeting after the Stated Annual Meeting. The Board shall meet not less often than quarterly for the review of its finances, but may meet monthly for the sake of efficiency.

In cases of emergency business, the Board may meet when summoned by authority of its chairman, either by intimation during a regular Sunday morning worship service or by personal notice to each member. Such notice must allow reasonable time for members to attend.

The chairman is bound to call a meeting within ten days, if requested to do so in writing by a quorum of the Board.

The first meeting of the Board in each year is called by the authority of the Minister, and is held not later than a month after the Stated Annual Meeting of the Congregation.

b. Quorum

Three is a quorum where the number of the Board does not exceed nine, and five is a quorum where the number exceeds nine and does not exceed twenty. Where it exceeds twenty, seven is a quorum. In all cases, where the Parish has multiple congregations, the quorum must represent more than only one congregation.

c. Delay and rescheduling of Meetings

In the event that a quorum has not formed at the scheduled time for any meeting, the Chairman shall be free to determine the time and place of the rescheduled meeting in accordance with G-07;0502.a above. By its own resolution and during the course of regular business at a regular meeting of the Board, the Board may alter the “thirty minute” policy to another time span of its own choosing.

d. Failure to Attend Meetings

In the event that any member of the Parish Board does not attend the regular meeting of the Board for a period of any consecutive twelve months, his or her continuing membership on the Board shall be reviewed by the Board. If the Board decides to re-place the defaulting member, the Board may call a special meeting of the Parish to elect another person to fill the unexpired term, or the Board may defer the matter until the next regular Stated Annual Meeting.

e. Opening, Closing, and Minutes

Meetings of the Board are, opened and closed with prayer, and both facts must be recorded under penalty of invalidating the meeting. Immediately after the Board has been constituted, the minutes of the previous meeting should be read and the judgement of the Board, approving or correcting them, should be recorded. Besides recording the constituting and closing, and the judgement on the minutes of the previous meetings, the minutes must record the names of all members present, and the several decisions taken, with any dissent or complaint.

3. Powers and Functions

a. Accounts

The Treasurer of the Board (and Financial Secretary, where so engaged) shall keep an account of the ordinary income and expenditure of the Congregation, preferably in an analysis system of bookkeeping, including such income and expenditure under separate headings as the Board of Finance may determine so as to provide a uniform system of bookkeeping throughout the denomination.

b. Priority of Expenditure

The Board shall make every effort to meet all of its commitments as determined by the budget approved at the Stated Annual Meeting. However, in the even of a shortfall, the following shall claim absolute priority, and in the following order:

- 1) All Salaries, accommodation, and pension dues.
- 2) Assessments of General Assembly.
- 3) Synod and Presbytery Assessments.

c. Maintenance of Church Properties

It is the duty of the Board to maintain all of the property within its parish bounds vested either in the name of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, or belonging to the Parish or Congregation. Such property must be kept

in proper order and repair, and fully insured against loss or damage by fire - such insurance to be effected in the name of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria insofar as the subjects insured are vested in them. Any sum or sums which may be or may have been fixed by the General Assembly, the Synod, the Presbytery or by the Board itself for the maintenance of such properties, are, to be taken from the ordinary income of the Parish where not obtained from voluntary or other sources. No extraordinary repairs or

improvements upon the church properties so far as vested in the said Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria are to be undertaken, and no material additions thereto are to be made, until the Board receive consent thereto by the General Assembly Board of Church Property Development, and sufficient funds have been raised or guaranteed for the purpose without encroaching upon the ordinary revenue of the Congregation. Further, material additions to the furnishings for the church of church hall may not be provided until the monies required to meet the cost of the same shall have been similarly raised or guaranteed. Any urgent extraordinary repairs to properties vested in the said Trustees may be executed by the Board without such consent as aforesaid, but the necessity for the same shall be immediately reported by the Board to the General Assembly Board of Church Property Development, and in no case is the cost thereof to be defrayed out of the ordinary income.

d Appointment and Salaries of Church Officials

The Session appoints the choirmaster, organist, and any other like officials, and defines their duties. It is customary for such persons to donate their services; and it is proper therefore for the Parish Board to annually give them a fitting honorarium. In cases where their duties are unusually extensive and a salary is required, such salaries are fixed by the Board. All such officials are subject to the direction of the Minister as regards the execution of their duties. The Session has power to suspend or terminate the appointments of all or any of the officials, due intimation of such suspension being given by the Session must be communicated to the Board as well as officially to the party concerned. (See G-10.0304).

e. Other Staff

Each Parish may engage such other staff (for example: drivers, secretaries, guards, gardeners, etc.) as may be deemed necessary. Such staff are hired or dismissed by the Parish Board, even though they may be assigned

to Ministerial staff. Their salaries, etc, are fixed by the Parish Board. (See G- 10.0304)

f. Audit of accounts and submission thereof to the Parish

The accounts of the Parish are made up to 31st December in each year, and, after having been dully audited, are submitted by the Board to the Parish at the Stated Annual Meeting (See G-07.0403), and the same must, inter alia, contain a statement as to the application or disposal, or the proposed application or disposal, of any balance or surplus of the General Funds for the year. The said accounts are laid before the Presbytery within one month thereafter, for examination and attestation to the effect that the accounts are correct and are in accordance with the terms of the Constitution and the Practice and Procedure. The Board shall also satisfy themselves that the accounts kept by the several

other agencies of the Parish have been duly audited and are in order.

g. Use of Church Buildings

The use of the church and other ecclesiastical buildings are usually at the disposal of the Moderator, as seen in G-10.0301, for religious, ecclesiastical, or charitable purposes. If usage is for any other purpose, it must receive the

approval not only of the Minister, but the Session as well.

4. Interpretation

If any question arise with reference to the election of Board members, or to the interpretation of any articles of the Constitution or the legality of any particular exercise of the powers therein contained, it is competent to any person or body interested to apply by petition through the Session to the Presbytery of the bounds to adjudicate on the matter. The decision of the Presbytery upon

such matter, or upon any question arising in connection with the annual audit as prescribed, is final unless the complainant shall secure from the General Assembly Auditor or Legal Adviser within six months from the date of judgment

by the Presbytery, a signed statement that the matter is one suitable for appeal to the Higher Courts of the church.

The Church and its Property

Decision Pertaining to Property

The historic principles of Church Government as written in section G-01.0400, along with any and all other provisions of this Constitution prescribing the manner in which decisions are made, reviewed, and corrected within this church are applicable to all matters pertaining to property.

All Property Held in Trust

All landed property must be registered in the name of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Such Trustees are appointed by the General Assembly, and shall hold the real and immovable property in trust for the General Assembly, and

shall administer such property according to the directions of the General Assembly.

All property, which for whatever reason may have been lodged under another name (whether that of an individual, a Congregation, a Parish, a Presbytery, an arm, an agency, a programme or project or any other unit or department of the denomination) and for whatever purpose, is held in trust nevertheless for the use and benefit of the

Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Property Used Contrary to the Practice and Procedure

Whenever any property of, or held by, any particular Parish or Congregation of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria ceases to be used by that body as a place of worship or other approved ecclesiastical purposes in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, in accordance with the Practice and Procedure. The control of such property shall revert to the Board of Church Property Development.

Property of a Church Dissolved or Extinct

Whenever a particular church is formally dissolved by the Presbytery, or has become extinct by reason of the dispersal of its members, the abandonment of its work, or other

cause, such property as it may have, shall be used, and applied for such uses, purposes, and trust as the Board of Church Property Development may direct, limit, and appoint, or such property may be sold or disposed of as the Board of Church Property Development may direct, in conformity with the Constitution and the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Selling, Encumbering, or Leasing Church Property

A Congregation, or Parish or Presbyterian, or Synod, shall not sell, mortgage, or otherwise encumber any real property of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, and it shall not acquire real property subject to an encumbrance or condition without the written permission of the Board of Church Property Development who shall have brought the matter to the attention of the General Assembly or the General Assembly Executive Committee for their approval, and which permission must be channeled through the Presbytery in which the property is situated.

A Parish or Congregation may not lease its real property used for purposes of worship. A Parish or Congregation may not lease out any other property for more than a year (neither in singular, multiple, nor in successive contracts) without the written permission of the Board of Church Property Development as noted in the paragraph above.

Protection of Church Property

All landed property must be reasonably protected from encroachment, which responsibility falls on the Parish Board, or upon the relevant court or arm of the church for whose benefit the property exists, including the payment of any rent, land fees, taxes, etc.

All real property must at all times be reasonably protected from loss or damage,

whether by thieves, the elements, rodents, termites, or whatever; the responsibility for this protection falls on the particular Congregation or department of the church.

Development of Church Property

All architectural construction must meet the standards of both local civil authorities and that of the Board of Church Property Development. Church building construction must meet the esthetic demands suitable for the Presbyterian form of worship. The Board's approval in writing must be obtained before any construction or alterations are commenced.

Property of Church in Schism

The relationship of any Congregation or Parish to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria can be severed only by constitutional action on the part of Church courts [Presbytery, Synod, General Assembly] (See G-11.0404.n). If there is a schism within the membership of a particular Congregation or Parish and the Presbytery is unable to effect a reconciliation or a division into separate Congregation within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, the Presbytery shall determine if one of the factions is entitled to the property because it is identified by the Presbytery as the true congregation within the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. This determination does not depend upon which factor claims or is the majority at the time of the schism.

Use of Church Property

See G-10.0310, and G-06.0207, and G-07.0503.g.

Limited Liability Companies and Other Incorporations

No Congregation, Parish, Presbytery, Synod, nor any other unit or structure or association or agency of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria may form or enter into a Limited Liability Company or any other legal incorporation except with the specific approval of General Assembly, and recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly.

Governing Bodies:

General Principles Common to All

General

1. Definition

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall be governed by representative bodies composed of presbyters, both Ruling Elders and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament.

These governing bodies, known as the courts of the Church, shall be called

Session

Presbytery

Synod

General Assembly

2. Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction

Governing bodies of the church are distinct from the government of the state and have no civil jurisdiction or power to impose civil penalties. Governing bodies of the Church have ecclesiastical jurisdiction only for the purpose of serving Jesus Christ and declaring and obeying his will in relation to truth and discipline.

These governing bodies may frame symbols of faith, bear testimony against error in doctrine and immorality in life, resolve questions of doctrine and discipline, give counsel in matters of conscience, and decide issues properly brought before them under the provisions of the Constitution and the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. They may authorize the serving of the Lord's Supper in accordance with the principles of the Directory for the Service of God. They have power to establish plans and rules for the worship, mission, government, and discipline of the church and to do those things necessary to the peace, purity, unity, and progress of the church under the will of Christ. They have responsibility for the leadership, guidance, and government of

that portion of the church which is under their jurisdiction.

3. Unity of Governing Bodies

All governing bodies of the church are united by the nature of the church and share with one another responsibilities, rights, and powers as provided in the Constitution. The governing bodies are separate and independent, but have such mutual relations that the act of one of them is the act of the whole church performed by it through the appropriate governing body. The jurisdiction of each governing body is limited by the express provisions of the Constitution, with the acts of each subject to review by the next higher governing body.

Participation and Representation

Governing bodies of the church shall be responsible for implementing the church's commitment to inclusiveness and participation as stated in G-04.0403. All governing bodies shall work to become more open and inclusive and to correct patterns of discrimination on the basis of race, sex, age, or disability.

In implementing this commitment, consideration should be given to the gifts and requirements for ministry (G-06.0106 in persons elected or appointed to particular offices or tasks, and to the right of the people to elect their officers G-06.0107).

Officers

1. Offices Named

Officers of each of the governing bodies shall be a Moderator and Clerk, Governing bodies may provide additional officers as may be required or may be desired.

2. Moderators

a. Authority

The Moderator of the governing body possesses the authority necessary for preserving order and for conducting efficiently the business of the governing body. He or

she shall convene and adjourn the governing body in accordance with its own stated purpose. The Moderator may, in an emergency, convene the governing body by written notice at a time and place different from that previously designed by the body, but it is usual and regular that at the close of any meeting the time and place for the next meeting are fixed.

b. Duties

The duties of the Moderator are:

- i. To constitute and conclude each meeting with prayer;
- ii. To preserve order
- iii. To take the vote, and announce the decisions;
- iv. To instruct parties at the bar;
- v. To administer rebukes and admonitions;
- vi. To call on members to state their views and/or discharge any function which may have been assigned to them;
- vii. To see that the business done has been duly recorded;
- viii. To sign the minutes;
- ix. In general, to speak and act officially in the name of the court of the Church of which he or she is Moderator, according as such court authorizes, but always in conformity with the provisions of the Practice and Procedure.

c. Terms of Office

The Minister of the Parish shall be Moderator of the Session of that Parish. In Parishes where there are Associate Ministers, they may agree to alternately preside in the Session. The Moderator of a Presbytery shall be elected for such term as the Presbytery may determine, not exceeding one year. (See G-11.0207). The Moderator of a Synod shall be elected for such term as the Synod may determines, not less than one year and not exceeding two years. (See G-12.0206). The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be elected at each states meeting (See.G-13.0109). At the time of election, the Moderator

of a Presbytery, a Synod, or the General Assembly must be a continuing member of, a commissioner to the governing body over which he or she is elected to preside:

Limitation of number of terms: The same person may not hold the office of Moderator of the General Assembly for more than three consecutive terms or four consecutive years, which ever comes first. In the Presbytery, the same person may not hold office of

Moderator of Presbytery for more than two consecutive terms or three consecutive years, which ever comes first.

d. Voting

The Moderator has no deliberative vote, but in cases of a tie, he or she has a casting vote only. He or she cannot move or second a motion. If he or she does not give his or her casting vote, the question remains undecided, and may be raised again in the future.

e. Speaking on an Issue

The chief function of a Moderator is to conduct the business of the court in a decent and orderly manner in accordance with G-09.0202.a,b, above. In the absence of any other person, he or she may introduce any competent item of business as may have been

included on the agenda, provided always that his or her remarks are limited to stating the issue at hand and not taking any side. He or she is permitted to take part in any discussion while he or she occupies the chair. The Moderator must vacate the chair when he or she is a part in a cause before the Court.

Parish Moderators, while also not allowed to take any side, are reminded of their responsibility as “Teaching Elders” to state the implications of any issue, particularly as concerns the teaching of Scriptures and the decisions of the higher courts of the Church. If

an issue arise which is so grave that the Moderator of the Parish feels he or she must take one side or the other, the Moderator of Presbytery or an Interim Moderator appointed by the Presbytery must be called in to preside.

f. Absence of Moderator and Moderators 'Pro Tempore'

In all higher courts of the Church, in the absence of the Moderator the next preceding Moderator who is present, or failing the presence of any previous Moderator of that

particular Court, the senior minister present takes the chair and constitutes the meeting. Thereafter, the Court may appoint any other ministerial member as Moderator 'Pro tempore' (for the time being), if it see cause.

For absence of Moderator in the Parish Session see G-10.0107.

3 Clerks

The duties of Clerks are:

- a. To record, in the form of minutes, the transactions of the governing body;
- b. To keep its rolls of membership and attendance, preserve its records carefully and permanently;
- c. To bring before the court any matters of business, and give intimations of the court's decisions.
- d. To take charge of all of the courts papers, books and documents.
- e. To furnish extracts from the minutes when required by another governing body of the church. Such extracts, verified by the Clerk shall be evidence in any governing body of the church.
- f. To carry out the instructions of the court.

The Clerk of the Session shall be an Elder elected by the Session for such term as it may determine, not to exceed two consecutive terms of three years each. The clerks of a Presbytery or of a Synod shall be elected for such term as it may determine (See G-

11.0208; G-12.0206; G-13.0110) but not to exceed two consecutive terms of three years

each, and must be eligible for membership in the governing body. The clerk of the General Assembly shall be known as the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly. The term of the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly shall be for three years when first elected to

office, and may be re-elected for continuing service for further periods of two years at a time, at the pleasure of the General Assembly.

Meetings

1. Kinds of Meetings

a. “Stated” meetings: A ‘stated’ meeting of any governing body is the regular meeting of that body according to its own predetermined schedule of meeting, and which normally allows for action upon the full range of business relevant to that body. A ‘stated’ meeting for general business may also take place in consequence of an express adjournment for ordinary business from a previous ‘stated’ meeting or in consequence of an express appointment by a higher governing body. Cf Presbytery G-11.0302.a; Synod G-12.0301.a.

b. “In hunc effectum” (meaning literally; ‘for this purpose only’): meeting: An ‘in hunc effectum’ meeting is a meeting specifically appointed by a governing body for the transaction of specified business. This kind of meeting requires that the particular business and the time and place of meeting be specified in the minute of the meeting which appointed it, along with the resolution to meet ‘in hunc effectum’ and that public intimation thereof be made at that meeting. No business can be transacted at an ‘in hunc effectum’ meeting except that for which it has been appointed. It may adjourn, but only for the prosecution of the same business. For regulations for Presbytery, see G-11.0302.b;

for Synod see G-12.0301 .b.

c. ‘Pro re nata’ (meaning literally, ‘for unforeseen business that has arisen’) meetings: A pro re nata’ meeting is one called during the interval between one ‘stated’ meeting and another in consequence of some unexpected business having arisen which requires immediate attention. Only specified business may be acted upon. For regulations for Presbytery, see G-11.0302,c; for Synod see G-12.0301.C. For lapsed Presbytery, see G-11.0304.

The governing body may adjourn, if necessary, to the next stated meeting, or to a date previous to the next stated meeting to complete the business. If the Moderator declines to call a ‘pro re nata’ meeting after a requisition to do so has been addressed to

him, the Whole circumstances of the case may be brought before the governing body at its next 'stated' meeting. In the event of the death of the moderator, and until a successor is appointed, his rights and duties in connection with the calling of 'pro re nata' meetings

devolve upon the clerk.

2. Opening of Meetings

The Moderator of a governing body beyond the Session shall open all stated meetings during his or her term of office and shall preside until a new Moderator is elected. If the Moderator is absent at the opening of the next meeting the next previous Moderator shall perform these duties.

All meetings of governing bodies shall be opened and closed with prayer. Presbytery 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.

3. Delay of Meeting

In the event that any Court, Board, Committee, Commission or arm of the Church, other than at Parish level cannot form a quorum within one hour of the scheduled time for meeting, the Moderator (or Chairman, Convenor, President, etc.) is free to reschedule the meeting as required.

In the case of Parish Board meetings see G-07.0602,c.

4. Parliamentary Procedure

Meetings of governing bodies shall be conducted in accordance with the rules of Parliamentary procedure as most recently given by or amended by, the General Assembly. (See Appendix G-13.04.)

5. Expenses

The expenses of Elders and Ministers attending governing bodies shall be defrayed

as follows:

a. General Assembly:

The General Assembly shall coordinate travel equalization and provide accommodation and feeding for all official Elder commissioners and Ministers.

Officially invited resource persons, honourably retired Ministers, Presbytery Guests, and other persons as may be approved by the General Assembly or the General Assembly Executive body, shall have their travel, accommodation and feeding paid for by the General Assembly. To offset such expenditure, the General Assembly shall receive from each Elder commissioner and Minister commissioner an equal amount of money, which money is to be supplied to the commissioner by the Parish which he or she represents.

b. Synods:

Synods shall follow the pattern of General Assembly for funding and reimbursement of expenses.

c. Presbyteries:

Presbyteries may choose either of the following options.

- i. Rotation plan: Where meetings of Presbytery are held under a plan of regular rotation throughout the entire Presbytery, the sending Parish shall pay transportation while the host Parish shall pay for accommodation and feeding. Presbyteries using this plan may not leave this plan until all the Parishes have hosted Presbytery an equal number of times.
- ii. Fixed location plan: Parishes shall pay an equal amount per commissioner to Presbytery; Presbytery shall from these funds pay for all travel, feeding, and when necessary, for accommodation. (See G-11.0303.)

6. Venue for Meetings

To ensure the exposure of the General Assembly to the entire Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, regular meetings of the General Assembly shall be held in a different Synod than that of the previous year.

Synods may find it advantageous to select their places of meeting according to the nature of the business at hand.

Presbyteries may choose their own pattern of meeting, in accordance with G-09.0304.C. (above).

Principles of Administration

1. Definition

Administration is the process by which a governing body implements decisions. It involves working with and through persons to accomplish goals and includes developing leadership, planning, communicating, organizing, budgeting, supervising, and evaluating.

2. Structure of Administration

Mission determines the form of structure and administration. All structures should enable the church to give effective witness to the Lordship of Christ in the contemporary world.

The administration of mission should be performed by the governing body nearest the congregation that can most effectively and efficiently accomplish it.

3. Accountability to Governing Body

A governing body may delegate particular aspects of its task to councils, boards, agencies, commissions, and committees, but always on the basis of accountability to the governing body.

4. Nature of Presbyterian Polity

In order to give meaning to the interdependent nature of Presbyterian polity:

- a. Each governing body shall participate through its representatives in the planning and administration of the next higher body. (See G-04.0301.C.)

- b. Each governing body shall consult through appropriate representatives with governing bodies below and above it concerning mission priorities, programme, budgeting, and the establishment of administrative staff positions.
- c. Each governing body shall employ its staff in accordance with the principles of inclusiveness and diversity found in G-09.0104 and O-04.0403.

5. Manual of Operations

Each governing body above the Session may, in consultation with the governing body above and below it, develop a manual of administrative operations, but not such as are in conflict with the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

6. Ownership of Records

Minutes and all other official records of church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies are the property of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and held in perpetuity by the said governing bodies or their legal successors. When Congregations, Synods, or Presbyteries are dissolved, their records are held for them by the next higher governing body within whose bounds they were before dissolution.

When the persons holding an office are changed, the out-going officer shall hand over to the in-coming officer all records and documents and other items pertaining to the office. There shall be a detailed handing over note signed in triplicate by both persons, with the first copy going to the person leaving office, the second copy to the person taking the office, and the third copy placed in the permanent files of the office.

7. Minutes and Records More than Fifty Years Old

All minutes and other official records of existing or dissolved Sessions, Presbyteries and Synods that are no longer required for frequent reference are to be deposited for preserving and servicing with the National Archives of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, who shall have the responsibility of protecting said documents from destruction, whether by fire, water, theft, vermin or any other cause. It is the responsibility of the Clerk of each

governing body to make recommendation to that governing body for the permanent safekeeping of the governing body's records. (Min. 1520.4(b)-1965.) (See G-10.0505.)

Minutes

1. Terminology

While either "minute" or "minutes" may be used to designate the record of the whole business of a meeting, for the sake of this Practice and Procedure, "minute" shall refer to any one item of business, which is usually given its own number, and "minutes" shall refer to the collective items of business-usually the sum total of any meeting or series of meetings.

2. Framing and Approving

Minutes are usually taken down in draft form, in handwriting, to be afterwards written out properly. Each minute may be read out, part by part, as business proceeds, or at the close of the meeting, and signed by the Moderator, unless the court wishes to do otherwise. In any case, where an important contentious matter is before the court, the minute relative thereto should be carefully adjusted to its satisfaction before the close of the meeting and signed by the Moderator.

At next meeting the first business after receiving commissions and appointing a new Moderator when this is required, is to submit the minutes in order that, after correction if necessary, they may be approved and engrossed. The court ought afterwards to see that

this is properly done, and the minutes signed.

In all courts higher than the Session, all motions, whether framed prior to the meeting of the court or framed during the course of a debate, are committed to writing by the mover of the motion and handed into the Clerk of the court. The Clerk, while having liberty to edit the motion for the sake of clarity or to remove extraneous material, shall retain the paper containing the written motion, but shall enter into the minutes the full intent of the motion, inclusive of any amendments, as may have been approved by the court.

In all courts of the Church, when regular meetings of the court are held more than four months (120 days) apart, the draft minutes of the meeting(s) of the court must be approved before the court rises.

In Presbyteries, Synods, and the General Assembly, the minutes of a meeting are generally printed and circulated among the members before the following meeting. It is advantageous that such minutes be circulated as soon as possible after the rise of the meeting so that:-

- a. Commissioners may have an opportunity to review the printed minutes for accuracy while the meeting is still fresh in their minds;
- b. Commissioners may make certain of any responsibilities assigned to them;
- c. Commissioners may find such minutes helpful in reporting to the body which they represent.

The only competent question, when a minute is submitted for approval, is whether it accurately states what was done. A minute cannot be altered after it has been approved.

The resolution of a court becomes operative at the moment it was decided, unless the resolution specifically states another time for it to take effect. It is not necessary to await the approval of the minute at a subsequent meeting.

3. Essentials of Minutes

The minutes of a meeting must bear the place and date, the names of all members present, and that it was constituted and closed with prayer, and must be attested by the signatures of the Moderator and Clerk. In larger Presbyteries and Synods, instead of the names of those present being entered in the ordinary minutes, a record of the attendances of members is kept in a sederunt book, in which case the latter becomes part of the minutes and should always be open to the inspection of members. However, it is usual to include the names of those present, along with those excused, in the printed minutes.

4. Form of Minutes (sample)

“Place, Date”

“Which place and date the Presbytery of met, pursuant to adjournment [or, at call of the Moderator], and was constituted with prayer.

“Those present were;

“The Minutes of the meeting held on was approved.

5. Who Signs

Minutes of Church courts shall be signed by the Moderator who occupies the chair at the time when the minutes are submitted for approval. They shall also be authenticated by the signature of the Clerk of that court. A similar rule shall be followed in the case of the General Assembly Executive Committee, the Board Secretaries Council, and other Committees of the General Assembly. The minutes shall be signed by the Moderator and Clerk of the meeting at which they are approved, and in the presence of the court.

If for any reason the Moderator be unable to sign the minutes, or if his or her signature cannot be obtained after it has been engrossed in the permanent record, the court may appoint another member to sign, and along with his or her signature there should be written, “by authority of the [name of court] given on [date]”.

If the minutes submitted for approval are in draft form, the Moderator and the Clerk initial the draft when approved, and afterwards sign the minutes when engrossed in the permanent record.

6. Contents

A court is entitled to say what shall have a place in its records (subject to overruling by a higher court); and, if a motion be made which it is resolved not to record, no reference should be made to it.

7. Unseconded Motions

Unseconded motions should not be recorded.

8. Rules for Clerks

- a. Minutes must be correctly written without blottings or interlinings, and must have a marginal index of subjects for the sake of reference.
- b. If words be struck out, the number of them, or of the lines, must be noted on the margin and signed both by the Moderator and Clerk, with the statement that the deletion was by authority of the court; and words to be inserted are to be written on the margin and signed by the Clerk.
- c. Clerical errors may be attested by the initials of the Cleric. Care must be taken to avoid everything that would permit doubt of the authenticity of the record.
- d. The pasting of papers on the pages is irregular and undesirable.
- e. Blank spaces ought not to be left as would give opportunity for unauthorized insertions.

9. Deleting Minutes

It is incompetent for any court to delete or give authority to delete. No writings, or pages of writings, may be expunged.

10.. Distribution of Minutes

a. Session Minutes

The minutes of Session are private and may not be duplicated or distributed.

Extracts from the minutes may be provided by the Clerk of Session, when so authorized. The Minute Book must be submitted to a higher court when called for.

b. Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly

Minutes are usually printed, and distributed to members of the court, with copies supplied to all superior courts. General Assembly minutes are distributed to all commissioners, to all Parishes, and to all Board Secretaries.

c. General Assembly executive Committee and Board Secretaries Council.

Minutes are usually printed, and distributed to members of the court,

d. General Assembly Boards:

Minutes are usually printed, and distributed to members of the Board, with copies supplied to other Board Secretaries and to the General Assembly offices.

11. Record Apart

Records apart are kept in certain judicial cases. See D-02.2xxx for regulations.

12. Extracts

Extracts of minutes of a court are required only in judicial cases, details for which can be found in D-02.4xxx. Quotations from the minutes may be provided by the Clerk of the court to persons who are not members of said court, only upon the approval of said court. It is the duty, however, of the Clerk of a court to send written intimations of the court's decisions to those affected by the decision.

13. Dissents

See G-09.0707

Subordination of Courts

1. The Rule, and Exceptions

The courts of the church are four -viz., General Assembly. Synod, Presbytery, and Parish Session; and each has authority over those below it, and may review and reverse their proceedings when brought to the higher court in a regular manner. (See G-04.0301 .c.f.) There are very few matters which are excepted from this rule.

Examples of the exceptions are:

- a. Where a specific court has been appointed as trustee for the disbursement of a certain fund or money.
- b. The Parish Session's decision is final on claims for enrolment as adherents. (See G-10.0305.a.)
- c. In all cases which may come before a Synod by dissent and complaint, or by appeal, the judgment of the Synod is final, unless it be a case involving:-
 - i. doctrine;
 - ii. worship;
 - iii. censure of a Minister or other office-bearer;
 - iv. the licensing of students;
 - v. union or readjustment or other change in the status of a Congregation or Parish.

At the same time, a superior court has the right to satisfy itself that a lower court which has the final authority in any matter, has acted competently in reaching its decision.

2. Sending Visitors

Every court has power to send forth visitors to see how all things are ruled within its bounds.

3. Inferior Court Must Obey

It is an essential part of the constitution of the Church that the orders of a superior court unappealed from, must be obeyed by an inferior court; and Ministers and Elders individually come under solemn obligations to such obedience (see G-04.0301.f)

Disregard of orders is, therefore, held to be a grave offence. New information arriving after a superior court's order has been given, may affect the implementation of that order, but it does not justify a lower court's neglect of the order.

From Inferior Court to Superior Court: Procedure

There are six ways in which the proceedings of a court may come before its superior court. They are:-

- a. The records of the court which are brought up annually to its immediate superior court for inspection and attestation, and in which the superior court takes note of some action(s) of the lower court. See G-09.0702.
- b. Reference by the court itself; e., the lower court officially passes a matter in a higher court. See G-09.0702.
- c. Dissent and complaint by a dissatisfied member; i.e. the dissatisfied member registers his or her dissent at the court, and in writing complains to the higher court for hearing and his or her reasons. See G-09.0703
- d. Appeal by a party at the bar. See G-09.0704
- e. Petition, when the petitioner could not have taken either of (c) or (d), or when the petitioner was obstructed in the attempt to do so. See G-09.0705.
- e. An interior court may by overture invite a superior court to take initiative in any matter requiring legislative or executive action. See G-09.0706.

1. Inspection of Records

a. What books

Every book ordered to be kept by any court is to be revised and attested yearly by the next superior court.

b. Who examines

A competent number, but not less than three, of Ministers of the most fit and

experienced shall be appointed.

c. Scope of inspection

For the points to be reviewed in the inspection, see Appendix (G-09:)¹.

d. Attestation. Satisfaction or Dissatisfaction, see Appendix (G-09:)¹.

e. Unpresented records

If the sending up of records to the superior court for attestation be neglected, it is the Clerk of the lower court that the superior court orders and holds responsible.

The Clerk of the superior court however, is required to lay that order before the superior court before execution. The Clerk of the superior court shall also inform the Moderator of the interior court of the order

2. References

Reference of any matter to the next superior court is made by a resolution of the court referring. The Parish Session is required to refer to the Presbytery certain offences of the graver sort for trial by libel. An inferior court may take the same course in any matter, but only on sufficient cause; for generally the course is regarded with disfavours, as being an evasion of responsibility.

For Procedure, see D-03xxx.

3 Dissents and Complaints

Dissents and Complaint can only arise subsequent to a judicial case. For Procedure, see D-06.5xxx.

4. Appeals

Appeals can only arise subsequent to a decision of a governing body. For Procedure,

see D-06.5 xxx.

5. Petitions

a. Irregular Usage

The use of 'petition' to bring the proceedings of a lower court into a higher court is not permissible, except in such cases as when persons entitled to have come by appeal or complaint have been obstructed in that course by the inferior court. (See D.XX.XXX.)

b. Ordinary Usage

The ordinary use of petition is to initiate business in the court of first instance the business generally concerning only the affairs of the petitioners. A petition may be presented by a person or persons who are otherwise not entitled to make an overture on the matter- as in the case of some arm of group within the church, or even outside of it.

If the Presbytery be the court of first instance in a particular case, it is not necessary that the petition be transmitted through the Parish Session.

c. Transmission

All petitions from members or groups of members should be presented to the Session in the first instance, If, however, those petitioning feel unable, or unwilling, or have been prevented or ignored by the Session, the petition may be presented directly to the Presbytery. In no case will any petition from any source be considered by a Synod or the General Assembly without reference from a lower court.

d. Hearing and Receiving

A petition must first (1) be read, or held as read. Then (2) the question is whether to

receive it; and next (3) what shall be the answer to its request. A court may, immediately on discovery that the contents of the petition are incompetent or improper, decide not to receive it. Ordinarily, however, if the question of receiving it be raised, the petitioner ought to be heard thereon, and the safe rule is not to dispose of it without hearing him/her.

e. Petitions not receivable

A petition is not to be received:-

- i. Unless some person appear at the bar in support of it;
- ii. If it contains unbecoming, improper expressions.
- iii. If the content is a matter unrelated to the court;
- iv. If the matter ought to have been brought by another course - e.g. appeal, etc.
- v. If the petitioners might have appeared as parties before the inferior court, but did not.

f. Procedure

For Procedure. See D-0c.6xxx.G-09.0706

6 Overtures

a. Their Use

Overture is the designation given to the formal proposal submitted to a court by an inferior court, or by one or more members of the court itself, to initiate legislative or executive action of a general kind not limited to business of the overtures. Overtures may be made to any court of the church concerning matters within their province; however their most common usage is with the General Assembly only. The usual course in courts below the General Assembly is the more direct one of a member making a motion, preceded in matters of importance by a notice of motion.

The General Assembly may send overtures to the Presbyteries on their own initiative, although overtures may come to the attention of the General Assembly at

the recommendation of one of the General Assembly Boards, or at the recommendation of a Synod or Presbytery.

Overtures, at the General Assembly, on the same subject or closely related subjects, are grouped together and only one speaker is heard introducing the entire group of overtures.

b. Who May Overture

An overture may be promoted before a court only by a member, or members, of that court. Or it may be promoted by an inferior court, although no member of that court can be heard unless he or she is also a member of the superior court or has been recognized by the superior court.

c. Supporting an Overture

If no one appears to introduce the overture, it fails without a motion to that effect. Once introduced even if the introducer do not support it (as when he or she acts for his or her Presbytery though not of its opinion) the overture is the property of the Assembly, and must be disposed of.

d. Form

All overtures from Presbyteries or Synods or from Commissioners which propose the introduction of new Acts or the amendment of existing Acts or Regulations shall contain the precise terms of the legislation which they propose, The Principal Clerk of the General Assembly shall be available to assist with the framing of such proposals.

The form might be

“It is humbly overtured by the undersigned members of [name of court] to the Venerable the General Assembly to rescind [such and such a clause], and instead thereof to enact and ordain as follows: & c.

The reasons for the proposed legislation may be listed, beginning each with “Whereas,” etc

e. How Transmitted to General Assembly

Any overture from a Presbytery to General Assembly must be transmitted through the Synod of the bounds; which shall forward it with or without comment with or without approval. A Synod is not entitled to refuse to transmit an overture which is presented in proper form. But a Presbytery has liberty to transmit an overture to the General Assembly direct in case of urgency and when no regular meeting of Synod intervenes between the meeting of Presbytery at which it was adopted and the General Assembly.

f. Overtures sent to Presbyteries under the Barrier Act

The General Assembly, in order to provide against “any sudden alteration, or innovation, or other prejudice to the Church, in either doctrine, or worship, or discipline, or government” requires the use of the Barrier Act to effect permanent legislation in these matters. (See CG 11.0406.g., and Appendix G-13:01)

g. Declaratory Acts

Declaratory Acts are those decisions which declare what the law of the Church is, and which do not change the Church's doctrine, worship, discipline, or form of government, but which instead are interpretations based on previously existing bases.

The General Assembly alone is able to interpret the laws of the Church. Lower courts may give their understanding of Declaratory Acts and the Church's laws, subject always to the General Assembly's further interpretation.

See also GXXxx, and Appendix G-13:01.

h. Interim Acts

The General Assembly may immediately convert an overture into an Interim Act when this is necessary for carrying out more effectually the subsisting regulations or forms of the Church. In this case, it is sent down as an 'Overture and Interim Act,' and continues in force till the next General Assembly. An Interim Act should be passed only in case of emergency for this reason at least, that it is liable to be set aside unless the related overture is approved by a majority of the Presbyteries. It is undesirable that legislation on any matter should be changed for only one year.

i. Treatment of Overtures and other Acts

The draft of any Declaratory Act, Interim Act, or overture, shall be printed, laid on the table of the General Assembly, and circulated at least one day before a Motion for the passing of such Act or the transmission of such overture to Presbyteries is made in the General Assembly.

When a proposal which requires the consent of Presbyteries is submitted to the General Assembly by overture, the overture is either 'dismissed,' or it is "received and 'sent down' to Presbyteries in its original or in an amended form.

j. Presbytery's Decision

The decision of a Presbytery must be "Approve" or "Disapprove" of such Overture. Whether a Presbytery approves or disapproves, it is at liberty to make suggestions, which the Synod may adopt if they in no way modify the substance, sense, or

intention of the Overture,

The General Assembly may, If it see cause, instruct Presbyteries to consult the Sessions within their bounds regarding an Overture sent down under the Barrier Act. The opinions of the Sessions are tabulated by the Presbytery Clerks, and reported to the Synod: but it son the verdict of the Presbyteries that legislation depends.

k. If Approved

If a majority of the Presbyteries approve, the following General Assembly may either (1) pass the Overture into an Act, or (2) resolve that it be not passed, or (3) send it back down to the Presbyteries in some amended form. The Principal Clerk shall report to the General Assembly not only the number of Presbyteries approving or disapproving, but also the number of Sessions in each Presbytery approving or disapproving.

l. If Disapproved

If half or more of the Presbyteries report disapproval, the overture is regarded as approved, and the official announcement of this to the General Assembly is held to dispose of it; however, it may be sent down again in an altered form.

m. If indecisive

If enough Presbyteries fail to report either approval or disapproval so that there is no clear majority of Presbyteries for either approval or disapproval, the overture may be sent down a second time with or without change. If again the result is indecisive, the Overture is deemed to have failed for lack of interest.

n. Returned within Nine Months

The returns from Presbyteries must all be within nine months of the date of rising of the General Assembly which sent it down. It is incompetent to pass an overture into law on the ground that it had been reported to the previous Assembly as approved by the Presbyteries.

7. Dissent

a. Privilege

Members of a court are entitled to dissent, and to require their dissent to be recorded. (See G-10.0108.)

b. Reasons

Reasons may or may not be given for a dissent. When given briefly and definitely as part of a dissent which is intimated immediately, it is the practice of the Church to record, them. Longer dissents are held on file but with mention of the fact of dissent included in the minutes. The court mayor may not frame answers, and may see fit to record them if the reasons have been recorded.

c. When reasons rejected

A court may reject reasons of dissent which are disrespectful to it, or injurious to a party. Everything that is fair in argument may be stated without offending in these respects. A dissent may not be a continuation of the discussion of the subject, but may show only the position of the dissentient, for his or her justification. The dissent should contain only one straightforward sentence.

d. Effect

Dissent relieves of all the. responsibility incurred, including expense, unless the dissent were incompetent or censurable. It is incompetent and censurable when it is against carrying out an instruction of a superior court. Members who will not take part

in tarrying out the instruction are liable to censure.

e. Time of entering dissent

A dissent must be put into writing, and handed into the Clerk. It cannot be given until the court has disposed of the matter for that meeting, the decision taken, and the minute thereof entered into the record.

f. Adherents (others supporting the dissent)

When a dissent has been entered, it is in order for any other Commissioner present when that judgment was pronounced to adhere to such dissent and append his or her" name. Persons not present may not enter their dissent.

8. Motions and Voting

Where there ore motions inconsistent with each other (motions and counter-motions), the first vote is a vote in favour of each of them, put in the order in which they were proposed, the result not being announced for one till it is announced for all. If any of them obtains a majority of those voting, it becomes the judgment; if none of them does, so the motion having fewest votes is struck off and the vote taken again, and so on. If the lowest two be equal, the Moderator gives his or her casting vote on them.

When amendments are proposed, that is proposals not inconsistent with the general tenor of the motion each may be disposed of immediately it has been moved, seconded, and spoken to, the vote on each being For or Against. Thereafter the motions (as amended, if amended) are voted on in the way already stated.

The Moderator of any court of the church has a casting vote only. He or she cannot move or second a motion. If he or she does not give his or her casting vote, the question remains undecided, and may be raised again in the future.

It is unnecessary to move a direct negative to a motion. The same purpose is achieved by speaking and voting against the motion.

9. Citation

a. What it is

Citation is an authorized official act authoritatively and distinctively calling the cited to a specified place and time for a specified purpose.

b. The Court's part

In all cases where parties are concerned, the judicatory is to see that before it proceeds, all are properly called before it by a legal and timeous citation in writing and which explains the cause. There must be evidence that all citations have been delivered.

c. Essentials

It is essential to any citation that it shall be such as affords the part cited reasonable ground for believing it to be authentic, and that its execution can be proved to the court.

d. Court's Power and Bounds

A court has power to call before it any person residing within its bounds whom the ecclesiastical business before it concerns as party, witness, or otherwise; and if it desire to call a person residing in the bounds of another court of the same degree it applies to that court to cause the person to be cited.

e. Citation in the presence of the court (apud acta)

Citation 'apud acta' is citation in the proceedings - by the court in its presence. The minute is the proof of it.

f. Citation by Edict

Citation by edict is citation by public intimation, and will be found prescribed only for citing a body or bodies, or an absconded Minister.

g. Execution

Execution of a citation is a certificate of its having been served, given by the official who served it. In Citation by Edict, it is written on the citation:-

“[place and date] the foregoing citation was this day duly served by me.

Signed) Witness

(Signed) Official

Title

The witnesses must be present at the public reading of it.

h. Citing an Inferior Court

A superior cites an interior court to its bar by sending an extract resolution to that effect to the Moderator and Clerk. If either be present, though not at the bar, his or her court may be cited through him or her from the chair.

10. Reckoning Time

- a. “Month” is taken to mean calendar month, if there be no specification to the contrary.
- b. “Free days” or “clear days” means days over and above the day of the initial and the day of the terminal act.
- c. “Within” so many days-say ten-means that the time allowed, without counting the day of the initial act (the judgment intimation, or the like), extends to the end (midnight) of the tenth day.
- d. Sunday and public holidays are always counted.6-09.0800

Committees and Commissions

1. Committees

A committee is appointed to either study and recommend appropriate action or to carry out directions or decisions already made by a governing body. It shall be given ‘terms of

reference'. It shall make a full report to the governing body that created it, along with any recommendations which shall require action by the governing body. Upon completion of their duties, the committee is thanked and discharged.

Except under special circumstances, committees shall consist of laypersons and Ministers with at least half of the members being laypersons. The majority of the committee members shall be members of the court which appointed it. Unless the court so directs, committees may not co-opt other persons to their number.

2. Commissions

a. Authority

A commission is empowered to consider and conclude matters referred to it by a governing body. The appointing body shall specifically state the scope of power given to a commission [Terms of Reference] A commission shall keep a full record of its

proceedings, which shall be submitted to its governing body to be incorporated in its minutes and to be regarded as the actions of the governing body itself.

The decision of an administrative commission shall be the action of the appointing governing body from the time of its completion by the commission and the announcement, where relevant, of the action to the parties affected by it. Such decision shall be

transmitted to the Principal Clerk of the governing body who shall report it to the governing body at its next meeting.

A commission may also be assigned duties as a committee, the reporting of which shall be handled as a committee's report. A commission, upon completion of its duties, is thanked and discharged.

b. Membership

Membership of commissions need not be limited to members of the court which made the commission. A commission never receives power to add to their number, nor may they sub-commit.

Commissions shall consist of Ruling Elders and Ministers, the number to be determined by the commissioning court, but never less than three in number.

c. Quorum

A quorum for any commission shall be not less than two thirds of the membership of the commission.

d. Administrative Commissions

Commissions appointed by General Assembly, Synods, or Presbyteries may be either administrative or judicial. Commissions appointed by Sessions may be administrative only.

Administrative commissions may include:

- i. Ordaining and/or inducting Ministers into Parishes (by Presbyteries only).
- ii. Organizing or merging congregations and/or Parishes (by Presbyteries only).
- iii. Visiting particular churches, governing bodies or other organizations of the church reported to be affected with disorder, and to inquire into and settle the difficulties therein.
- iv. To examine and recommend candidates for the ministry and/or Ministerial training (by Presbyteries only).

e. Judicial Commissions

Judicial commissions are to consider and decide a case of process for the governing body in accordance with the Rules of Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

9. Special Organizations

a. Right to Organize

Members of a particular Parish or particular Parishes may associate together to conduct special tasks of witness, service, nurture, or other appropriate endeavours.

Where such special organizations exist in a particular Parish, they shall be under the direction, control, and oversight of the Session: Where they cover the territory included

within a Presbytery or Synod, they shall be responsible to the governing body having jurisdiction and where they cover territory larger than a Synod, they shall be responsible to

the General Assembly.

b. Review and Control

The names or titles of special organizations may be self-determined and they may adopt their own bylaws and elect their own officers, subject always to the power and

review and control vested by the Constitution in the several governing bodies of the

church. Such organizations shall give an annual report to the governing body having jurisdiction. Whenever the functions of special organizations include the collecting and distributing of money, this shall be done subject to the oversight and direction of the

appropriate governing body, to which an annual accounting shall be made.

c. Limitations

i. Neither the General Assembly nor any other court of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria may create or provide funding for an organization under this particular provision of the Practice and Procedure. -

ii. No organization may claim to exist under this provision of the Practice and Procedure without written permission from the appropriate governing body (Session, Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly). If the organization desires to expand into an area beyond the boundaries of the governing body, permission must be secured from the higher governing body and no expansion may be made until such permission has been obtained.

d. Special Organizations wishing to become legally incorporated

See G-13.0500

7. Administrative Staff

The execution of the work and decisions of a Presbytery or Synod are normally carried out by the Clerk and any other persons appointed by the governing body to any particular task. Presbyteries and Synods may, however, hire or appoint qualified persons with the responsibility of carrying out any responsibilities so assigned by the governing body. Before such an appointment may be made, the approval of the next higher governing body must be obtained. Presbyteries and Synods shall be held responsible for actions of such Executives which they may engage.

Constitution and Officials

1. Membership

Every Parish duly sanctioned by the General Assembly has a Session. In the case of a Parish newly created, it is the responsibility of the Presbytery to ensure the induction of a Minister, and the election, and ordination if necessary, of Elders.

The Session in any Parish consists of the Minister or Ministers along with the Ruling Elders in active service.

The office of Ruling Elder is open to men and women alike; and a person shall not be prevented, on the grounds of sex or ethnic affiliation, from being elected to office of Ruling Elder or from performing any of the duties proper to the said office.

All members of Session are Elders, Ministers being Teaching Elders": the others being "Ruling Elders."

Ministers and Elders may equally speak on every subject as members of a church, court, and all have the same responsibility. The Moderator, however, has only a casting vote and not a deliberative vote. Ruling Elders in the Presbytery do not lay on hands at the ordination of a Minister, but share in every step thereto.

2. The Character of the Office

"The Eldership is a spiritual function as is the Ministry." The office of the Elders is both individually and unitedly to watch over the Parish members, both publicly and privately, so that no corruption of the Christian faith enters therein. As the Ministers (as "pastors" and "teachers") should be diligent in sowing the seed of the Word, thus also the Elders should be careful in seeking the fruit of it in the people.

It belongs to the Eldership to examine those who come to the Lord's Table. Elders ought to bring to the Session those things that they cannot correct by private admonition. Every Elder ought to have a district assigned to him/her, so that he or she will be responsible for the concerns of a portion of the Parish flock and report back to the Session; and the observance of this very important. It is part of the Elder's official duty to pray with the sick; it is also the responsibility of the Minister to pray for the sick, even in private. It is the principal office of the Elder to meet in the Session with the Minister (pastor), who are also of their number, for the establishing of good order and discipline.

3. Admission to Office

Ruling Elders are elected in accordance with the provisions of G-06.0300 and G-07.0402.a, and they are ordained and admitted by the Session. Ministers are ordained and inducted by the Presbytery, and are directly accountable to it for the discharge of all duties of their office.

4. Tenure of Office

Ruling Elders hold office indefinitely, except when they are removed due to death, deposition, or resignation. See G-06.0308.

5. Absence from Stated Meetings

If an Elder has been absent from the meetings of Session for more than 12 months without due cause deemed satisfactory by the Session, the Session may, after giving him or her notice for his or her interest, dismiss him or her from membership on the Session, Elders

are, as all other members of the Parish, under the jurisdiction of the Session.

6. Number of Elders

It belongs to the Session to determine the number of Elders required by the circumstances of the Parish, and when expedient, to arrange for the election of additional Elders. See G-06.

0306. The ratio of Ruling Elders to communicants ought not to be less than one Ruling Elder per twenty-five communicants nor more than one Ruling Elder per fifteen communicants. If is, however, the duty of Presbytery to see that all proper means are used in every Parish to make sure that the Session shall be sufficient for the needs of the Parish. This matter shall be the subject of special inquiry at the Triennial Visitation (See G-11. 0405.c).

7. Moderator

The Minister is ex officio (by virtue of his or her office) Moderator of the Session. At the first meeting of the Session after his or her admission to office by the Presbytery, a certified intimation of his or her induction forwarded by the Presbytery Clerk is read and engrossed in the minutes. If there be Associate Ministers, they preside alternately, or as may be agreed between them, or as appointed by the Presbytery. The Minister not presiding sits and votes as an ordinary member, unless it be otherwise authoritatively regulated.

In the absence of the Moderator, any other Minister of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria may, if deputed by him or her in writing, with the business to be dealt with specified, preside pro tempore (for the time being). No meeting of Session can be held without the Moderator or the Minister deputed by him/her, or the Minister appointed by the Presbytery presiding.

8. Moderator's Duties

The duties of the Moderator are:

- a. To convene the meeting of the Session; -
- b. To preside over the meetings of the Session;
- c. To constitute and to close each meeting with prayer;
- d. To see that the business is properly ordered and recorded;

- e. To take the vote and announce the decisions of the Session;
- f. To act for the Session in administering censure and in carrying out its decisions.

The Moderator has a casting vote, but no deliberative vote, but he or she may introduce any business to the Session and speak concerning it. (See G-09.0202.e and G-09.0708.) In common with the other members, he or she has the right of dissent and complaint against any decision.

The Moderator is not responsible to the Session for the discharge of his or her Ministerial functions.

9. Complains against the Minister

If the Minister appear to be railing in fulfilling his or her Ministerial functions, or if he or she appear to encroach upon the functions of the Session, a petition signed by any number of the ruling Elders may be presented to the Presbytery. Such a petition need not be resolved within on official meeting of the Session.

Moreover, in all matters which the Session is entitled to decide, its decision is as truly binding on the Minister as on any other person; he or she differs from others only in that his or her disregard has to be dealt with by Presbytery. It will be the business of the Presbytery, if it see cause, to instruct or enjoin him/her; and thereafter, if necessary, to deal with disobedience itself.

Where the functions of a Minister are being encroached upon by the members of the Session, the Minister may appeal to the Presbytery for redress.

10. The Session Clerk

The Session appoints a Clerk, whose tenure of office lasts during the pleasure of the Session, and years may not exceed two consecutive terms of three years each. (See G-09.0203) It is the Clerk's duty to take regular minutes of the Session's procedure and engross the same in a permanent record to take charge of all Sessional documents, and to prepare and issue all extracts of minutes and papers authorized by the Session. In his or her absence from

any meeting, the Session appoints a Clerk pro tempore whose appointment must be recorded in the minutes. The oath de fidel should be administered to the Clerk on appointment. Each minutes', when approved, must be signed in the permanent record by the Clerk as "Clerk" or "Clerk pro tempore," as well as by the Moderator.

Failing the appointment of the Clerk, it devolves on the Moderator to perform the duties, and he or she signs as "Moderator and Clerk" The Clerk must be a member of the court.

11. Treasurer

If necessary, the Session appoints a Treasurer to take charge of funds at its disposal, such as funds from the Poor Fund Collection where the same is not distributed through the Parish board.

12. Assessors

In the event of there not being, from any cause, a sufficient number of Ruling Elders in a Parish duly sanctioned by the General Assembly available to form a quorum, the Presbytery appoints one or more of its own number as assessors to act as members of the Session until a new election has taken place and the Session has been regularly constituted. It is the first and immediate duty of a Session which is supplemented by Assessors, to seek the completion of the Session by the ordination of Elders.

Similarly, in the event that a Presbytery must discipline a Session, the Presbytery shall send in Assessors until such time as a healthy Parish life is restored.

On the fulfillment of the purpose for which any assessor(s) has been appointed, his or her duty ceases; and he or she ought to report to the Presbytery at its first meeting thereafter, and be discharged.

13. Provisional Session

For a Provisional Session, see G-11.0404.1.

1. Quorum

Unless the Moderator or his or her regularly appointed substitute be present, no meeting

of the Session can be held. Three is a quorum where the number of the Session does not exceed nine, and five is a quorum where the number exceeds nine and does not exceed twenty. Where the Session membership exceeds twenty, seven is a quorum. In all cases, where the Parish has multiple congregations, the quorum must represent more than only one congregation.

2. Mode of Convening

The Session is legally convened under the authority of the Moderator, or the order of a superior Court, either by public intimation from the pulpit, or by personal notice given to each member, Such notice is held sufficient if a reasonable time be allowed for the attendance of all members.

3. Frequency of Meetings

The Parish Session must meet at least quarterly, and preferably monthly, for the conduct of regular business. Special meetings of the Session may be called:-

- a. Whenever the Minister, judges it necessary, or
- b. Whenever requested by the Elders, as in the section following (G. 10.0204), or
- c. Whenever so directed by the Presbytery or other higher Court.

4. Requisition to Moderator

The Moderator is bound to call a meeting within ten days when requested by at least one third of the Ruling Elders (those holding office at the time). With a minimum of five when the number of Ruling Elders exceeds nine. Such requisition must be in writing.

5. Meeting of a Superior Court

No meeting of the Session can be held, except in connection with the administration of the Sacraments or for urgent business, at the time of an ordinary meeting of a superior Court, without the leave of that Court.

6. Adjournment

The Session may, if it see cause, adjourn to complete unfinished business to a time which must be fixed when the adjournment is made. In that case, unless the adjournment be to a later hour of the same day, care should be taken that intimation is given to all members, either in the presence of the Court, or in one or other of the prescribed-ways of calling a meeting. When intimation has been thus given, the Session may take up any competent business.

7. Opening and Closing

All meetings of Session must be opened and closed with prayer, and both facts be minuted.

8. Approval and Signing of Minutes

Immediately after the Session has been constituted and the roll call taken, the minutes of the previous meeting or meetings should be read, corrected if need be, and approved and the approval duly recorded. The approval or correcting of the minutes does not imply any power to alter the acts or decisions of the meeting; the only question is the correctness of the minutes as a true account of what was done. For keeping, signing, correcting minutes, and the granting of extracts, see G-09.0406 and G-9.0500.

9. Relation to Other Sessions

No Session is entitled to interfere with, or review the action of another Session. It may make friendly communication to another Session regarding any action of which it thinks it has cause to complain; but, if not satisfied, it can proceed further only by referring the matter to its own Presbytery.

10. Meetings Usually Private

The meetings of Session are not usually open to the Congregation or Parish, but are private except where the Session resolve otherwise in any particular case. In many matters which come before the Session, it is necessary to proceed with great circumspection, especially in cases of discipline affecting the good name of members of the Parish; in all such,

strict privacy ought to be observed. Active Elders ought not to discuss Session affairs with other Elders not currently holding office, and are liable to discipline for the dissemination of confidential information.

The Session may invite the presence of members of the Parish Board, or other office-bearers, for their advice and assistance; but in all cases the Session must determine its action by the vote of its own members only.

In any matter of procedure not provided for, a discretionary power is left to the Session, which may find guidance in the corresponding procedure applicable to superior courts of the Church.

Powers and Functions

1. General

It is the duty of the Session to maintain good order to cause the Acts of the General Assembly to be put into execution, to administer discipline, to judge and determine cases, and to superintend the religious and moral condition of the Parish.

2. Discipline

Of discipline in the Session, see D-03 and D-04.

3. Worship responsibilities

a. Public Worship

It belongs to the Session in concurrence with the Minister to regulate the hours of public worship. For the proper conduct of worship and the preaching of the Word, the Minister is responsible to the Presbytery subject to the regulations laid down in the Directory for the Worship and the Work of the Church. In addition to the stated worship services, the Session may appoint such occasional or special services as it judges desirable.

b. Administration of the Sacraments

The Session also appoints and provides for the administration of Baptism and the observance of the Lord's Supper. (See W-03 for details). Ordained Ministers only may administer the Sacraments. Elders may be called upon to assist.

i. Baptism

Baptism is to be administered to adults upon their profession of faith in Christ and obedience to Him, and to infants up to and including the age of seven, according to the regulations laid down in W-03.0200-0300. A certificate of baptism must always be given by the Minister and the baptism recorded in the appropriate Baptismal Roll Book.

ii. The Lord's Supper

The Session appoints and intimates the time and place for the observance of the Lord's Supper, and makes provision therefore. The Elders assist the Minister in the distribution of the elements at the Lord's Supper. The Lord's Supper is a Ministerial, not a Sessional act, and the Session does not, accordingly, require to be constituted unless it be necessary to hold a meeting for other Sessional purposes.

Only members in full communion are entitled to participate, but it is usual for Ministers to offer an "ecumenical invitation" --i.e., that any member of any other Christian denomination who is in full communion in his or her own denomination, is welcome to participate, when nothing is known concerning them inconsistent with a Christian's profession of faith in Christ.

Each Session is free to choose, but preferably with the agreement of the Minister, whether to use the common cup or individual cups. Similarly, in congregations where some members may have a problem with alcohol abuse, it behoves the Minister and Session, as part of their pastoral concern, to use a non-alcoholic drink in place of wine or to make alternate arrangements. (See also W-030500.)

Each Parish should make use of the Preparatory Service, on a day prior to the administration of the Lord's Supper, for the purpose of self-examination by the

communicants in anticipation of the Lord's Supper. Lord's Supper Attendance Cards are to be given out at that time.

4. Appointment of Choirmasters) and/or Organist(s)

The appointment

The appointment of choirmasters and organists are made by the Session, which must be satisfied as to the Christian character of any applicant before he or she be recognized as eligible. A precise record of the terms of appointment, usually for one year at a time, must be entered in the minutes of the Session.

It is customary for such persons to donate their service (G-07.0503.d), and it is proper therefore for the Parish Board to annually give them a fitting honourarium. In cases where their duties are unusually extensive and a salary is required, such salaries are fixed by the Board.

All such officials are subject to the direction of the Minister as regards the execution of their duties. The Session has power to suspend or terminate the appointments of all or any of the said officials; due intimation of such suspension being given by the Session must be communicated to the Board as well as officially to the party concerned.

In the conduct of public worship, the Choirmaster and Organist are under the direction and control of the Minister, but the Session may dismiss any such person if dissatisfied with his or her character or conduct, or with his or her behaviour or efficiency in the discharge of his or her duties. Resignation of office is given in to the Session. The Session, as a matter of duty, should review the appointment(s) annually. (See G-07.0503.d.)

Other Church staff, such as typists, drivers, labourers, guards, etc., are hired or dismissed by the Parish Board, even though they may be assigned to a Ministerial staff. (See G-07.0503.e.)

5. Oversight of Church Members

a. Admission into membership

The Session is responsible for the admission of persons into membership. Persons may be admitted by -

- i. Confirmation, as in the case of first communicants and those having been baptized as

infants.

ii. Transfer of Membership from another Presbyterian Parish.

iii. Resolution of Session, either on-

have (a) Affirmation of faith as in the case of those being baptized as adults and who

undergone membership training, or

(b) Reaffirmation of faith, as in the case of those whose membership has lapsed, or who may not have a Transfer Certificate from another Presbyterian Parish, or who come from another denomination.

In each case, the Session shall examine the candidate for full communicant membership status as to the sincerity of his or her profession of faith and the quality of his or her life.

(See G-05.0400). It is usual to accept a person with a Transfer Certificate from another Presbyterian Church without any investigation. However, if the Session has reason not to

do so, it is free not to accept the Transfer Certificate; the judgment of the Session is final.

(See G-09.0100b.)

Every Parish shall maintain a Parish Register - a permanent record containing

the names and addresses of all full communicant members, including (1) the date of enrolment, whether (a) as first communicants, or (b) by transfer, or (c) by resolution of Session in regard to the applicant's affirmation/reaffirmation of faith and (2) the date of removal, whether (a) by death, (b) by transfer, or (c) resolution of Session as in the case

of those struck off, excommunicated, or otherwise removed. "Removal," in this sense does not mean that any name or information has been either erased, defaced, obliterated, etc. from the Church Register, but refers to the action of Session by which that person is no

longer considered to be a member in that Parish and therefore details of the Session's decision are entered into the "Removal" columns of the Parish Register.

Every Parish shall maintain a Lord's Supper Attendance Roll, into which are written the names of the full-communicant members, including those on the Supplemental Roll, along with the dates such a member has partaken of the Lord's Supper.

b. Revision of the Membership roll:

The membership of a Parish consists of the names of all those whose names are on

the Parish Register, not having been removed for any reason. This list is the same as the Lord's Supper Attendance Roll.

The roll shall be revised annually by the Session, preferably just prior to December

31. (See G-05 0502 and W.0400).

c. Transfer of Membership

A communicant's name shall be transferred from the Church Register of one Parish to that of another Parish only by a Transfer Certificate, and such certificate shall not be valid after the expiry of three years from the date which it bears. In case of persons presenting Transfer Certificates, the date of enrolment shall be the date of lodging the certificate; and,

in other cases; it shall be the date of the resolution of Session to add the name to the Roll.

The date of removal shall be the date of death, or the issue of a Transfer Certificate, or of a resolution of the Session to remove the name.

With a view to lessening the danger of members lapsing from Church connection, the Session shall issue a Transfer Certificate to every member in full communion immediately upon his or her leaving the Parish to take up residence elsewhere. If the destination of the transferring member is known, the Session shall intimate the same to the Minister or the Session Clerk of that Parish. Members who maintain more than one residence, shall hold

full membership in the Parish where their church life is most active, but may hold

Associate Membership in the other Parish.

d. Elder's Districts

The Session should arrange for the division of the Parish into convenient districts, and appoint one or more of its members to have special spiritual oversight of each district.

Each Elder ought to have a correct list of all those thus entrusted to his or her care,

members and adherents, and to report to the Session regarding them; it is his or her duty

to visit the families in his or her district as their spiritual overseer, especially the aged and those in affliction, to care for the young and to deal privately and tenderly with any who are

neglecting public worship, or are under discipline.

6. Supervision of Parish Organizations

All organizations or associations of members or adherents in connection with the Parish or Congregation are under the supervision of the Session; and no organization or association can be sanctioned as Congregational without first receiving the approval of the Session.

The leaders of every society within the Church should consult with the Minister from time to time to ensure that the programme of such society does not conflict with the overall programme of the Church.

The control of finances of any Parish organization lies essentially with that branch or society. However, large sums of money may be lodged with the Parish Treasurer for safe-keeping. A branch or organization may not spend more than it actually owns, nor borrow from any source without prior approval of the Parish Board.

The choir by definition, is not an organization of the Church and exists primarily to aid in the worship of God. The contribution of the choir to the Church is under the supervision of the Minister.

7. The Spiritual Care of the Membership

a. Roll of Baptized Adherents

All baptized young persons in the Parish being members of the Church but not in full Communion, have special claims to supervision and care. Their names should be entered

in a roll kept by the Session; and each Elder should endeavour to make himself or herself acquainted with the young in his or her district, and to promote their spiritual welfare.

Young persons who move to another locality, whether for education or any other reason, should be furnished with an introduction to the Minister or Session Clerk of a Parish there. Where such is not given, notice regarding them should be sent to the Minister or Session Clerk.

b. Sunday Schools

It is the duty of the Session to see that parents attend to the godly upbringing of their children, and to aid them in this work by instituting a Sunday School, or some similar provision. These

schools are not intended to relieve parents of the duty of themselves instructing their children in the Scriptures and in Christian truth. All Sunday schools are

under the supervision of the Session, which should take a particular interest in them, and use means to promote their efficiency by visitation and otherwise. The Minister being in charge of Christian instruction is the head of the Sunday school, even where, as is common, another person- acts as superintendent. Teachers should be persons of intelligence and piety, and, if possible, members of the Church, and their appointment should have the concurrence of the Minister and Session.

In order to be an-example to the children as well as for personal instruction, every Parish should maintain a regular adult Sunday School.

c. Bible Classes

For the benefit of the adults, there should also be a Bible class or classes under the charge of the Minister or other qualified persons appointed by him/her.

The overall impact of the Sunday School and the Bible Classes should be not merely an intellectual knowledge of the Scriptures, but a spiritual growth resulting in the member's ability to make responsible moral and ethical decisions, and in his or her being prepared for witness and service in the world.

The Session should appoint a committee to oversee the Sunday School.

8. Mission Work

The formation of a Mission Station rests ordinarily with the Minister and Session of the Parish within whose bounds it is required, it being understood that the Presbytery may at any time take the initiatory steps towards the same. The Station has no separate constitution of its own, but is under the charge and supervision of the Minister and Session of the Parish. It is at the discretion of the Presbytery, if found more convenient, and with the consent of the said Minister and Session to place it under the supervision of another Parish. For further regulations, (see G-11.0404.k.)

Where a church worker, licensed or lay is appointed to a Mission Station, he or she is subject to the authority of the Minister and Session of the bounds, except where the church worker is a Probationer.

The mission of the Church, however, is to be understood as being nationwide and worldwide, and not merely the erection of nearby Mission Stations. (See G-03.0300).

9. Proclamation of Banns

The procedure to be followed in connection with the Proclamation of Banns is found in W.XX.xx. The names, addresses, and designations of persons proclaimed are to be entered in a book kept for that purpose, open to public inspection. This book shall be produced, when required, to the Session and must be submitted annually to the Presbytery for attestation. (See Appendix G-0601 and also Marriage Act of Nigeria, CAP 115, paragraph 24).

10. Use of Church Buildings

As the Minister is allowed, subject to his or her Presbytery, a large discretion in the methods of his or her ministry, the place of worship and other ecclesiastical buildings belonging to the Parish are at his or her disposal for the purposes of his or her office. He or she can use them, and grant permission to use them, for all purposes connected with the Parish or any of its organizations and for purposes which are of a religious, ecclesiastical or charitable nature, though not connected with the Parish, subject only to the control of Presbytery. But he or she cannot use them, or grant permission to use them, for any other purpose not connected with the Parish, without the agreement of the Parish Session.

On the other hand, neither the Session nor the Parish Board can use them, or grant permission to use them, for any purpose whatever without the Minister's consent. Nor can the managers, caretakers or custodians use or grant the use of such buildings for any purpose without the consent of the Minister and Session. For any use made of the Church property the sacred character of the building shall be kept in view.

During a vacancy or the time when a Minister has leave of absence from his or her charge, the Interim Moderator of the Session has the same rights as the stated Minister in the

use of the Church buildings.

For detailed regulations, see G-06.0207 and G-07.0503.g.

11. Stated Annual Meeting

It is the duty of the Session to appoint the day and hour when the Stated Annual Meeting shall be held for the purpose of electing members to the Parish Board. While it is the Session who fixes the date, it is the Board officers who call the meeting to order. The Session shall also appoint the day and hour for a Parish meeting for the election of Elders. (See G-07.0400),

12. Other responsibilities

- a. It is the duty of the Session to see that the membership of the Parish are challenged as to the responsible use of time, talent, and money. The Session, in connection with the Parish Congregational Board, shall develop effective ways for encouraging and gathering the offerings of the people, and assuring that all offerings are distributed to the objects toward which they were contributed.
- b. The Session shall keep the Church aware of its responsibility to the world, the nation, and the community.
- c. The Session shall keep itself aware of its own need of further instruction and guidance in its own work, which may aptly be done by means of Sessional retreats, workshops, and seminars.
- d. The Session shall transmit to the Parish Board all matters appropriate to said Board, including those which may come from a higher court.

Election and Admission of Ruling Elders

(See G-06.0300).

The Relationship of the Session to the Superior Courts of the Church

1. Review by Superior Courts

The Session is subject in all its proceedings to the review and directions of the Presbytery and Superior Courts of the Church, and the Minute Book of the Session is to be submitted to the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly when called for. The Session is charged with carrying out the decisions of the Superior Courts in matters within its province, and furnishing to them such information as they may call for.

2. Access to Superior Courts

The Session has direct access to the Presbytery by means of References (See G-09.0702) and Petitions (See G-09.0705 and D-03 and D-06), and through the Presbytery to the higher courts. The Session may propose to Presbytery such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the Church.

3. Records Required

The following records are ordered to be kept by the session, and must be submitted annually to the Presbytery for attestation.

Record of Proceedings-, ie., Minute Book

Parish Register

Lord's Supper Attendance Roll

The Supplementary Roll

Roll of Baptized Persons not Communicants

Register of Infant Baptisms

Register of Proclamation of Banns

Property Register

4. Triennial Visitation

At the Triennial Visitation of the Parish, the Visiting Committee holds a separate meeting with the Session. (See G-11.0405.C and Appendix G-11.04).

5. Old Records

All records more than fifty years old are to be deposited in the national archives of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. (Min. 1520.4(b)-1965. See G-09.0406.)

At the request of the Session, in writing, and in accordance with the Archives Committee of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, access to such records shall be granted.

6. Property Register

An inventory of all property held by the Parish should be made, and a record entered at the back of the Minute Book of the Session. This record shall be kept up-to-date and shall be reviewed annually by the Session.

When a new Minister is inducted into a vacant charge, a copy of the inventory shall be placed in his or her hands for the purpose of enabling him or her to know that he or she has obtained the custody of all Church properties recorded therein. A duplicate copy shall be submitted to the Clerk of Presbytery.

7. Election of Elder Commissioner to Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly

Each Session shall elect for three years at a time, one of its own number to represent It in Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly. Where a Parish consists of more than one congregation, the one elected Commissioner shall represent all of the congregations. Commissions shall run from 1 January to 31 December and may be presented and sustained

at any meeting of Presbytery. No Commissioner may serve for more than two terms consecutively.

Every Commissioner from a Session to a higher court of the Church shall report back to the Session, for purposes of information, the substance of deliberations and the decisions of the higher court.

For further regulations, see G-11.0202.

8. Overtures

When an overture is transmitted to Presbyteries by the General Assembly under the Barrier Act, they are required to give Sessions within their bounds an opportunity of reporting

their opinion thereon, and especially when instructed to do so.

For transmission of Overtures, see G-09.0706.

9. Reports to Presbytery

Every Session shall present a written report of the affairs of the Parish to each regular meeting of the Presbytery.

10. Representatives of Higher Courts on Official Business

The Session shall be responsible for welcoming representatives of higher bodies on the occasions of their visits. The Parish Board however, shall be responsible for accommodation and feeding when necessary.

11. Judicial Matters

Any member of Session, when called upon, shall serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.

12. Fraternal Relationships

The Session shall maintain fraternal relationships with other Christian bodies at the Parish level, which relationships shall be consistent with the general attitude of the entire Church.

(See G-15.0103)

General

1. Established by the General Assembly

As the general Assembly has the power of uniting, disjoining and erecting Presbyteries at pleasure,- their bounds may be altered or their number increased according to the change of circumstances.

2. Formation of a Presbytery

A Presbytery is formed by the General Assembly, and in the Act forming it the bounds thereof are defined, the designation fixed, and the place and time of the first meeting appointed. The senior Minister present presides at that meeting until the Presbytery has been duly constituted, the roll of members made up, and a Moderator elected.

3: Composition

Presbytery is a corporate expression of the Church consisting of a/ the Churches and Ministers of the Word and Sacrament resident within the Presbytery bounds. When a Presbytery meets, each Parish shall be represented by an Elder duly commissioned by the Session.

In any Presbytery where the number of Ministers exceeds the number of Elder commissioners, Presbytery shall proceed during its first meeting of the calendar year (and preferably in January) to invite certain Congregations or Parishes to elect additional Elder commissioners on some basis acceptable to the Presbytery, but in keeping with the concerns of G-09.0104.

In each Presbytery the minimum number of Ministers shall be seven and the minimum number of Parishes shall likewise be seven. In an isolated area, the General Assembly may form a Presbytery with fewer than these minimums, provided always that there shall be at least four Ministers resident in each Presbytery.

Presbyteries in remote areas may be granted Synodical powers by the General Assembly.
(See G-12.0201 and Appendix G-11:02.)

Membership and Officials

1. Membership

A Presbytery consists of:-

a. Ministers

(1) Ministers included are:

- i. All the Ministers of the Church in charge of Parishes within the bounds of the Presbytery;
- ii. All the Ministers of the Church who are not in charge of Parishes, but who are appointed by or sanctioned by the General Assembly or its Board of Church Ministry to a particular work and who are resident within the bounds of the Presbytery: (Min. 1038-1961).
- iii. All Associate Ministers of the Church resident within the bounds;
- iv. Ministers of other Churches who are appointed to work by the General Assembly or the Board of Church Ministry, and are resident within the bounds of the Presbytery. (See min. 1038-1961).
- v. All honourably retired Ministers, resident within the bounds of the Presbytery.

(2) Criteria for Membership:

A Presbytery shall determine who may be a Minister of the Word, subject to the approval of the Board of Church Ministry, in making this determination, the Presbytery shall be guided by the following criteria:

- i. The ministry of Ministers of the Word and Sacrament shall be in demonstrable conformity with the mission of Gods people in the world as set forth in Holy Scripture, the Church's Creeds and Confessional Statements, and the Practice and Procedure of this Church.
- ii. The ministry shall be one that serves others, aids others, and enables the ministries of others.
- iii. The ministry shall give evidence of theologically informed fidelity to God's Word. This

will normally require the Bachelor of Divinity degree or its equivalent and the completion of the requirements for ordination set forth in G-14.0402 - G-14.0405 inclusive.

- iv. The ministry shall be carried on in accountability for its character and conduct to the Presbytery and to other organizations and agencies, where appropriate
- v. The Ministry shall include responsible participation in the deliberations and work of the Presbytery and in the worship and service of a Parish.

(3) Categories of Membership

i. Active Member

An active member is a Minister of the Word and Sacraments who has been formally admitted to the Presbytery in accordance with G-11.0201 .a.(1) and is now engaged in ministry that complies with all of the criteria of G-11.020.a.(2) without exception. He or she is fully engaged in the work of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, or is officially; posted by the Board of Church Ministry to some ministry outside the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, or is honourably retired (G11.0201.a.(3)iv.) but still serving the Church under "contract appointment'

Ordained Ministers who return to formal training shall be considered active for the duration of their training.

ii. Members-at large

A member-at-large is a Minister of the Word and Sacraments who has been properly admitted to the Presbytery in accordance with G-11.0201 .a.(1), but who for reasons beyond his or her control and without intentional abandonment of the exercise of ministry is no longer engaged in a ministry that fully complies with G-11.0201.a(2). To enter this category, the Minister must make application, and demonstrable family responsibilities shall be the sole reason for acceptance by the

Presbytery. The member- at-large is entitled to participate at meetings, vote, and hold office. His/her status must be reviewed annually.

iii. Ministers in other employment (Ministers on secondment)

A Minister who has previously been admitted to some Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria as an active member, but is now voluntarily

engaged in another occupation that does not comply with all the criteria of

G11.0201 .a.(2).i-iv, (above). He or she is entitled to take part in the meetings of Presbytery to vote or hold office, and to speak except when the matter for

discussion affects him or her. His or her status must be reviewed annually. An equalizing Elder may be counted against the inactive member.

iv. Inactive Members

Inactive Members are those designated so by reason of absence from regular meetings of Presbytery. (See G-11.0404.d.iii)

Ministers under suspension shall be considered inactive.

v. Honourably Retired

The Board of Church Ministry may designate an active Minister as an honourably retired Minister if that Minister is in good and regular standing at the time of his or her retirement. The status of being an honourably retired Minister may be granted because of age, fulfilled tenure of service, or because of physical or mental disability. Eligibility for retirement, except for disability, arrives at the age of sixty. Honourably retired Ministers shall be put on the inactive roll of Presbytery.

Honourably Retired Ministers are regarded as resource members of Presbytery and may speak when invited to do so. They have no vote and no equalizing Elder.

vi. Probationary Ministers

Probationary Ministers (licentiates) are not members of Presbytery until after their ordination. They are responsible to and under the discipline of the Presbytery

of their posting. They are expected to attend every meeting of the Presbytery, to speak when given the floor, but may not vote or hold any office.

b. Elders

Each Parish shall have one representative Elder, whether that Parish is comprised of one Congregation or more than one Congregation, except in the case of linked Parishes. (See G-11.0404.n.iv)

A representative Elder, male or female, must be a person, who has been ordained to the office of Elder in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and who, having been admitted to the Session, has not been deposed, disqualified or otherwise removed from office therein, and who at the time of his or her appointment as commissioner to Presbytery and the higher courts of the Church is an active Elder. (See G-06.0300).

Where two Parishes are linked they shall be represented by but one Elder. (See G-11.04 04 .n. iv.)

A Presbytery shall itself elect such number of Elders as may be required at the time when the Roll is made up to secure that the number of Ministers and Elders in the

Presbytery shall be equal. Such Elders shall be chosen from any Session within the bounds, and before taking their seats they shall produce certificates of bona fide eldership from the Sessions to which they belong.

2. Elder's Commissions

Elder's commissions run from 1 January to 31 December, and may be received at any meeting of Presbytery. (See G-10.0507).

Each Presbytery Clerk shall lodge with the Clerks of Synod and the General Assembly, not later than 1 April, a list of names and addresses of Elders whose commissions have been sustained by the Presbytery, and shall intimate such changes as may occur during the year. The Synod and General Assembly may call for the Productions of commissions if it shall see

cause.

For Form of Commission, see Appendix G-I3.05

3. Roll of Presbytery

Ministers are enrolled and have place according to the seniority of their ordination, regardless of the character or station he or she may hold. Elders follow.

4. Assessors

In special circumstances, the Synod or General Assembly may appoint assessors to act along with the Presbytery, with or without vote as the higher court may decide. The most common use of Assessors is in cases of trial by libel. (See D-XX.xx.)

5. Corresponding Members

A Presbytery may invite any member of another Presbytery present at its meeting to be a corresponding member. A corresponding member has a right to speak, but not vote/on any question before the court.

6. Ministers associated with Presbytery

It is permissible to associate with the Presbytery at any particular meeting - e.g., for ordination or induction -- a Minister present from another Presbytery or from another communion (denomination) whose ordination is recognized by the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

7. Moderator

The Moderator shall be chosen from among the ministerial members on the roll of Presbytery by free election. The Moderator holds office for one year, and is eligible for re-

election. (See G-09.0202.C.)

For the duties of Moderators in general, see 3-09.0202.b.

The Moderator has no deliberative vote, but in cases of equality he or she has a casting vote.

The Moderator is permitted to take part in any discussion while he or she occupies the chair.

The Moderator vacates the chair when he or she is a party in a cause before the Court. (See G-09.0202.d,e.) and an 'interim' Moderator is appointed.

In the absence of the Moderator a previous Moderator and failing such the senior Minister present, takes the chair and constitutes the meeting. Thereafter the Presbytery may appoint any other ministerial member as Moderator pro tempore if it sees cause. But if the Moderator appear at any stage of the proceedings, he or she takes the chair, and the fact is recorded.

(See G-09- 0202.f.)

The Presbytery has the power to appoint a Minister to act as Moderator pro tempore on any particular occasion such as an ordination or induction. (See G-09.0202.f.)

If the Moderator ceases to be a member of Presbytery during his or her term of office, the duties immediately devolve upon the previous Moderator until the next ordinary meeting of Presbytery.

8. Clerk

The Presbytery appoints a Clerk, who holds office during the pleasure of the Presbytery, but not to exceed two consecutive terms of three years at a time (see G-09.0203). On his or her appointment, the oath “de fideli” is administered.

For the duties of the Clerk of Presbytery, see G-09.0203.

In the absence of the Clerk the Presbytery appoints one of its members to act as Clerk pro tempore. The fact of the appointment is entered in the minutes, and the oath de fideli administered. If it can be demonstrated from the minutes of Presbytery that the Clerk pro tempore had at some previous meeting taken the oath de fideli, the oath need not be repeated. For the Form of oath “de fideli,” see Appendix G-13:05.

9. Treasurer

The Presbytery shall appoint a Treasurer to take charge of its funds. In his or her absence, the duty devolves upon the Presbytery Clerk.

10. Other Provisions

In electing members to various Committees and Boards, the Presbytery shall adhere to the principle of participation and representation expressed in G-09.0104 as much as possible, particularly as concerns sex, ethnicity, or age.

The Presbytery may engage the services of administrative staff as needed.

Meetings and Procedure

1. Quorum

A quorum of the Presbytery shall be one-third of the registered (commissions received) members of Presbytery, provided that two of them are Ministers Inducted Into Parishes of the Presbytery, and provided that either the Moderator or Clerk of Presbytery is present. The Presbytery may fix its own quorum at any higher number.

2. Meetings

No meeting of Presbytery can be held while the Synod or the General Assembly is sitting, except when special leave to that effect has been granted by that Synod or the General

Assembly. Apart from this restriction, a Presbytery has the power of meeting when it judges expedient, preferably quarterly. However, the Presbytery must hold Stated (ordinary, regular) meetings not less than three times each calendar year. It is necessary for the Presbytery at

each Stated meeting to resolve when the next Stated Meeting shall be held, to enter the resolution in the minutes, and to cause public intimation of it to be made. If the requirements are neglected by a Presbytery, its powers and functions lapse altogether until revived in a constitutional manner. (See G-11.0304).

a. A Stated Meeting (See G-09.0301 a)

A Stated meeting of Presbytery is one which takes place in consequence of an express adjournment for ordinary business from a previous Stated Meeting or in consequence of an express appointment by the Synod or General Assembly, or in consequence of the lapsed powers and functions of the Presbytery having been revived in a constitutional manner.

b. A Specific Purpose ('in hunc effectum") (See G-09.0301 .b)

An 'in hunc effectum' meeting of Presbytery is a meeting especially appointed by the Presbytery for the transaction of specified business. This kind of meeting requires that the particular business and the time and place of meeting be specified in the minute of the meeting which appointed it, along with the resolution to meet 'in hunc effectum', and that public intimation thereof be made at that meeting. No business can be transacted at an 'in

hunc effectum' meeting except that for which it has been appointed.

c. An Emergency Meeting ("pro re nata") (See G-090301 .c)

A 'pro re nata' meeting is a meeting called during the Interval between one ordinary meeting and another in consequence of some unexpected business having arisen which requires immediate attention. Such a meeting may be called by the Moderator, either on

his or her own motion, or in consequence of a requisition addressed to him or her by at

least-three of the members of the Presbytery. It is required that due notice of the meeting

be given to every member, and that the specific business for which it is called be distinctly stated in the circular calling it, and no other business can be transacted at it. When the meeting takes place, the Moderator must explain his or her reasons 'or calling it, and the

Presbytery must pronounce judgement upon his or her conduct in doing so.

If necessary, the Presbytery may adjourn to the next ordinary meeting, or to a date previous to the next ordinary meeting to complete the business. If the Moderator declines

to call a pro re nata' meeting after a requisition to do so has been addressed to him or her,

the whole circumstances of the case may be brought before the Presbytery at Its next ordinary meeting. In the event of the death or total inability of the Moderator, and until his

or her successor is appointed, his or her rights and duties in connection with calling of 'pro re nata' meetings devolve upon the Clerk.

d. On the Death of a Minister

On the occasion of the death of a Minister who is on the Roll of Presbytery, the Presbytery may meet without formal summons on the day of the funeral and make arrangements for supply of the pulpit and for other necessary matters, unless intimation

otherwise has been duly made to members of Presbytery,

On the death of a retired Minister, or other Minister not holding a pastoral charge, who is a member of the court, the Presbytery Clerk is notified immediately and, in conjunction with the Moderator, makes whatever arrangements circumstances may dictate for the Presbytery to be adequately represented at the funeral.

On the death of a Minister, it is the duty of the Presbytery Clerk to make immediate intimation to the Clerk of the Synod of the bounds and to the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly. White burial arrangements shall be at the pleasure of the family of the

deceased, the conduct of the funeral service shall be by the Presbytery of which the deceased Minister was a member, or in the case of his or her burial being within the

bounds of a different Presbytery than his or her membership, by a joint effort of the two Presbyteries concerned. Representatives of the General Assembly shall be present.

It shall be the custom of this Church that a tribute to the deceased Minister be read at the first Stated meeting of Presbytery after the funeral and that a Minute concerning his or her life's service for the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria be presented for inclusion in the minutes of the next regular meeting of the*Synod and General Assembly.

In cases where the burial of a Minister is fixed for a date later than seven days after the death, the Presbytery and the family in consultation shall not fix the burial for a day which conflicts with any previously fixed meeting of the General Assembly or its Boards.

e. On the Death of Other Church Workers

In case of the death of a Deacon, Deaconess, or Church Sister, the Presbytery shall be responsible for burial arrangements to the extent of purchasing a modest coffin, and conducting the burial service.

3. Places of Meeting

The Presbytery fixes one or more places at which Stated Meetings are held. If it is resolved to hold a meeting at any other place, or to transact ordinary business at meeting appointed on account of special business, care must be taken that sufficient notice of time and place of meeting be given to all the members.

A Presbytery may arrange its meetings according to either of the following methods,

a. Rotational Method -

Meetings of the Presbytery rotate throughout all of the Parishes of the Presbytery. No Parish hosts Presbytery for a second time until all have hosted. The hosting Parish pays for food (and lodging where necessary) while the other Parishes pay for transportation of their commissioners. No Presbytery may quit this system, once started, until all Parishes have hosted an equal number of times.

b. Fixed Location Method

Stated meetings of the Presbytery are held in a fixed location. All Parishes pay an equal amount as determined by Presbytery, into a common expense account. The Treasurer of the Presbytery reimburses each commissioner according to his or her expenditure for travel and pays for the central feeding (and lodging where necessary).

When a Presbytery wishes to conduct a Stated Meeting outside of its own boundaries, it must petition the General Assembly for leave to meet outside its bounds.

4. Presbytery Lapsed

When from any cause the powers and functions of a Presbytery have lapsed, it shall be competent for any three or more of its members to address a requisition to the Moderator failing whom to the Clerk, to call a meeting of the members of Presbytery for the purpose of appointing a day on which the Presbytery shall meet and proceed with ordinary business; and the Moderator or Clerk shall be bound to comply with such a requisition and to call a meeting, to be held on a day not less than ten nor more than fifteen days from the date of receipt of the requisition, by circular letter addressed to every member on the roll of the Presbytery. This meeting shall be considered a 'pro re nata' meeting, at which no business can be transacted except the appointment of a day for an ordinary meeting and any

related emergency matters which may have arisen. At the next ensuing meeting of the Synod, or General Assembly in the

case of Presbyteries With Synodical powers, , the Presbytery shall be bound to explain the causes that have necessitated its adopting its special procedure, and shall be liable to censure if the explanation be unsatisfactory.

5. Opening and Closing

Every meeting of Presbytery must be opened and closed with prayer, and both of these facts must be recorded in the minutes. See also G-09.0301.

6. Minutes

For details regarding the keeping of minutes, see 0-00.0500

Minutes and other official records of the Presbytery are the property of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria and 'the Clerk of Presbytery is responsible for their maintenance and preservation.

7. Order of Business

After the minutes are signed and the roll adjusted, all petitions, references, and papers of any kind to be submitted to the Presbytery, which have been previously put into the hands of the Clerk, are laid on the table. The Clerk intimates all causes and business to be brought before the court, which he or she may do by way of a Provisional Agenda, and the Presbytery determines the order in which they are to be taken up.

Business left over from a previous meeting has ordinarily precedence over new matters. Business appointed for a specified hour must be taken up at the time fixed. However, it is usual to allow any business which may be in progress at such "time fixed" to proceed for not more than thirty minutes.

The Presbytery is free to meet "in camera" by its own resolution. When Presbytery meets

"in camera" only registered commissioners may be present. (See G-11.0319)G.11.03088.

8. Presbytery in Conference (Minutes are not taken)

For greater freedom in the discussion of important questions the Presbytery may resolve to meet in conference. The Presbytery may appoint its Moderator or any other of its members to preside at such a conference or it may authorise the conference to appoint its own , chairman. Resolutions framed and decisions taken at a conference are not recorded in the minutes of the court. The object of a conference is to ripen opinion for subsequent decision or action by the court or to influence public opinion.

9. Presbytery in Committee (Decisions recorded: rules of debate suspended)

For the consideration of any matter involving a variety of details or for other sufficient reasons, the- Presbytery may resolve to meet in committee and appoint a chairman, who may be the Moderator or any other member. When this is done the ordinary rules of debate are understood to be suspended. When resolutions are framed or decisions adopted in this committee, they are reported to the Presbytery when it resumes, and they are usually adopted by the Presbytery without further discussion, the right of dissent, or of dissent and complaint, being reserved.

10. Committees of Presbytery

The Presbytery may appoint committees of its number for the more careful and minute consideration of three portions of business which seem to require such appointment, it being understood that these committees keep regular minutes and are to report to the Presbytery, which will record its own judgment upon the subjects of the several reports. Each committee has a convener who has a casting vote, but no deliberative vote. Committees cannot meet when the Presbytery is sitting except by leave of the court.

11. Motions and Speaking

With a view to a Presbytery coming to a 'decision upon any question, a member of Presbytery must make a motion on the subject.

12. Notice of Motion

It is usual to give notice at a previous meeting of any motion which is to be brought forward at the next meeting. However, in cases in which parties are heard at the bar, no previous notice of motion bearing on the merits of the case can be given.

Where Presbyteries send out to all members notices stating the business to be transacted at the next meeting it is usual to regard a "Notice of Motion" printed on such a "billet" to be adequate even if the member who proposes to move it did not give formal notice at the previous meeting of the court.

13. Rules of Debate

a. Any motion submitted to the Presbytery should be committed to writing and given in to the Clerk.

b. If, after the mover has addressed the Presbytery, the motion be not seconded, it falls to the ground without discussion.

c. When it is duly seconded, it is open either for adoption or for discussion. No alteration

can be made upon it without the leave of the Presbytery, except in the shape of an amendment, or second or third motion, proposed and seconded by other members who object to the first motion as it stands. A motion made and seconded cannot be

withdrawn without the leave of Presbytery.

d. In the discussion on motions a member is-entitled to speak only once, but he or she may ask leave to explain something he or she has said which seems to be misunderstood. Leave is usually granted. The member who introduces the first motion, however, has a right to reply, but is--not permitted to introduce any new matter into his or her reply. After the reply the discussion is held-to be closed, and the vote is taken.

14. Call to Order ("Point of Order")

Any member has a right to call a speaker to order; and immediately on his or her doing so the speaker stops until the question of order is determined. The member calling to order is then allowed to state briefly the grounds, which the call has been made; but no other member is entitled to speak the point of order unless at the request of the Moderator, with whom the

decision rests. Members calling to order unnecessarily are liable to the censure of the Court.

When, the Moderator has announced his or her decision with regard to a point of order, or to the competency of a motion submitted, the Court in all ordinary circumstances accepts that decision as final, but any member is at liberty to dissent and complain against the ruling.

15. Voting

In voting, a Presbytery is guided mainly by the principles noted in the standing orders of the General Assembly. (See Appendix G-13:04.)

16. Intimation of Decisions

Decisions of Presbytery are communicated to those whom they concern either apud acta, that is, verbally to parties present, or by written extracts.

17. Extracts

Parties in cases before the Presbytery are entitled to extracts from the record, but only those parts of the minutes in which the parties themselves are directly concerned. Both parties, those who acquiesce and those who appeal against the ruling, are equally entitled to request extracts.

Other parties requesting extracts must get Presbytery approval for their request before obtaining them; the Clerk of Presbytery is not at liberty to give extracts without the express leave of the Presbytery. See also G.09.0512.

18. Dissents

When a cause has been concluded, the minute adjusted, and the decision announced by the Moderator, it is competent for any member who has voted to enter his or her dissent.

19. An Open Court

The Presbytery is an open court but it may sit in private when it judges it necessary or expedient and must do so when required by the law of the Church, or by instruction of a

superior court e.g., a Presbytery is required to sit in private when-considering reports of the Triennial Visitation of any Parish within its bounds.

The Responsibilities, the Powers and the Functions of the Presbytery

1. Responsibilities (A checklist)

The Presbytery is responsible for the mission and government of the Church throughout its geographical district. It therefore has the responsibility-

- a. To develop strategy for the mission of the Church in its area consistent with G-030000, and especially G-03.0300, including the education of our children.
- b. To coordinate the work of its member Churches, guiding them and mobilizing their strength for the most effective witness to the broader community for which it has responsibility.
- c. To initiate mission through a variety of forms in light of the larger strategy of the Synod and the General Assembly.
- d. To implement consistent with 0-09.0104, the principles of participation and inclusiveness in employing its personnel and in establishing the membership of its committees, councils, boards, and other policymaking and policy-recommending bodies, in order to assure fair representation in its decision-making and in the election of commissioners to Synod and the General Assembly.
- e. To counsel with a Parish where the various constituencies of the Congregation are not represented on a Session.
- f. To provide encouragement, guidance, and resources to its member Churches in the areas of leadership development, Church officer training, worship, nurture, witness, service and Stewardship.
- g. To provide pastoral care for the Churches and members of Presbytery, by visiting Sessions and Ministers on a regular basis (of Triennial Visitation, G11.0405.C.)
- h. To organize new Churches and to receive and unite Churches in consultation with their members, but always with the approval of the General Assembly. (See G-13.0103.r.)

- l. To divide, dismiss, or dissolve Churches in consultation with their members, yet always with the approval of the General Assembly. (See G-13.0103.r.)
- j. To control the location of new Churches and of Churches desiring to move.
- k. To take special oversight of Churches without pastors, including the authority to select, train, examine, and commission lay preachers and may authorize them to administer the Lord's Supper according to G-14.0514.
- l. To receive under its care any candidates for the ministry (See G-149300)
- m. To examine candidates for ordination, particularly in the light of Presbyterian polity. (See G-14.0405 and 0-04.0000.)
- n. To ordain, receive, dismiss, install, remove, and discipline Ministers. (See G.140400 & 0500; G-06.0200; G-110404.g.)
- o. To receive under its care persons preparing for professional service in the Church, and to commission them when appropriate. (Example: the Diaconate.)
- p. To serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.
- q. To assume original jurisdiction in any case in which it determines that a Session cannot exercise its authority.
- r. To maintain regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the Church, including
 - Seeing that the orders of higher governing bodies are observed and carried out.
 - Proposing to the Synod or the General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole Church.
- s. To establish and maintain those ecumenical relationships which will enlarge the life and mission of the Church in its district.
- t. To establish and superintend any agencies necessary for its work. (Example: a budget committee, an evangelism committee etc.)
- u. To review Session minutes and records at least once each year.
- l. To consider and act upon requests from Congregations for permission to take the actions regarding real property as described in section G-08.0000.

2. Powers

It belongs to the Presbytery:-

- a. To see that the Word of God is purely preached within its bounds, the sacraments rightly administered, and discipline maintained;
- b. To maintain and enforce the existing laws and usages of the Church in matters connected with the performance of public worship and the administration of the ordinances; (See W-02.0300.)
- c. To oversee the conduct of Ministers and the discharge of their professional duties, with power to try and sentence them;
- d. To cause ordinances made by the Synod and the General Assembly to be kept and put into execution;
- e. To make rules for good order in the Churches (altering no rule of Synod or General Assembly, and reporting to these higher courts what they have done);
- f. To supervise, examine, and license students of divinity;
- g. To judge appointments other than those made by the General Assembly;
- h. To vindicate the Church's claim to funds or property;
- i. To guard the Church's funds and/or property from injury or improper use;
- j. To consider questions of union and/or readjustment of Congregations;
- k. To fix or alter Parish boundaries, as occasion may arise;

3. Functions: General

The functions of a Presbytery are usually divided into three sections:

- a. The Department of Original Action, -i.e., where the Presbytery's responsibility is not something passed on to it by either a higher or a lower court, but where the Presbytery must take the first and usually some continuing actions. See Section 3, below.
- b. The Department of Review, — i.e.. where the Presbytery reviews decisions and resolutions of Parish and Congregational meetings, and disposes of matters brought to it from a lower court. See Section 4, below.

- c. The Department of the Special Relations of the Presbytery to the Synod and the General Assembly. See Section 5, below.

4. Functions of Presbytery: Department of Original Action

- a. Training for the Ministry {See also G-14.0300 and Appendix G-14:01}

The Presbytery possesses the function in conjunction with the Board of Christian Education of deciding whether applicants are qualified or not to be received into the

number of enrolled students of theology with a view to their becoming preachers of the Gospel, who may be called to the pastoral office. It has also the function of examining

them as to their qualifications and performance at any stage of their progress; of

determining in due time whether or not they may be licensed to preach the Gospel; and of licensing them if they be found qualified. In the exercise of these functions the Presbytery

is regulated by the Board - of Christian Education of the General Assembly.

Presbytery responsibility as follows:

- i. Recommendation:

A recommendation must corrie from a Parish Session. A certificate that he or she is a member of the Church in full communion shall be produced; together with an extract minute from the Session supporting the recommendation. The Presbytery may examine the candidate for intellectual aptitude. The Presbytery, if it be satisfied with his or her character and motives, shall send intimation of his or her candidature to the Board of Church Ministry, along with relevant details.

- ii. Supervision:

During his or her course of theological study a student shall remain under the supervision of the Presbytery which recommended him/her, unless and until he or she be regularly transferred to the supervision of another Presbytery.

- iii. Progress:

The supervising Presbytery shall confer with each student at least once each year on the progress of his or her studies, and shall satisfy itself of his or her fitness to go forward to the office of the Ministry; and the Presbytery shall intimate to the Board of Christian Education that this has been done.

iv. Application for Licence

Each student, during the last six months of his or her theological course shall make application to the Clerk of his or her own Presbytery to be taken on Trials for Licence, and shall intimate the Secretary of the Board of Christian Education of the same.

v. Requirement before Trials for Licensing

No Presbytery shall receive a student on Trials without certification that he or she has satisfied the requirements of the Board of Christian Education, and unless it has satisfied itself as to his or her character. The Presbytery may require testimonials from any other Presbytery within whose bounds; he or she has resided at any time during the proceeding year.

vi. Trials for Licence

The Trials for Licence of students shall be such as the Board of Christian Education of the General Assembly may from time to time prescribe, (see G-14.0402-.0404 inclusive.)

vii. Sustaining of Trials

Besides passing a judgment sustaining or not sustaining each, part of the Trials separately, the Presbytery shall also, after all have been sustained separately, pass a

judgment on the whole be a regular vote, to sustain or not sustain these Trials."

(N.B. The Presbytery shall be "alone" when dealing with students who are proposed for licence, and when discussing their Trials, but the proceedings at the actual licensing shall not be in private. When possible, the Act of Licensing should be performed at a public service in a Church.

viii. Act of Licensing

The Trials having been sustained, the student shall be required to understand and answer the prescribed Questions, and to sign the relative Formula. If it be resolved to proceed to licence, the Moderator shall, after prayer, address the student as follows:

"In the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this Presbytery, we do now licence you to preach the Gospel of the Grace of God, and to exercise your gifts as a Probationer for the Holy Ministry." The Moderator, or another Minister deputed by the Presbytery, shall then address suitable counsels to the licentiate, and conclude with prayer.

In the event that a candidate for licensing refuses to answer any of the prescribed questions, the licensing is withheld.

For the prescribed Questions and Formula, see Appendix G-14:05.

ix. Certificate of Licence

The Clerk of Presbytery shall furnish the licentiate with an extract or certificate of his or her licence. He shall also send the name and address of the licentiate, with the date of his or her licence, to the Board of Church Ministry of the General Assembly.

The Oversight of Licentiates and Ministers without Charge

i. Licentiates

Licentiates remain under the supervision and subject to the authority of the Presbytery which licensed them, till they are regularly transferred to another

Presbytery. A Licentiate removing from the bounds of the Presbytery that licensed him or her or from within which he or she has been residing, and fixing his or her residence within the bounds of another Presbytery, shall present to that Presbytery an extract of his or her licence, and a presbyterial certificate of character from the Presbytery which he or she has left.

ii. Ministers without a Charge

Ministers who are not active members (see G-11.0201.a.[3]) of any Presbytery are subject to the jurisdiction of the Presbytery within whose bounds they reside.

They must within two months of taking up residence produce a certificate of status and a presbyterial certificate. Without these they are not permitted to exercise any function of the ministry.

The Ordination and Induction of a Minister

i. Serving of the Edict

When the Presbytery has fixed a day for the ordination and induction of a probationer, or for the induction of a Minister, it shall appoint an edict to be read to the Congregation on the two Sundays immediately preceding the day fixed for the

induction, which shall be attested each Sunday by the officiating Minister or preacher.

By the edict, public intimation is made that the day and hour named have been appointed for the ordination and induction, or the induction, as the case may be, and that the Presbytery will proceed in due form to the settlement, if no objection to the life or doctrine of the probationer or Minister be previously brought forward and

substantiated. It shall be also intimated that the Presbytery will meet at a time and place appointed for the purpose of receiving and dealing with objections, if any, which meeting may be held on the same day as that fixed for the ordination and/or induction and at such previous hour as may be expedient. (For Forms of Edict and Attestation, see Appendix G.14:05).

ii. Return of the Edict

At the time and place named in the edict, the Presbytery, having been constituted, shall call for 'the return of the edict,' with attestation that it has been duly-served. Any objection at this last stage shall be substantiated immediately to the satisfaction of the Presbytery, in which case proceedings shall be halted. When no objections are given in or when -they cannot be substantiated immediately, the Presbytery shall proceed with the ordination and/or induction, according to appointment.

iii. Ordination and Induction

The Presbytery shall then move to the place of worship where a Minister appointed shall conduct devotional exercises and may preach a discourse suitable to the occasion. The Clerk shall then read a .brief narrative of the cause of the vacancy and the steps taken for the settlement, and the Moderator shall put to the ordinand or Minister to be inducted the questions therein prescribed, addressing him or her by name, These having been satisfactorily answered and the Formula (see Appendix G-14:05) having been signed, the ordinand shall kneel, and the Moderator, by prayer, with the imposition of hands in which all the Ministers present join, shall ordain him or her to the office of the Holy Ministry. Prayer being ended, the Moderator, addressing him/her, shall say:

“I now declare you to have been ordained to the office of the Holy Ministry, and in

the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of the Church, and by authority of this Presbytery, induct you into this charge; and in token thereof we give you the right hand of fellowship”.

The Moderator and other members of Presbytery present shall give to him or her the right hand of fellowship. The Moderator shall then put the prescribed question to the members of the Congregation. (See Appendix G-14:05). Suitable exhortations shall then be addressed to the Minister and afterwards to his or her people. The

Congregation shall then be dismissed and as they retire the members shall have an opportunity of welcoming him or her as their Minister. His/her name shall then be

added to the roll of the Presbytery. Certified intimation of the ordination and induction shall be sent to the Session Clerk to be engrossed in the minutes of the first meeting of Session thereafter.

iv. Induction of Minister already ordained

When one who has been already ordained to the ministry is to be inducted to the pastoral charge of a Congregation, the act of ordination shall not be repeated, and the

words “I now declare you to be ordained to the office of the Holy Ministry, and” in the declaration shall be omitted. In other respects the procedure shall be the same as that in an ordination.

It is the duty of a Presbytery, after inducting to a charge within its bounds, the Minister of a charge under the jurisdiction of another Presbytery from which he or she has been duly translated, to give immediate intimation through its Clerk to that Presbytery that the induction has taken place.

v. Ordination without Induction

Ordination which has no reference to a particular pastoral charge, or to some position or function held to be equivalent to that of a particular pastoral charge shall not be conferred except when expressly authorized by the General Assembly. But the right of a Presbytery to ordain a Probationer as Associate Minister within the bound or

to any other office the duties of which, in the judgement of the Presbytery, may be undertaken more effectively by a person ordained to the ministry, is hereby expressly affirmed. In such cases the serving of an edict may be dispensed with, but public notice of the Presbytery's intention shall be given, that there may be sufficient opportunity to bring forward and substantiate any objection to the life or doctrine of the person proposed to be ordained. As far as the act of ordination is concerned the procedure is as usual, but there is no induction.

Resignation of Office and/or Change of Status

i. Resignation

A Minister's resignation of his or her charge, or of his or her status as a Minister and licentiate, must be offered to his or her Presbytery, and the Presbytery, before accepting it, must (a) ascertain and judge of his or her reasons, and (b) cite the Congregation for its interests. Members of the Congregation may appear.

If the Minister should put it out of the power of the Presbytery to judge of his or her reasons, the Presbytery is absolved and the Minister must take the Consequences.

ii. Non-Parish Employment

Ministers who wish to take up other employment than that of the Parish ministry shall request approval -for the same through the Presbytery from the Board of Church Ministry. (See G-06.0217.)

iii. Unexcused Absence from Meetings of Presbytery

If a Minister shall be absent from the sessions of the Presbytery of which he or she is a member for a period of one year, and shall have neglected to report to that Presbytery concerning his or her residence and work, the Presbytery, after making a

fair effort to find and counsel with the Minister, shall without prejudice to the Minister place his or her name on the inactive roll. .(See G3-11.0201 .a.(3).iv.)

iv. Absconding Minister

If the Minister has absconded and then resigned, and every effort has been made to effect his or her return, he or she should be treated as a deserter, and deposed. (See G-06.0217.)

v. Release from the exercise of Ordained Office

If a Minister in good standing shall make application to the Board of Church Ministry through his or her Presbytery to be released from the exercise of the ordained ministry, the Presbytery shall delete that persons name from the roll of Presbytery and shall give that person a certificate of membership to a particular Church. No judgment of failure is implied in this action.

Release from the exercise of the ordained office of a Minister of the Word and Sacrament requires a discontinuance of al functions of that office. The designations reverend, Minister, pastor or other similar term shall not be used. The status of

a Minister who has been so released shall be the same as any Church member.

Should person released under this Section later desire to be restored to continuing membership in Presbytery, that person shall make application to the board of Church Ministry through a Presbytery. Upon the advice of the Presbytery and the approval of the Board of Church Ministry, and upon the reaffirmation of ordination vows and the resumption of a ministry that qualifies such person for continuing membership in the Presbytery, the person shall be restored to the exercise of the ordained office, but without any reordination.

A tendered resignation may be withdrawn at any time previous to its acceptance.

A resignation may take place on the day on which the resignation is accepted, or at a subsequent date fixed by the Presbytery or other court.

iv. Dual Membership

A Minister who is serving as a Minister in a Church outside of Nigeria or in another Reformed denomination within Nigeria may, with the approval of Presbytery accept ministerial membership in that Church without affecting his or her membership in the Presbytery of this Church.

e. Public Worship

i. Oversight of Worship

It belongs to the Presbytery to regulate matters concerning the performance of public worship and the administration of ordinances, in accordance with the laws and settled usages of the Church; and it is the duty of the Presbytery to enjoin the discontinuance, or prohibit the introduction, of any novel practice or innovation which (a) is inconsistent with the laws and settled usages of the Church particularly as described in the Directory for Worship (b) may be the cause of a division within the Congregation, or (c) is unfit from any cause to be used in the worship of God.

In the matter of worship, the Minister is not in the same relation to the Presbytery as in other matters. The Presbytery itself is the party directly responsible to the Church. The Minister is its executive. From which it follows that an appeal against its order, the Minister and all must abide by the order until final judgment is given.

See also the Directory for Worship, and The Book of Common Order.

ii. Conduct of Public Worship

For the conduct of public worship, only Ministers, Probationers, divinity students, and those specifically designated by the Presbytery may be employed. If any other person be engaged to supply a pulpit, full particulars must be sent to the Presbytery Clerk, who is to report the matter to the Presbytery.

iii. Special Services and Collections

The Presbytery has the power of appointing special diets of worship, and special fast-days and days of thanksgiving. It can also appoint special collections for particular causes to be made in all the Parishes under its jurisdiction. This power, however, requires to be exercised with great discretion, and a Presbytery may be cited by the Synod or the General Assembly for promoting causes which may adversely affect the overall welfare of the Church.

The funds so received in the Parishes must be returned to the Presbytery immediately by that Parish's Elder commissioner to Presbytery, and without any deductions.

iv. General Supervision

Presbyteries have, subject always to the laws of the Church, a duty of supervision in all matters affecting the spiritual welfare of the Church and of its members within their respective bounds, and may give counsel and admonition and make public declarations of opinion on such matters, as they may see cause. In doing so, they must be careful of the rights of Sessions and of individual members of the Church,

Administration of the Sacraments

The Sacraments must be administered only by Ministers of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, but in special circumstances, Ministers of other denominations whose orders are in accordance with the standards of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria may be invited occasionally to administer the Sacraments. The Presbytery Clerk shall be intimated before such an invitation is extended.

Cases of Discipline

For procedure to be followed, see the Book of Discipline.

Ministers of Other Churches

Presbyteries have certain duties in connection with Ministers of other Churches who may apply for admission to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. (See G11.0201 .a(2) and 615.0202 and following paragraphs.)

A Minister in good standing in another Reformed denomination, whether inside or outside of Nigeria, may be accepted as a member of a Presbytery in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, upon presentation of proper credentials and contingent upon his or her service to that Presbytery.

Membership of Ministers from non-Reformed traditions, and Ministers wishing to transfer in permanently shall be accepted only upon the recommendation of a Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria to the Board of Church Ministry, and after satisfactory examination concerning his or her Christian life, Christian faith and views in theology, the Sacraments, and the government of this Church by the Board of Church Ministry, the Board's recommendation to the General Assembly or the General Assembly Executive Committee. When a Minister of another denomination seeks membership in a Presbytery of this Church, that person shall, before being enrolled, furnish the Board of Church Ministry with satisfactory evidence of having been removed from the membership roll of Ministers of any and all other denominations with which the Minister has previously

been associated. Ministers from other denominations may only be received with a view to their active participation in the life and work of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Vacant Charges

I. Presbytery duty

It is the duty of Presbytery to take a special oversight of a Parish in which the pastoral office is vacant; to see that ordinances are duly administered, and that discipline is maintained, and to appoint one of its members as 'Interim Moderator' of the Session, and to carry out the laws of the Church, as to filling up the vacancy.

ii. "Interim" Moderator

The "Interim" Moderator is entitled and called upon, so far as he can do so consistently with his or her duty to his or her own flock, to execute all the spiritual functions that would otherwise belong to the stated pastor. He stands in the same position as the stated Minister in regard to the use of the Church and other ecclesiastical buildings.

j. Regulations for the Filling Up of a Vacant Charge

i. Appointment of an interim Moderator

When a vacancy takes place in a charge, the Presbytery of the bounds shall without delay appoint one of its ministerial members to be the Interim Moderator of the Session, and to preside at all Congregational meetings that may be held in connection with the vacancy, and shall instruct him or her to cause intimation of the vacancy to be made to the Congregation on the first Sunday possible.

The date of the vacancy shall be:

- (a) the day of the death of the inducted Minister; or

- (b) the day of a Minister's induction to another charge; or
- (c) the day appointed by the Presbytery or higher court for the resignation by the Minister of his or her charge; or
- (d) the day on which a Minister is deposed or removed from his or her charge.

interim Notwithstanding the foregoing, it is lawful for the Presbytery to appoint the

Moderator before the date of the vacancy in the following cases

- (a) Where the Minister has been appointed by the General Assembly to another Parish, or
- (b) Where a Minister has intimated to the Presbytery his or her intention to demit office by resignation, or
- (c) Where a Minister has intimated to the Presbytery his or her imminent retirement.

ii. Questions of joining Parishes, dividing Parishes, and/or readjusting Parish boundaries.

When a Charge has become vacant, the Presbytery shall examine the situation with a view to determining in the face of the many obstacles related to readjustment, whether there is adequate reason for change of structure, and shall inform the Synod

of the bounds, of the same. If, in the opinion of the Presbytery, a union or readjustment of agencies should be considered, the Presbytery shall appoint a committee to confer with the Synod and all procedure towards filling the vacancy shall be halted until this question is settled.

When it has been agreed that no question of union or readjustment does arise, the Presbytery shall await action by the Board of Church Ministry of the General Assembly.

k. Formation of a New Congregation (Mission Station)

i. Definition

A Mission Station is an elementary congregation; it has no constitution of its own, but is under the charge and supervision of the parent Congregation. A Mission Station becomes a Congregation by an act of Presbytery, in which the Constituting Covenant

is accepted and congregational status authorized. (See G-07.0200, G-07.0300, and G-10.0308.)

ii. Session Responsibility

The formation of a Mission Station rests ordinarily with the Minister and Session of the Parish within whose bounds it is required, it being understood that the Presbytery may at any time take the initiatory steps toward the same. (See G-10.308.) The Session shall regularly report on the same to the Presbytery.

For steps to be taken, see G-07.0300.

iii. Presbytery Responsibility

The Presbytery shall be aware of all Sessional efforts to form new Congregations. It is at the discretion of the Presbytery, if found more convenient, and with consent of the said Minister and Session to place it under the supervision of another Parish, until such time as it becomes a regular Parish. (See G-07.0302.)

If the area in question be remote from any existing Parish of the Church, the Presbytery may petition the General Assembly to create an Extension Charge, under the supervision of a Synod.

Extension Charges

i. Appointment of Minister

Should the General Assembly resolve to create an Extension Charge, either in response to a petition or on its own initiative, it shall be the duty Of the Presbytery of

the bounds to induct to the Extension Charge, for a term of years, the Minister appointed for the purpose by the General Assembly. (See G-07.0302.)

The Minister so appointed shall have full Ministerial standing in the Presbytery,

and be directly responsible in the usual way to the Presbytery.

ii. Provisional Session

The Presbytery shall also appoint a Provisional Session, consisting of the Minister, who shall be Moderator, and Elders who are, or have been, members of Sessions within the bounds (see G-06.0306), to administer the spiritual affairs of the Extension Charge (see G-07.0302). The Provisional Session is accountable to the Presbytery in every respect, as are other Sessions.

iii. Local Church Board

The temporal affairs shall be managed by a Management Committee composed of the aforesaid Provisional Session, together with a number of members annually elected by the Congregation at a meeting duly called for the purpose. The number of members elected shall not exceed one third the number of the Provisional Session, except that the minimum number of members elected shall be two.

iv. Audit of Accounts

Until a Church extension charge has been erected into a Parish in full status, its accounts require to be examined by auditors appointed by the Presbytery of the bounds.

v. Reports and Review of the Situation

The Presbytery shall report to the annual General Assembly on the progress of the Extension Charge. If after five years as an Extension Charge it has not been erected as a regular charge, it shall be open to the General Assembly, in consultation with the Synod and Presbytery, to review the whole situation.

Erection to Full Parish Status

i. Sanction of General Assembly Required

When the Presbytery judges that the congregation or a Mission Station or an Extension charge should be erected as a regular charge, it shall forward a statement of its opinion through the Synod to the General Assembly, which, alone has the power of sanctioning a new Parish. If the General Assembly concur, the General Assembly shall ratify (or establish) the name of the new Parish, and fix the effective date for its inauguration.

ii. Constitution of a Session

When the General Assembly has sanctioned a new Parish, the Presbytery shall in the case of a Mission Station or Congregation, appoint a Provisional Session consisting of a Ministerial member of Presbytery who shall be Moderator, and Elders who are members of Sessions within the bounds, to arrange for the constitution of a Session by the election of Elders from among the members of the Congregation.

In the case of an Extension Charge, the existing Provisional Session shall arrange for the election of Elders.

iii. Parish Board

In every new charge, a Parish Board for the administration of finance shall be constituted. See G-07.0500.

Changes in Status of Parishes or Congregations

i. Suppression of a charge

A charge may be suppressed when union or readjustment is in view. A necessary condition for the 'suppression' of a charge is that the Presbytery takes the view that union or readjustment is desirable for a Parish. For this reason, any Minister or licentiate appointed to labour there may do so for only a specified amount of time, as determined by the General Assembly. In all other respects the rights of such a Parish remain unimpaired. It retains its Session and Parish Board, is represented by an Elder in Presbytery and the higher courts of the Church, and is liable for

assessments the same as other Parishes.

When a Presbytery determines to suppress a charge due to the inability of the Parish to meet up with their financial obligations to Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly, that all powers of functioning as a Parish are denied until such time as their obligations are met, the Presbytery agrees to restore, and the General Assembly has ratified the Presbytery's action.

ii. Reduction of a Parish, or its Dissolution

(a) Definitions

"Reduction" means reducing the status of a Parish to that of a Congregation or Mission Station. "Dissolution" means the final termination of a Parish as such.

(b) Action by Presbytery

When a Presbytery finds, after full inquiry, that from depopulation of the district where a Parish is situated, or from any other cause, it is not advisable to maintain it, the Presbytery shall consider, in consultation with the Synod and the General Assembly Board of Church Ministry whether it should be continued as a Congregation within another Parish, or should be discontinued, or should be otherwise dealt with, and shall report its opinion to the General Assembly. A copy of such report shall be supplied to the Session of the Parish reported on that it may take all competent steps to be duly represented at the General Assembly when the Presbytery's report is heard.

(c) Action by the Regional Synod

The Regional Synod, after hearing parties, shall decide whether the Parish should or should not be continued, and, in the event of its deciding to discontinue it, shall satisfy itself that suitable provision is made for providing the sacraments and ordinances of the Church to the remaining members of the Church in the

district. The Regional Synod shall report its actions to the General Assembly.

(d) Action by the General Assembly

The General Assembly shall hear the report of the Synod and shall determine to "concur" or not "concur" with the action of the lower courts concerned. If the

General Assembly does 'not concur,' it shall give its reasons and instructions to the Regional Synod concerned. -

(e) If the Parish raises the Question.

Should the question as to whether the Parish such continue as such be first raised within the Parish itself, the matter shall be immediately reported to the Presbytery through the Session. The Presbytery shall without delay inquire into the whole circumstances of the Parish, meeting with the Minister, the office-bearers, and the Parish membership. It shall formulate its opinion on the case, and report the case along with its opinion thereon to the Synod and to the General Assembly.

(f) Destination of Property

The destination of the property shall be settled before the dissolution of the Parish is finally determined, subject to all General Assembly regulations concerning property. (See G-08.0000)

iii. Joining of Parishes

A union of parishes within the bounds may be effected by the Presbytery, only after the concurrence of the Synod and the General Assembly, who shall appoint the official name, appoint the effective date. The Presbytery shall be responsible for the election of Elders. The Minister, even though he or she was Minister of one of the previous Parishes, shall be inducted into the newly created Parish. The records of both previous Parishes shall be permanently kept.

iv. Linking of Parishes

The linking” of Parishes is to be differentiated from the joining of Parishes. In “joining,” two Parishes become one permanent Parish. In 'linking” two or more Parishes remain separate Parishes with separate Sessions and Parish Boards, etc., but are considered as one pastoral charge. The Minister is shared by the linked Parishes, inducted into each, and an appropriate arrangement is made for services and salary and housing. All the Church buildings of both Parishes shall continue in regular use.

The Minister of linked Parishes has only one vote in the courts of the Church. The two Sessions shall meet as one annually to elect an Elder commissioner to represent them both in all the courts of the Church. (See G-10.0507 and G-11.0201.b).

Linked Parishes are not considered to be an ideal situation, but are tolerated in the face of other handicaps such as shortage of Ministers, insufficient financial resources, etc.

Parishes may only be linked by a decision of the General Assembly upon recommendation of the Presbytery of the bounds and the Synod of the bounds.

Linking of Parishes may not last more than three years without being reconsidered by the Presbytery, who may either agree to extend the length of time by another two years before reconsideration, or who may compel some other arrangement.

Presbytery must-report its action immediately to the Regional Synod and any action must be ratified by the General Assembly.

Construction of Buildings and/or Other Structures

When a Congregation or Parish proposes either to build or to remodel any permanent building, whether for worship, manse, or any other purpose, the approval of the Presbytery of the bounds and the approval of the Board of Church Property Development are to be obtained before any construction is started.

The Board of Church Property Development shall grant approval when the

architectural plans indicate that the structure is architecturally Sound and suitable, that the site is suitable, and that the estimated cost of construction is reasonable for the proposed plans. (See G-08.0700)

The Presbytery shall be responsible to ensure that the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria holds proper title to the land before construction, that all rents and fees pertaining thereto have been completely paid, and that all local building codes and other restrictions have been met.

The Parish, or other body of the Church proposing the structure, shall also submit to the Presbytery a statement of the provision made for defraying the cost, or of the means by which it is expected that the liabilities incurred will be met; and the Presbytery shall not give its sanction to the commencement of building operations until it is satisfied that such Parish or other body have made sufficient provision to defray the cost of the building. The Presbytery shall give its concurrence in writing.

Care of Church Property

Inasmuch as the care of Church property is a visible sign of the life of a Parish, the Presbytery shall ensure that all Church property within its bounds is kept in proper care

and order, including proper maintenance of the building(s) structurally, proper cleanliness of the building(s) and surrounding environment, and the presence of only those items of equipment such as will enhance the worship of God, or facilitate the purposes for which the building was erected.

5. Function, of Presbytery: Department of Review

a. Right of Review

The Presbytery's right of review extends not only to decisions and resolutions of Parish meetings, and the disposal of matters brought before it by reference, petition, protest and appeal, or dissent and complaint, but also to various other matters.

As to the right of review of decisions of Parish meetings, see G-04.0301.f and G-09.0103. As to the right of review on matters by reference, petition, protest and appeal, or dissent and complaint see G-09.0702-.0705 inclusive, and G-09.0707.

b. Records to be Examined

The presbytery exercises the right of review through the periodic examination of the records of Session and Parish Boards. Presbyteries are instructed to see that the Church Registers, the Roll of Communicants, Session Records, Roll of Baptized Persons not Communicants, Baptismal Registers, Register of Banns and Property Registers, plus audited Statement of Accounts of all Parishes annually. The said records are to be

brought to the Presbytery, preferably at the meeting immediately following the Stated Annual Meetings of the Parishes (see G-07.0403), for attestation by the Presbytery or a Committee thereof. After such examination, the Presbytery must come to a finding regarding them.

All Records and Record Books are the property of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. Every Parish, upon completing a record book and wishing to open another record book, must first of all request permission for the same from the Presbytery.

i. For duties of examining committees and attestation, see Appendix G-11:04.

ii. Records Contrary to Standard

The Presbytery may find that certain procedure of a Session or Parish board has been ultra vires, or contrary to Acts of the General Assembly, and may declare it to be null and void, or may order the minutes to be rescinded. Before doing so, it must summon the Session or the Parish Board to the bar and hear them as parties. The Presbytery has no power of judgment with respect to those details of practical procedure in the Session or Parish Board which are within the province of that court or Board and which are consistent with the Acts of the General Assembly.

iii. Abstract of Financial Accounts

Every Parish shall submit in triplicate an abstract of the Parish financial

accounts to the Presbytery for attestation. If found to be satisfactory one copy shall remain in the permanent file of Presbytery, and the remaining two sent to the Synod and the General Assembly respectively.

c. Triennial Visitation of Parishes and Congregations

i. Frequency

Every Parish of Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall be visited at least once in three years by a Committee of Presbytery. A special visitation may be made at any time when deemed necessary or expedient.

To give consistency to the exercise, only Ministers with not less than five years pastoral experience should be engaged.

ii. Rota

The designated years for visitation shall be 1990, '93, '96, '99, 2002, '05, 08, 11, etc. It is not intended that the visitation exercise be spread over the entire year, but should be completed during only a few month's time. Every Presbytery shall prepare a rota whereby all the Parishes may be visited.

iii. Objectives of the Triennial Visitation:

- (a) To demonstrate, at a local level, the unity of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria;
- (b) To strengthen the hands of the Minister, Session, office-bearers and member;
- (c) To advise them should anything appear to be unsatisfactory in the state of the Parish or not in accord with Church law and order;
- (d) In general, to give counsel and encouragement as may be suitable to the circumstances of the case.

iv. Composition of Visitation Committee

A Committee may consist of four or more persons, but not less than one Minister and one Elder among them.

v. Schedule for Inquiry

Guidelines and a schedule of subjects of inquiry may be found in Appendix G-11:-01, and shall be used in connection with the visitation, but the Committee of Presbytery may use their discretion in inquiring into other matters relevant to the state of the Parish.

vi. Announcement of Arrival

The Clerk of Presbytery or the convener of the Visitation Committee, after consultation with the Minister of the Parish, shall give one month's notice of the date of visitation, which should be intimated to the Parish at public worship on two Sundays before the date of visitation. He or she shall at the same time send copies of the Visitation Schedule to the Minister and the Session Clerk. On receiving confirmation from the Minister, (which must be sent promptly), the Convenor must give ample warning to his or her fellow delegates regarding the place and time for the Committee to assemble.

vii. Separate Meetings

The Committee shall hold separate meetings with the Minister; the Session, and the Parish Board (or Management Committee, if there is no Parish Board). The Minister is entitled to be present at all these meetings. The Convener of the Visitation Committee shall take the chair at all of the aforementioned meetings.

viii. Public Appearances

It is desirable that the Minister on the Visitation Committee conduct public worship on the Lord's Day in connection with the visitation, or that he or she address the Parish on a week-day where such may be found more convenient. He/she shall address to the Parish such counsels as may be considered appropriate and helpful for the promotion of Christian work and fellowship. Where possible the Minister of the Parish shall be present. Bible Classes, Sunday Schools, and similar organizations shall also be visited if possible.

ix. Report of the Visitation Committee

After the visitation, a report must be prepared by the Convener of the visitation committee, and shown to the other delegates before being presented to the

Presbytery. The Presbytery shall in private take such report into its deliberate and careful consideration, and record in the Presbytery books its finding, along with such explanations or instructions as the Presbytery may deem proper. The Committee shall communicate its report or proposed finding to the Session of the Parish concerned, in good enough time so that the Session, the Minister, or any other interested party having an interest may claim to be heard by the Presbytery when the report is dealt with.

The report should be submitted in triplicate so that one copy may be filed by the Presbytery; one held by the Convener; and one supplied to the Session of the Parish visited (this copy to be produced, three years later, on the occasion of the next

Triennial Visitation).

x. Follow-up

Not later than six months after it has communicated its findings on the Visitation Committees Report, the Presbytery shall inquire of each Parish visited to what extend

the recommendations and instruction have been implemented.

xi. Report to the Synod of the Bounds

Every Presbytery shall report to the Synod of the bounds the result of each visitation. In the event of the Presbytery finding itself unable to express satisfaction with the state of any Parish, it shall be the duty of the Synod to appoint a Committee to make further inquiry in consultation with the Presbytery, and to endeavour to remedy what is deemed to be unsatisfactory. If, after this further visitation, it be found that matters are still unsatisfactory, the Synod shall forward a report to the General Assembly through the General Assembly Executive Committee, and the General Assembly may take such further action as it its wisdom may appear best.

Rules Regarding Congregations and/or Parishes In An Unsatisfactory State

i. Special Visitation Committee formed (Step 1)

If it should come to the knowledge of a Presbytery that the state of any Congregation or Parish within the bounds is not considered to be satisfactory, either through a petition from office-bearers and/or members of the Congregation or Parish concerned, or through statements made by the Minister of the Parish, or through Triennial Visitation report, or through a remit from a higher court of the Church, or through reports which the Presbytery deems to be such as require investigation, it shall be the duty of the Presbytery to appoint a Special Committee, and to remit to such Committee the responsibility of inquiring into the situation authorizing them to give counsel and advice on anything which may appear to be unsatisfactory, and the said Committee to report back to the Presbytery on their inquiry and endeavours.

Statement to be Recorded (Step 2)

If, upon the report of such Committee, the Presbytery finds that the state of the Parish or Congregation is unsatisfactory and that endeavours to effect a remedy are unavailing or have failed, the Presbytery shall record the said report and its own findings thereon in a record apart.

iii. Records Apart (Step 3)

If the Presbytery be also of the opinion that there are prima facie grounds for concluding that the unsatisfactory state of the Parish or Congregation may be due (a) wholly or substantially to defects or errors personal to the Minister, or (b) wholly or partly to the fault of any office-bearers or members specified, it shall record also its findings on the said prima facie grounds, along with the report and findings referred to above in the record apart. All further findings of the Presbytery in the matter shall likewise be recorded in the record apart.

iv. Failure due to a Minister (Step 4)

(a) Where the Presbytery is of opinion that there are prima facie grounds for concluding that the unsatisfactory state of the Parish may be due wholly or substantially to defect or errors personal to the Minister, a copy of the Special Committee's report and of the Presbytery's findings, certified by the Clerk of Presbytery, shall be furnished to the Minister, with a citation from the Presbytery to him or her to attend a meeting, not less than one month thereafter, at which the

subject matter thereof is to be further considered by the Presbytery. Intimation of the said meeting shall also be given to such other parties as the Presbytery may think proper.

(b) At the said or a subsequent meeting, the Presbytery shall hear any statement which the Minister may make, and receive and record any relevant matter which

he or she may tender to be recorded on his or her behalf. It shall also be competent for the Presbytery to hear statements from persons in the communion of the Church, who are or have been members of the Parish, bearing on the question whether the existing state of the Parish is attributable wholly or substantially to defects or errors personal to the Minister. If the Presbytery be constrained to conclude that the ends of the ministry are not being served and that this state of matters is likely to continue, and further, that the unsatisfactory state of the Parish is due, either wholly or substantially, to defects or errors personal to the Minister, it shall pronounce findings to that effect and the same shall be recorded in the record apart, together with a statement of the grounds thereof. The said findings shall be in numbered paragraphs and shall specify the said defects or errors.

- © Thereupon the Presbytery shall report specially to the Board of Church Ministry all the circumstances of the cases, and seek its authority to dissolve the pastoral tie and declare the charge vacant.
- (d) The procedure and final judgement of the Presbytery shall be subject to appeal and complaint in ordinary form to the Synod; but, when the Presbytery has taken the steps authorized in Step 2 (above), it shall proceed in face of all appeals until it has disposed of all questions arising out of Steps 2,3 and 4 (above).

Failure due to Office-bearers or Members (Step 5)

- (a) Where the Presbytery is of the opinion that there are prima facie (at first sight) grounds for concluding that the unsatisfactory state of the Parish may be due wholly or partly to the fault of any office bearers or members specified, a copy of the Special Committee's report and of the Presbytery's findings, certified by the

Clerk of Presbytery, shall be furnished to the parties specified, with a citation from the Presbytery to them to attend a meeting, not less than one month thereafter, at which the subject matter thereof is to be further considered by the Presbytery. Intimation of the said meeting shall also be given to such other parties as the Presbytery may think proper.

- (b) At the said or a subsequent meeting, the Presbytery shall proceed in the same manner, *mutatis mutandis* (similarity), as in the case of a Minister; If the Presbytery be constrained to conclude that the unsatisfactory state of the Parish is due, either wholly or partly, to the fault of any one or more office -bearer or members specified, it shall pronounce findings to that effect and the same shall be recorded in the record apart, together with a statement of the grounds thereof. The said findings shall be in numbered paragraphs and shall specify the said fault The Presbytery may in such case remove from office, or order transference certificates to be given, or suspend from Church membership, as the justice of the case and the interest of the Parish may require.

("Mutatis mutandis" means literally "the things being changed that require to be so to suit a new case.")

Appeal

The procedure, findings, and final judgment of the Presbytery, except a judgment that an office-bearer be removed from office, or that a transference certificate be given to an office-bearer or member, or that an office-bearer or member shall be suspended from Church membership, shall be subject to appeal or complaint only to

the Synod. Where the Presbytery has made findings in terms of Step 2 (above), it shall thereafter proceed in face of all appeals or complaints until it has disposed of all question which may arise under Steps 2, 3, and 5 (above) except that where the

Presbytery has pronounced a final judgment involving any of the penalties referred to in Step 5 (b) (above), the appeal or complaint against the said judgment shall be taken direct to the General Assembly, and shall suspend the operation of the said penalties till the appeal or complaint has been disposed of. An appeal or complaint to the Synod shall entitle the appellant or complainer to submit for review any of the prior findings or procedure of the Presbytery.

vii. Limit of Application

No case shall be dealt with under these rules which involves the moral character or doctrinal view of any Minister, office-bearer, or member of the Church.

This Act shall not apply to the case of insanity in a Minister.

viii. Privacy Required

All procedure in Presbytery under this Act shall be taken in private.

6. Superior courts

a. Name of Presbytery

A Presbytery can make no change in its name without leave of the Regional Synod and General Assembly.

b. Meeting during Higher Courts of the Church

If a Presbytery wishes to meet during the sittings of the Regional Synod or General Assembly, it must obtain the leave of the Synod or General Assembly to do so. As all members are presumed to be present at the higher court, an announcement from the

chair of the higher court shall be sufficient.

c. Responsibility to Synod as to Record

The Presbytery is responsible to the Synod for the correctness and accuracy of the permanent record of its proceedings. The minute-book must be submitted to the Synod

when called for, which should be at least once a year. It is competent for the Synod, on examination of the Presbytery records, to take notice of any irregularity, omission, or error, not only in the language or form, but also in the substance of the minutes, and to exercise

their powers of review in relation to the matter.

The Presbyteries shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings which shall be submitted at least once each year to a committee of the General Assembly for its general review and control. It shall report to the Synod and General Assembly every year the condition and progress of the Church within its bounds during the year and all important changes which have taken place including ordinations; the receiving, dismissing, and deaths of Ministers; and the organizing, uniting, dividing, or dissolving of Congregations and/or Parishes.

The Presbyteries shall send annually to the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly lists of its Ministers and Churches and statistical and other information through the

Regional Synod according to the requirements of the General Assembly.

d. Collections appointed by the General Assembly

It is the duty of Presbyteries to observe carefully the instructions of the General Assembly and/or the Regional Synod respecting the various collections appointed and operations Instituted by the General Assembly, and carried out by means of Boards of General Assembly or otherwise, for the welfare of the Church and the furtherance of the

Gospel at home and abroad.

e. No Interference With Another Presbytery

A Presbytery cannot interfere with or review the procedure of another Presbytery. It may protest to the other Presbytery, and may endeavour by frank and friendly

representation to have the matter put right. Where this is ineffectual, the Presbytery which feels aggrieved can bring the matter by petition for redress before the Synod of the

bounds, when both Presbyteries belong to the same Synod. When they belong to different Synods, the petition must be addressed to the General Assembly.

f. Approval of Overtures Under the Barrier Act

It is the right and duty of every Presbytery to take its part in the legislation of the Church, by approving or disapproving of overtures transmitted by the General Assembly, with a view to such overtures being passed into standing laws.

The Presbytery shall fix a day for the consideration of such overtures, the Sessions of the Presbytery having previously had time for reflection. If it be thought desirable, a

committee may in the first instance be appointed to consider the overture, and to report.

Presbyteries must either approve or disapprove of the overture. Whether a Presbytery approve or disapprove it is at liberty to make remarks. These remarks should be sent on a separate sheet. If such remarks in no way modify the substance, sense, or intention of the overture, it is competent for the General Assembly, if they see cause, to adopt the

substance of them. A form to be used by Presbytery Clerks in making returns is sent out by the Principal Clerk of General Assembly, and all such returns must be transmitted to

the Principal Clerk of General Assembly not later than six months after the close of General Assembly, or such other date as the General Assembly may appoint. The number of members voting for approval or disapproval must be given.

g. Overtures from Presbyteries

Presbyteries are at liberty to overture the Synod, or the General Assembly through the Synod. In case of urgency, when no meeting of Synod intervenes, a Presbytery may transmit an overture to the General Assembly direct. For procedure, see G-09.0706.f.

Stated Annual Duties of Presbyteries

- a. To call for and examine the books of all Sessions and Parish Boards.

- b. To produce annually to the Synod of the bounds:-
 - i. the records of the Presbytery;
 - ii. a report on the Triennial Visitation of Parishes and Congregations;
 - iii. a report on the care of Church property within the bounds.
- c. Dated Duties: Jan, Feb, Mar, etc.

DETAILS YET TO COME

Function

“The Regional Synod shall act as an appeal court over the Presbyteries within its bounds. It may consider matters of local concern to the Church in its own area but shall refer all major matters to the General Assembly for decision and action.” (Constitution, paragraph 12.)

Constitution and Officials

1. Formation

The General Assembly determines the constituent Presbyteries of each Regional Synod and approve the name thereof. Not less than three Presbyteries shall constitute a Regional Synod. By a direct act of the General Assembly and due to reasons of geographical distance, certain Presbyteries may be granted Synodical powers.

2. Membership

A Regional Synod consists of:—

- a. All persons, both Ministers and Elder commissioners who are on the rolls of the several Presbyteries within the region, and who are accredited as commissioners to the General Assembly, and

- b. Any corresponding members, both Ministers and Elders, as may have been appointed and commissioned by neighbouring Regional Synods.

A Regional Synod may associate with itself in its deliberations, pro tempore, any Minister who is present, but such Ministers cannot vote upon any question before the Court. Ministers and Elders from other Regional Synods may be added to the Regional Synod by the General Assembly as assessors for special purposes. With reference to these purposes they have the rights of members during their appointment.

3. Elder's Commission

The commission from a Parish Session, which constitutes an Elder commissioner a member of Presbytery, constitutes him or her also a member of the Regional Synod during the period for which that commission is valid. A commissioner cannot be allowed to take his or her seat in the Synod unless his or her name appears in the roll of his or her Presbytery. Presbytery Clerks must send a list of the names and addresses of Elders whose commissions have been sustained by the Presbytery to both the Regional Synod and the General Assembly office. The Regional Synod may call for the production of commissions, if it sees cause.

4. Corresponding Members

At each meeting, Regional Synods may appoint corresponding members, a Minister and an Elder, to each neighbouring Synod. They can send only such as are in their own bounds. These corresponding members shall receive letters of commission from their own Regional Synod, which, on being presented and sustained, shall constitute them members of the Regional Synod to which they have been appointed for the period during which their commissions extend. Their connection with the business of Synod ceases at its rising.

5. Receiving of Commissions

Commissions to Elders, or to corresponding members may be received at any meeting of the Regional Synod.

It is incompetent for a Regional Synod to appoint "correspondent members" to act with a

Presbytery.

6. Officers

The Moderator shall be chosen from among the ministerial members of the court in good standing by free election. He or she shall hold office for at least a year and shall be eligible for re-election. During his or her term of office he or she should visit the various districts within the bounds of the Regional Synod, with a view to giving advice or stimulating interest in the work of the Church. A Minister with less than five year's experience since his or her ordination is ineligible for election.

Each Regional Synod appoints, a Clerk who sits at the pleasure of the Synod, but not to exceed two consecutive terms of three years, each (or a total of six consecutive years).

(See G-9.0203.)

Each Regional Synod may appoint a Treasurer and/or Financial Secretary as it sees fit.

7. Regional Synod Fund

Regional Synods: are entitled to assess the Parishes under their jurisdiction in order to provide such funds as are necessary for carrying on their work. This may be done by assessment on may be left until the opening of the Synod when the Clerk lays all causes and papers before the Synod itself. In the case of (1) and (2) the Regional Synod shall be informed of the proposed order of business, and if it so desires, may changed the proposed order to its own liking.

Every Presbytery reports to the Regional Synod of the bounds the result of each visitation. In the event of the Presbytery finding itself unable to express satisfaction with the state of any Parish and has followed the "Rules Regarding Congregations and/or Parishes in an Unsatisfactory State" as found in G-1 1.0405.d., it is then the duty of the Regional Synod to appoint a Committee to make further inquiry in conjunction with the Presbytery, and to endeavour to remedy what is deemed to be unsatisfactory. If, after this further visitation, it be Presbyteries which can then recover the amount due to the Regional Synod from each Parish within their own bounds.

However, no assessments may be made by the Regional Synod without prior approval from the Board of Finance of the General Assembly as to the amount of assessment. In all Parishes, the priority of expenditure shall remain in the following order:

1. All salaries, accommodation, and pension dues.
2. All assessments of General Assembly.
3. Synod and Presbytery assessments.

(See G-07.0503.b.)

Other special drives, etc., by the Regional Synod, for funds or in kind, may similarly be allowed, but only after prior approval of the Board of Finance of the General Assembly.

Meetings and Procedure

1. Meetings

a. Stated Meetings

A Stated Meeting of the Regional Synod is held either under an Act of the General Assembly, or upon regular adjournments from the proceeding ordinary meeting. Each Regional Synod meets annually, or at least biennially (once in 2 years) at such centres within its bounds as it may from time to time determine. Notice of meeting shall be given not less than three months in advance. (See G-09.0301.a.)

b. A Specific Purpose (In hunc effectum) Meeting

A Regional Synod may appoint a meeting in hunc effectum. The regulations for such meetings are the same as in the case of Presbyteries. (See G09.0301 .b.; (G-11.0302).

c. An Emergency (Pro re nata) Meeting

During the interval between meetings of the Regional Synod the Moderator of the Regional Synod has the power, either on his or her own authority or on requisition from at least a quorum of members, to call a meeting pro re nata, to dispose of any business

which has occurred, and which seems to require immediate attention. The first business after the Synod is constituted and the roll adjusted is the approval or disapproval of the Moderator's action in calling the meeting. No other business is to be entered upon except the particular business for which the meeting has been convened. The meeting is called by circular stating the special business, signed by the Moderator and the Clerk, addressed to every Minister of the Regional Synod, and delivered or despatched through the post office in due time before the date fixed for the meeting. On receiving such notice, it is the duty of each Minister to intimate the meeting to the member or members of his or her Session who are members of the Regional Synod. The Presbytery Clerk gives notice to the representative Elders of vacant Parishes. If the Moderator declines to call a pro re nata meeting after receiving a requisition to do so, the whole circumstances of the case may be brought before the Regional Synod at its next ordinary meeting. In the event of the Moderator having ceased to be a member of the court, his or her duties and responsibilities in relation to convening a meeting pro re nata devolve upon the Clerk.

(See G-09.0301.c.)

2. Quorum .

A quorum shall be fifteen commissioners, eight of whom shall be Ministers and seven of whom shall be Elders representing at least three Presbyteries, except in special area Synods, where a quorum shall include not less than one-half of the Parish Ministers and an equal number of Elder commissioners, and who represent all Presbyteries in the special area Synod.

3. Regional Synod Constituted

A quorum of members being assembled, the Moderator constitutes the Regional Synod with prayer. In the event of the Moderator being absent or having ceased to be a member of the court, the next preceeding Moderator who is present, or failing the presence of any Moderator of the Regional Synod, the senior Minister (according to date of ordination) present constitutes the Synod.

4. Opening Procedures

The first act of the Regional Synod after being constituted is to adjust its roll. This may be conveniently done by keeping the roll by itself and making the required changes on it—

generally accomplished beforehand by the Clerk. The names of those present are usually recorded in a separate register and not entered in the minutes. Thereafter the Moderator is

elected if his or her predecessor's term of office has expired, and the minutes of the last meeting of the Regional Synod read.

5. An Open Court

The Regional Synod is an open court, but may meet in private when it judges it necessary or expedient.

6. Order of Business

The order of business for a regular meeting of the Regional Synod may be organized in any of three ways, which ever is more acceptable to the Synod. (1) it may be left to the Moderator and Clerk to arrange, or (2) it may be assigned to a Business Committee of Synod to arrange, or (3) if found that matters are still unsatisfactory, the Synod may take remedial action, and forward a report to the General Assembly, and the General Assembly may take such further action as may appear best.

Examination of Presbytery records are usually called for at the first diet. A Presbytery whose record is not produced is liable to censure, unless a satisfactory explanation is given. A committee is usually appointed to examine the records produced and to report at the next diet.

It is the duty of each Regional Synod annually and immediately after the visitation of Presbytery records to prepare and transmit to the General Assembly a return on Presbyterial visitation of Parishes. A standard form is provided for that purpose.

When there is more than one diet, intimation is publicly made, before each adjournment, of the time at which the next diet will commence.

All business to be brought before the Regional Synod should be intimated to the Synod

Clerk, and all papers and documents intended for transmission to the Synod should be in his or her hands not less than seven days before the date fixed for the meeting of the Regional Synod. No papers are received at a later date, unless reasons satisfactory to the court be given for the delay. The decision as to whether or not the papers in any cases coming before a Synod should be printed rests with the Regional Synod Clerk.

At the conclusion of its business the Regional Synod adjourns to meet at a stated time and place, which being publicly intimated the meeting is closed with prayer.

Every diet of Regional Synod is both opened and closed with prayer, and the fact so stated in the minutes of the Synod.

7. Records

The Regional Synod is responsible to the General Assembly for the keeping of its permanent record. It must be sent up to the General Assembly for examination and attestation, and should be in the hands of the Clerk of the General Assembly not later than the first day of the General Assembly. Additional copies for the General Assembly files must be submitted as soon as possible after each meeting of the Synod.

Powers and Functions

1. Powers and Function,

The Regional Synod cannot legislate; but it can give orders, having “power to handle, order, and redress all things omitted or done amiss” in the courts below that come regularly before it, brought up by those courts, or parties, or Presbytery records. A Synod cannot review the conduct of a Presbytery respecting the attestation of a commission to the General Assembly; whatever is alleged to affect the validity of a commission cannot be judged of by a court inferior to that which the commission is addressed.

2. Cases with which the Regional Synod Deals

a. General supervision of the interests of the church within its bounds, and promotion of the

life of the Church, especially in cooperation with the programmes authorized by the General Assembly, the General Assembly Executive Committee, or Boards of the General Assembly.

b. Supervision of Presbytery Records. (See GA 11.0406.C.)

The Regional Synod must annually call for and examine the minute book of every Presbytery within its bounds. It is competent for the Regional Synod, on examination of the records, to take notice of any irregularity, omission, or error, not only in the language or form but also in the substance of the minutes, and to exercise its powers of review thereanent, but in this examination it is not entitled to order up other papers for examination; and while it must have respect to the proceedings recorded, and is entitled to censure them, it is not to revive a question affecting a private party, the decision of which has become final.

c. Triennial Visitation Reports

The Regional Synod receives and judges reports of the Triennial visitation of Parishes by Presbyteries. (See GA 1.0405.c.ix)

d. Special visitation of Parishes

The Regional Synod has power, in consultation with the Presbytery within whose bounds the Parish is situated, to visit any Congregation when it is deemed expedient to do so from what appears in visitation reports or in Presbytery minutes, or from information reported by the Moderator or submitted in writing by another member of Synod, who is not a member of the Presbytery concerned.

e. Schemes of the Church

The Regional Synod exercises supervision over Presbyteries in connection with the Schemes of the Church.

f. Delimitation of areas

In any matter affecting delimitation of areas brought before the Regional Synod by motion or complaint of any member of Presbytery, the judgment of the Synod, subject to ratification by the General Assembly, is final.

g. Overtures

The Regional Synod shall transmit to the General Assembly any overtures originating in the Synod itself or transmitted from Presbyteries. Overtures from Presbyteries may be transmitted with or without comment, with approval or with disapproval. A Regional Synod may not refuse to transmit an overture which is presented in proper form.

h. Appeals and Complaints

The Regional Synod may judge appeals and complaints from Presbyteries in cases of doctrine, worship, or censure of a Minister or other office-bearer, or in cases regarding the licensing of students, or in cases of union, readjustment and other changes in the status

of Parishes. However, in every case the right of appeal to the General Assembly shall be affirmed.

i. Combining, dividing, and dissolution of Parishes

The Regional Synod may make recommendation to the General Assembly for a final decision.

j. Other Duties

The Regional Synod shall effect any other duty laid upon it by the General Assembly.

3. Responsibilities of the Regional Synod:

The Regional Synod is the intermediate governmental unit responsible for the mission of the Church throughout its region. The Regional Synod may initiate mission within its bounds after clearance from the General Assembly, and must ensure that mission as prescribed by the General Assembly and its Boards is earned out, especially as described in G-03. Should a Regional Synod wish to initiate mission outside its bounds, an initial and formal clearance must be sought from the General Assembly and regular progress reports presented to the General Assembly.

- a. To develop, in conjunction with its Presbyteries, and under the guidance of the General Assembly, a broad strategy for the mission of the Church within its bounds in accordance with G-03.0000, including the establishment of educational institutions.
- b. To facilitate communication between its Presbyters and the General Assembly.
- c. To facilitate joint action in mission with other denominations.
- d. To provide services and programmes for Presbyteries, Sessions, Congregations, and members within its area that can be performed more effectively from a broad regional base.
- e. To organize new Presbyteries and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine Presbyteries or portions of Presbyteries previously existing, subject to approval of General Assembly.
(See G-11.0102 and G-13.0103.m.)
- f. To serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline.
- g. To warn or bear witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice in the area of its jurisdiction.
- h. To review the records of its Presbyteries and to take care that they observe the Constitution of the Church. (See G-11.0406.C.)
- i. To maintain regular and continuing relationship to the General Assembly, including;
- l. Seeing that the orders and instructions of the General Assembly are observed and carried out.

- ii. Proposing to the General Assembly such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the whole Church.
- j. To establish and maintain those ecumenical relationships which will enlarge the life and mission of the Church in its region. (See G-1 5.01 03.)
- k. To provide a system of administrative services to fulfill its objectives and programmes.

The General Assembly

The General Assembly

1. Definition and Function

The General Assembly is the highest governing body of this Church and is representative of the unity of the Synods, Presbyteries, Sessions and Congregations of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria. In matters spiritual the decisions of the Assembly are final and not subject to review by any civil court.

2. Membership and Commissioners

The General Assembly shall consist of all ordained Ministers in good standing and an equal number of Elder commissioners whose commission has been validated by his or her Presbytery Clerk, subject to the following considerations:

- a. Honourably retired Ministers are members of General Assembly, but without an equalizing Elder and without vote. Honourably retired Ministers serving the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria on 'contract appointment' or as 'Interim Moderators' are considered as being in service and are therefore members of the General Assembly with full rights and privileges.
- b. Board Secretaries and Chairpersons are members of General Assembly as "resource persons," without an equalizing Elder and without vote, except when such person is

otherwise qualified as an ordained Minister in good standing or is a certified Elder commissioner.

- c. Probationary Ministers are members of General Assembly, but without an equalizing Elder and without vote.
- d. No Parish shall be without an Elder commissioner to General Assembly, even though the Parish does not have an inducted Minister. Interim Moderators of Parishes shall not have a vote in General Assembly, except when such an Interim Moderator is not otherwise already qualified to vote. No Minister shall receive a second vote because he or she is also an Interim Moderator of another Parish.
- e. When the number of Elder commissioner, to General Assembly from any Presbytery exceeds the number of Minister Commissioners (usually due to vacant Parishes), such imbalance shall be tolerated for that General Assembly.
- f. When the number of eligible Ministers to General Assembly from any Presbytery exceeds the number of Elder Commissioners the imbalance shall be made up from that Presbytery by the selection of additional equalizing Elders.
- g. If an Elder commissioner resigns or dies, another may be appointed at any time before the Assembly meets; the Presbytery Clerk must produce both the letter of resignation or written certification of the death and the Presbytery's letter of commission for the new commissioner to the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly before the official opening of General Assembly.
- h. In addition to their commission as given by the Presbytery clerk, Elders require a certificate from the Moderator and the Clerk of the Session to which they belong of their being bona fide acting Elders and of their having signed the Formula, A form of certificate is provided by the Clerks of General Assembly.

Commissioners to the General Assembly are "answerable" to the body that appointed them (or whom they represent), and must report their diligence on their return. Commissioners are required to remain in attendance for the entire meeting of General Assembly, except in such cases where the General Assembly may have granted leave of absence.

3. Responsibilities

The General Assembly constitutes the bond of union, community, and mission among all its Congregations and governing bodies, it therefore has the responsibility and power:

- a. To set priorities for the work of the Church in keeping with the Church's mission under Christ as described in G-30000;
- b. To develop overall objectives for mission and a comprehensive strategy to guide the Church at every level of its life;
- c. To provide the essential program functions that are appropriate for overall balance and diversity within the mission of the Church;
- d. To establish and administer national and international ministries of witness, service, growth and development;
- e. To provide a system of administrative services to fulfill its objectives and programme;
- f. To provide services for the whole Church that can be more effectively performed from a national base;
- g. To establish and maintain an office of the General Assembly;
- h. To establish (including join or dissolve) and superintend the agencies, etc. necessary for its including the Boards and the General Assembly Executive Committee, thus providing for the regular review of progress in the Church's mission;
- i. To provide for communication within the Church;
- j. To oversee the work of the Synods and to facilitate their participation in the mission of the Church;
- k. To review the records of the Synods and to take Care that they observe the Constitution of the Church;
- l. To organize new Synods and to divide, unite, or otherwise combine Synods or portions of Synods previously existing;
- m. To approve the organization, division, uniting, or the combining of Presbyteries or portions of Presbyteries by Synods;

- n. To determine the number of Presbyteries, and the bounds thereof;
- o. To appoint as members of Presbytery such Ministers, within the bound and not having charges, as it sees fit;
- p. In special circumstances, to appoint assessors to act along with a Presbytery, with or without a vote as the General Assembly may determine;
- q. To consider reports from the Presbyteries on the Triennial visitation of the Parishes (See G-11.0405 X and G-12.0402.C);
- r. To sanction new Parishes, and to decide on the reduction or dissolution of a Parish (See G-07.0101); .
- s. To appoint Trustees, in accordance with Article 19 of the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria;
- t. To serve in judicial matters in accordance with the Rules of Discipline;
- u. To warn or bear witness against error in doctrine or immorality in practice in or outside the Church;
- v. To decide controversies brought before it and to give advice and instruction in cases submitted to it, in conformity with the Constitution;
- w. To establish and maintain those ecumenical relationship that will enlarge the life and mission of the Church (See G-15.0102);
- x. To correspond with other Churches (See G-15.0102);
- y. To correspond with overseas Churches on any matter, and particularly in matters concerning fraternal workers missionaries, and finance;
- z. To receive under its jurisdiction, with the consent of not less than two thirds of the Presbyteries, other ecclesiastical bodies whose life is consistent with the faith and order of this Church. (See Barrier Act Appendix G-13:01.).

4. Meetings

The General Assembly shall hold a stated meeting bi-annually at a time and place fixed by

the previous General Assembly. The Moderator shall call a special meeting of the General Assembly at the written request of not less than ten Elders and ten Ministers representing at least three Synods and six Presbyteries, and all of whom were commissioners to the last previous General Assembly. Should the Moderator be unable to act, the Principal Clerk shall do so under the same conditions, and should both the Moderator and Principal Clerk be unable to act the most recent Moderator shall do so under the same conditions, and failing him or her the most senior Minister available (as in the case of a national civil emergency). Commissioners to the special meeting of General Assembly shall be those commissioned to the last previous meeting of General Assembly. In instances where the commissioner has died or has otherwise been removed from office, a replacement may be made but in keeping with G-13.0102 above.

The venue for the stated meetings of the General Assembly shall be on a rotational basis, with not two consecutive meetings of the Assembly held within the same Regional Synod.

The General Assembly is normally an open court and any member of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is free to attend as an observer.

5. Quorum

A quorum of the General Assembly shall consist of one-third of the registered commissioners for that Assembly, one-half of whom must be Ministers (not retired), representing not less than one-half of all of the Presbyteries of the denomination.

6. Corresponding Members

The General Assembly may by its own rules determine whom it will invite to sit as corresponding members.

7. Standing Orders

For the Standing Orders of the General Assembly, see Appendix G-13.04. A copy of the Standing orders is issued to each member along with other Assembly papers. These orders are

for the Assembly only, but are usually taken as guides by inferior courts so far as applicable.

8. Powers and Functions

a. Ordinary Business

The ordinary business of the Assembly consists mainly of two parts: (1) Reports from the Boards of the General Assembly and (2) Matters Brought up from inferior courts. Members desiring to introduce any special subject for the consideration of the Assembly must do so in the form of an Overture from members.

b. Boards and Committees

Boards and Committees which report to the General Assembly are of two classes;

- (1) Those which are appointed during the Assembly to report to a subsequent diet; and
- (2) Those which are entrusted with business to be conducted by them in the course of the year. Regulations as to both classes will be found in the Standing Orders
(See Appendix G-13:04.)

It is usual to refer to Special Committees of the first class, all matters involving the preparation of documents, or the investigation of details, such as e.g., the General

Assembly press release and questions in dispute which cannot conveniently be entered into at the bar of the Assembly. Such Special Committees are usually appointed on the first or second day of the Assembly's meeting.

c. Production of papers

Business brought from the Boards and from inferior courts is introduced by the production of papers from these courts. Which are printed according to regulations to be found in the Standing Orders. The office of the Principal Clerk is charged with the duty of examining such papers as to style and form, before their printing and presentation to the General Assembly.

d. Legislative Functions, Declaratory Acts, and Interim Acts (See also Appendix G-13:01):

The functions of the General Assembly are legislative as well as judicial and administrative. They deliberate on matters which concern the whole Church in her doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and declare the mind of the Church thereupon so as from time to time to determine and regulate its constitution and laws. They may do so by way of what is called a Declaratory Act, which declares for the guidance of the Church what the General Assembly hold the law of the Church to be on any point on which questions have been raised. Such an Act may be passed by the General Assembly, without reference to Presbyteries; though Declaratory acts on matters of difficulty or importance are often sent down to Presbyteries before the Assembly pass them. But when any proposal to pass an Act of General Assembly, in any form, is such as involves 'alteration or innovation in either doctrine or worship or discipline or government' of the Church, it must in order to become a 'binding rule' of the Church be first sent down, under the Barrier Act, as an overture to the Presbyteries of the Church for their consideration, and can be finally passed only after the approval of a majority of Presbyteries has been obtained.

Acts of immediate importance may be passed as Interim Acts until the approval of Presbyteries has been obtained and must be acted upon at the subsequent General Assembly. However, an interim Act should be passed only in a case of emergency, and urgency, because it is liable to be set aside if the overture which it expresses should be disapproved by a majority of Presbyteries. Moreover, it is undesirable, because it tends to confusion and/or possible injustice, that legislation on any matter should undergo change

for only a year. An Interim Act has force only until the next succeeding General Assembly.

For the role of Regional Synods under the Barrier Act process,
see G-09.0706.b.e.

e. Remit to a Special Commission

The General Assembly may remit any cause to a special commission of members. The powers of such a special commission arise from, and are limited by, the Act or resolution of Assembly by which it is appointed, and should be carefully

defined therein. The Assembly may instruct such a special commission to report to the ordinary Commission of Assembly at any of their stated diets, authorising the latter to deal with any appeal or question arising out of the report. But the ordinary Commission have no power to deal with the report beyond what may be conferred by the Assembly's deliverance.

f. Nobile Officium

The General Assembly being the supreme judicial, legislative, and administrative court of the Church, have a nobile officium. In virtue of this they may deal with and dispose of any matter which may arise and which there is no other provision.

Nobile officium is a kind of power belonging to the General Assembly. It is without definition of rules of action. It is, in short, the power which would seem naturally and necessarily to belong to a supreme court, to determine and order such things as are necessary to be done in a pending case, and for which there is no legal provision, It cannot overrule law, but only supply the want of it when necessary; and it belongs only to the supreme court. It is not to be used as an alternative form of process or law as against the stated law of the Church, or to deprive a person of his or her legal rights; it may be used, rather, to give him or her equitable remedies which the strict law would not give. It is not to be used to impose some penalty on an individual with the stated law of the Church would not impose.

g. Decisions of General Assembly final

The General Assembly being the Supreme Court of the Church, their decisions, whether on the merits of a cause or on matters of procedure are final.

h. Dissents

Although there is no court to which an appeal from a deliverance of the Assembly

can be carried it is open to any member, who is dissatisfied, to have his dissent recorded in the minutes, provided he gives it in as soon as the decision has been pronounced.

i. Protestations

At the last diet of the Assembly, after all other business is concluded, protestations are called for - that is, an opportunity is given to anyone to protest that some decision of an inferior court has become final because some party has failed to prosecute his appeal or complaint.

9. Moderator

The General Assembly is presided over by a Moderator elected immediately after the constitution thereof. The Assembly shall elect any one who has been ordained to the ministry of Word and Sacraments, provided that he or she be a Minister in good standing with not less than ten years service in the ordained ministry.

The Moderator of General Assembly shall have a parish and shall operate as Moderator of General Assembly from his or her parish (1987-2722.q). The Moderator of General Assembly shall not hold office as the Moderator of a Presbytery or Regional Synod concurrently with the Moderatorship of the General Assembly.

- a. Nomination: Nominations for the office of the Moderator of the General Assembly shall be rotatory amongst the Regional Synods that constitutes the General Assembly (1987.2722.13). The name shall have been circulated early enough so that each Presbytery shall have known the names at least one full month before General Assembly sits. In the event that in the voting, the nominee does not score a simple majority (more than one-half) of the number of commissioners to General Assembly whose commissions have been received by the Principal Clerk one full week prior to the official opening of the General Assembly, the General Assembly shall be open to nominations from the floor, of which not less than three shall be required and the

nominee receiving a simple majority shall be deemed elected.

The rotation of the nomination to the office of the Moderator of the General Assembly shall be as follows: (1987-2722.14).

- a. Synod of the South-East (Presbyteries of Calabar, Itu Ogoja)
- b. Synod of the East (Presbyteries of Aba, Abakaliki, Abiriba, Arochukwu, Ohafia)
- c. Any other Synods which may be created.

In the matter of nominations, Presbyteries with Synodical powers shall not be considered as having this Synodical power.

The election of the Moderator will be the first order of business when the General Assembly is properly constituted. (1987-2722.14).

Although it is not essential it is highly desirable that consent should have been obtained before nomination

- b. Office, Function, and Duties of Moderator of General Assembly:
 - i. To preside over the General Assembly and to perform those duties as stated in the Standing Orders (see Appendix G-13:04).
 - ii. To visit Presbyteries according to the scheme of visitation sanction by the General Assembly.
 - iii. To perform such duties as may be directed by the General Assembly, and to represent the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria on historic and national occasions as they may arise.
 - iv. To undertake such other duties as he may choose during his term of office.

At the Moderator's request any member who has previously been Moderator of the General Assembly may occupy the chair in his or her absence.

The Moderator of the General Assembly shall be deemed to hold office from the time of his election by the General Assembly until he demits office upon the election of his successor. At the end of his or her term of office he or she may be re-elected to the same office again, but in no case may the same person hold the office of Moderator of General Assembly for more than two consecutive terms.

During his or her term of office the Moderator of General Assembly shall be known as "The Right Reverend.....", and all past Moderators of General Assembly shall be known as "The Very Reverend.....".

10. The Principal Clerk of the General Assembly

The General Assembly shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. The General Clerk of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall be the Clerk of the General Assembly. The General Assembly at its discretion may appoint minute secretaries, translators, stewards - etc. as it sees fit.

a. Office

The office of Principal Clerk of the General Assembly is a full-time appointment. The Principal Clerk is elected by the General Assembly, and serves initially for a period of three years, after which he may be re-elected for further terms of two years each. He is responsible to the General Assembly for the execution of his duties. (See G-09.0203.)

There shall not be a change of Principal Clerk in the same year with a change of Deputy Clerk.

His salary, pension benefits and office expenses are paid for by the Board of Finance from General Assembly funds.

In his office as Principal Clerk, he plays two major roles:

- i. As the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly meetings and
- ii. As the Principal Clerk (Executive Secretary) for the general administration of the denomination.

b. Nomination

His nomination for the office follows the same pattern as that for the Moderator of General Assembly. The office is held by a Minister in good standing with at least five years in the ordained ministry (1987-272215.)

c. Duties of the Principal Clerk:

- i. He is responsible for the writing, the printing and the distribution of the minutes of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Executive Committee and the General Assembly Boards Council.
- ii. He is the Custodian of the Records of the General Assembly and the legal extractor
- iii. He issues forms of commissions to the General Assembly.
- iv. He is responsible for producing the published reports preparatory to the General Assembly.
- v. He advertises the meetings of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Executive Committee, and the General Assembly Boards Council.
- d. In connection with the Moderator, he arranges the business for the meetings of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Executive Committee, and the General Assembly Boards Council
- vii. He is Clerk to the Business and Nominating Committee of General Assembly.
- viii. He receives commissions to the General Assembly.

- ix. He sends down overtures (cf Barrier Act; see Appendix G-13:01) from the General Assembly, and tabulates Presbytery responses.
- x. He is responsible for the administration of the General Assembly office, the buildings and related property.
- xi. He is responsible for such other duties as may assigned him by the General Assembly.

The Principal Clerk may assign any of the above responsibilities to the Deputy Clerk as may be expedient.

d. Hand-over of Office

On such occasions as there may be a handing-over of the office of the Principal Clerk to a successor there shall be a period of not less than three months (90 days) during which the incumbent Principal Clerk shall work with the outgoing Principal Clerk on a daily basis, and during which the incumbent Principal Clerk shall become familiar with the routine and responsibilities of said office. The incumbent Principal Clerk shall become officially responsible for the affairs of the office at the end of the three month period at a regular meeting of the General Assembly Executive Committee (or the General Assembly), unless the General Assembly dictates otherwise.

There shall be a handing-over of all properties entrusted to the said office, attested to by the General Assembly Executive Committee or a commission thereof, with signed copies of lists being kept privately with both affected parties, and a third signed copy lodged - in a permanent file of 1e General Assembly.

11. The Deputy Clerk of General Assembly

a. Character of the Office:

There is a distinct division of responsibilities between the Principal Clerk and the Deputy Clerk. The Principal Clerk is responsible for the over-all responsibility of the office and is primarily responsible to the General Assembly. The Deputy Clerk is responsible for certain areas of responsibility within the General Assembly Clerk's Office. The Deputy Clerk is subsidiary to the Principal Clerk only in terms of responsibility. The two offices shall not be considered as one of "servant and master," but as "team-member and captain."

b. Office

The Deputy Clerk is elected by the General Assembly, and serves initially for a period of three years after which he may be reelected for further terms of two years each. He is responsible to the Principal Clerk for the execution of his duties.

The Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly may or may not be an ordained minister (1987-2722.16).

There shall not be a change of Deputy Clerk in the same year with a change of Principal Clerk.

His salary, pension benefits and office expenses are paid for by the Board of Finance from General Assembly funds.

c. Duties

- i. He shall assist the Principal Clerk in organizing the affairs of the Office of the Principal Clerk in anticipation of, and at, the General Assembly. He shall be particularly responsible for Registration procedures, for taking the daily attendance and arranging voting procedures (voting cards).
- ii. In connection with or on behalf of the Principal Clerk, he shall attend all meetings of the General Assembly, the General Assembly Executive Committee, the General

Assembly Board Council, and the General Assembly Boards.

- iii. He shall be responsible for tabulating the Annual Returns from Parishes.
- iv. In connection with the Principal Clerk, he shall develop and maintain a Manual of Procedures for the on-going continuity of the Office of the Principal Clerk of the General Assembly.
- v. He shall carry out any other functions assigned to this office.

d. Hand-over

On such occasions as there may be a handing over of the office of the Deputy Clerk to a successor, there shall be a period of not Less than two months (60 days) during which the incumbent Deputy Clerk shall work with the out-going Deputy Clerk on a daily basis and during which the incumbent Deputy Clerk shall become familiar with the routine and responsibilities of the said office The incumbent Deputy Clerk shall become officially responsible for the affairs of the office at the end of the two month period at a regular meeting of the General Assembly Executive Committee (or the General Assembly) .unless the General Assembly dictates otherwise.

There shall be a handing-over of all properties entrusted to the said office, attested to by the Principal Clerk, with signed copies of lists being kept privately with both affected parties, and a third signed copy lodged in a permanent file of the General Assembly.

12. The General Assembly Treasurer

a. Office

The Treasurer of the General Assembly is appointed by the General Assembly or the General Assembly Executive Committee His tenure of office is at the pleasure of the General Assembly. Nominations to this office are handled by the Business and

Nominating Committee of the General Assembly.

b. Duties and Responsibilities

i. DETAILS ARE YET TO COME

ii. DETAILS ARE YET TO COME

c. Hand-over

On such occasions as there may be a handing-over of the office of the Treasurer to a successor, there shall be a period of not less than three months (90 days) during which the incumbent Treasurer shall work with the out-going Treasurer on a daily basis and during which the incumbent Treasurer shall become familiar with the routine and responsibilities of the said office. The incumbent Treasurer shall become officially responsible for the affairs of the office at the end of the three month period at a regular meeting of the General Assembly Executive Committee (or the General Assembly), unless the General Assembly dictates otherwise.

There shall be a handing-over of all properties entrusted to the said office, attested to by the Board of Finance, with signed copies of lists being kept privately with both affected parties and a third signed copy lodged in a permanent file of the General Assembly.

13. The Legal Adviser of the General Assembly

The General Assembly shall appoint and retain the services of a Legal Adviser and who shall give counsel in matters of civil law.

- a. He shall attend meetings of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Executive Committee whenever his presence is required or whenever matters are likely to arise requiring his advice.
- b. He shall receive libels (complaints by plaintiffs and proposed action) and other proceedings as required by the General Assembly.

- c. He shall conduct litigation as Senior Counsel on behalf of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- d. He shall give Opinions for the Church or any of its inferior Courts upon Memorials (statements of fact addressed to the government or other society possibly with a petition).
- e. He shall give advice, by note or in consultation, to inferior courts of the Church but requests for such advice must come through the Legal Adviser of the inferior court.
- f. He shall not be required to give advice in any form to individual Ministers or members of the courts and Congregations of the Church.
- g. He shall receive a General Retaining Fee, which shall be deemed to cover the duties defined under (a) and (b) above. For work falling under (c), (d) and (e) above, he shall be entitled to professional fees. Such fees however, shall be adjusted with the General Assembly or the General Assembly Executive Committee through the General Assembly Principal Clerk at the commencement of such services.

The post of Legal Adviser to the General Assembly is held at the pleasure of the General Assembly until such time as the Legal Adviser may tender his resignation or the General Assembly terminates his services.

14. Nomination of General Assembly Officers

For nomination of Moderator of the General Assembly see G-13.0109. For nomination of the Principal Clerk of General Assembly. See G-13.0110.b.

To ensure careful nomination of other members to any General Assembly office such as Deputy Clerk, Treasurer and to Board offices the General Assembly shall appoint a Business and Nominating Committee consisting of one person from each Presbytery who

is also a member of the General Assembly Executive Committee. Membership in the Business and Nominating Committee shall be by recommendation of the Presbytery and approval of the previous General Assembly. A quorum for the Business and Nominating Committee shall be 50% of its membership but not less than five persons. The Business

and Nominating shall appoint their own secretary and chairperson, the chairperson having only a casting vote in case of a tie. The Business and Nomination Committee is

responsible for making arrangements for General Assembly to hold, for controlling the

budget of the General Assembly meeting, for preparing the provisional agenda, for registration procedures and shall nominate suitable persons for such offices as might

require filling at the General Assembly. The Business and Nominating Committee shall

report regularly to the General Assembly Executive Committee.

General Assembly Executive Committee

To ensure the on-going mission of the General Assembly between meetings, there shall be a General Assembly Executive Committee.

1. Membership

The membership of the General Assembly Executive Committee shall be comprised as follows: (1987-2722.30.)

- a. Moderator of the General Assembly
- b. Principal Clerk of the General Assembly
- c. Deputy Clerk of the General Assembly
- d. Treasurer of the General Assembly
- e. The Chief Legal Adviser of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria
- f. Nine members of each Synod comprised of:
 - i. Moderator of Synod
 - ii. Clerk of Synod
 - iii. Treasurer of Synod
 - iv. Two Women's Guild representatives
 - v. Two Men's Christian Association representatives
 - vi. Two Presbyterian Young Peoples Association of Nigeria representatives
- g. Six member of Presbyteries with Synodical powers, including only one representative each from the Women's Guild, the Men's Christian Association and the Presbyterian

Young Peoples Association of Nigeria.

- h. The nine registered trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria
- i. The Secretaries and Chairmen of each General Assembly Board
- j. Two theological tutors
- k. The Principal of Hugh Goldie Training Centre.
- l. The Principal of Ikot Obong Women's Training Centre.

The Moderator and Principal Clerk shall act as Chairman and Secretary respectively

2. Meetings

The General Assembly Executive Committee shall meet quarterly except for the quarter in which the General Assembly meets, and shall deliberate on matters arising from the Boards and any other competent ministers brought before it by the Stated Clerk. The General Assembly Executive Committee cannot override any decisions of the General Assembly except in emergency situations and must report to the General Assembly for ratification on any of its decisions, emergency and otherwise.

3. Powers

The General Assembly Executive Committee shall be empowered to transact the administrative business of the General Assembly. The General Assembly Executive Committee shall not transact any legislative business, except to interpret the decisions of General Assembly. In the case of legislative matters of an urgent nature on which the General Assembly has laid down no policy, the General Assembly Executive Committee may take such decisions as are in accord with the general principles of Presbyterianism, the Constitution, the Practice and Procedure, and shall report any such decisions to the next regular meeting of the General Assembly for ratification or amendment.

The General Assembly Executive Committee shall have the oversight of the Boards

of the General Assembly.

The General Assembly Executive Committee shall not act as a court of appeal.

The General Assembly Boards

The work of the church in carrying out its mission shall be assigned to various Boards of its own choosing, each Board shall be directly responsible to the General Assembly for the execution of its portfolio, and shall report to the regular meetings of the General Assembly. The Boards of the General Assembly are not Church courts and may not act as such.

The number of Boards and the formula for membership of the Boards s subject to review by the General Assembly.

1. Membership

The composition and membership of each General Assembly Board shall be determined by a formula approved by the General Assembly and suitable for the work of that Board. (See Appendix G-13:03). Each Board's Secretary shall be appointed by the General Assembly, and shall be that Board's chief executive. Each Board may select its own Chairman, except where the General Assembly has appointed otherwise.

2. Meetings

Each Board shall meet as often as necessary, but not less than twice in a year, for the review and execution of its responsibilities.

3. Minutes

Each Board shall keep a full and complete record of its proceedings. Minutes of all proceedings shall be distributed to all members of that Board General Assembly offices and with all other Board secretaries. Minutes of Board meetings circulated to Board

members are not the private property of members but shall be handed over to the Board member's successor at the end of his or her period of membership.

4. Reports

Each Board shall give an annual accounting to the General Assembly of any funds entrusted to, or used by, said Board. Each Board shall produce a report of its activities in time for publication in the annual General Assembly reports.

5. The Stated Boards and their Terms of Reference:

a. Board of Christian Education

- (1) To develop programmes for the Church's training institutions (Ikot Obong Women's Training Centre, Goldie Lay Training Centre, and others), and to operate training courses within these institutions when called upon to do so by the General Assembly.
- (2) To represent the General Assembly on the Trinity College Council.
- (3) To formulate and promote religious curriculum for our Church's congregations.
- (4) To recruit young people into the ministry, either theological or lay training.
- (5) To coordinate the scholarship programme of the Church, which includes all advanced training, and leadership training.
- (6) To coordinate and encourage training for and with the ruling eldership.
- (7) To correspond with all students either overseas or in Nigeria to keep them informed of the Church here, and to offer pastoral oversight.

b. Board of Church Life

- (1) To provide guidance on behalf of the General Assembly to each of the organizations within the Church; The Men's Christian Association, The Women's Guild, The Presbyterian Young People's Association of Nigeria, the Order of the Diaconate, and the Christian Girls in Training and to represent them to the General Assembly,

- (2) To act as liaison with other para-church bodies such as the Boy's Brigade, the Girl's Brigades, the Scripture Union, Youth for Christ, Student Christian Movement, etc.
- (3) To formulate yearly programmes for the Christian Home and Family Life Week.
- (4) To correspond with Chaplaincies affiliated with the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- (5) To correspond with the United Church Women of Nigeria and the Christian Council of Nigeria (Women's Wing).
- (6) To be responsible for the social action interest of the Church.

c. Board of Church Property Development

- (1) To see that all Deeds of Lease and records in respect of Church land and properties are properly registered with the government.
- (2) To ensure that all lands belonging to the Church are surveyed and covered by valid Deeds of Lease.
- (3) To assist in the acquisition of lands for the Church at all levels.
- (4) To keep a register of all lands and valuable property registered in the name of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- (5) To supervise any development project, whether present or future, in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- (6) To approve all architectural plans for Churches.

d. Board of Faith and Order

- (1) To review the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria
- (2) To revise, when necessary, the Practice and Procedure.
- (3) To review and revise the distinctive liturgy of the Church.
- (4) To formulate the distinctive doctrines of the Church.
- (5) To maintain fraternal ties with the:-
 - i. Christian Council of Nigeria (CCN)
 - ii. World Council of Churches (WCC)

- iii. World Alliance of Reformed Churches (WARC)
- iv. All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC)
- v. Sister Churches overseas.

e. Finance Board

- (1) To prepare and submit an annual budget to the General Assembly, prior to the fiscal year.
- (2) To enforce the collection of assessments submitted annually to the Presbyteries.
- (3) To oversee and authorize all expenditures of the General Assembly Treasury.
- (4) To oversee the Treasurer's office, accounting records and methods.
- (5) To ensure an annual audit, in accordance with any directives of the General Assembly.
- (6) To supervise the Children of Deceased Agents Scholarship Fund.
- (7) To administer the Pension Scheme.
- (8) To review and revise as necessary the Conditions of Service of the Church.
- (9) To formulate and maintain the health-care system for church Workers.

f. Board of Propagation and Publication

- (1) To have the oversight for all evangelism, church extension and new church development within the Church.
- (2) To have the authority over all publications, documents, certificates, and any printed material that bears the name or seal of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, granting permission for any publication which is consistent with the ethos of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
- (3) To encourage Presbyterian publications and literature in Nigeria.
- (4) To develop skills within Presbyterian personnel for the use of modern communication media.
- (5) To formulate and distribute public statements at key times for national and

international events.

- (6) To liaise with other Bible societies and Bible translation projects on behalf of the General Assembly.

g. Board of Church Ministry

- (1) To handle all discipline matters referred to it by the Synods, and referring the same to General Assembly for final decision.
- (2) To locate church workers with informed guidance from the Presbyteries.
- (3) To have the mediating authority to ensure that the welfare, comfort and vocational effectiveness is cared for by the responsible body (ie., that proper salary, full allowance, proper housing, and sufficient vocational resources are given to each worker).

h. Presbyterian Press and Bookshops Board

- (1) To maintain registration with the government a private limited liability company named "The Hope Waddell Press and Presbyterian Bookshops".
- (2) To appoint the representatives of the General Assembly in view of the General Assembly's stockholder role.
- (3) To receive reports from the Presbyterian Press and Bookshops Board and report the same to the General Assembly.

i. The Medical Board

- (1) To have the responsibility of running the following Presbyterian hospitals:
 - i. The Eja Memorial Joint Hospital, Itigidi, Cross River State.
 - ii. The Presbyterian Joint Hospital, Uburu. Imo State.
 - iii. Any other hospitals yet to be built or acquired by the Church.
- (2) To represent the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria on the Boards of the following

medical institutions:

- i. Mary Slessor Joint Hospital, Ito, Akwa Ibom.
- ii. Akahaba Joint Hospital, Abiriba, Abia State.
- iii. Any other medical institutions yet to be built or acquired by the Church.

(3) To have the oversight of all other Presbyterian related medical work including:

- i. Gloria Maternity Home, Usumutong, Cross River State.
- ii. Presbyterian Leprosy Hospital. Mbembe, Cross River State.
- iii. Rural Improvement Mission (R I M), Achara Ikwo, Anambra.
- iv. Ebe/Ehijakara Health Centre,

(4) To represent the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria medical work, in so far as possible, on any health boards established by any state government.

(5) To recruit health personnel within Nigeria.

(6) To recruit health personnel from overseas, but in correspondence with a Principal Clerk of the General Assembly.

(7) To maintain facilities for the training of nursing staff.

(8) To advise the Principal Clerk of General Assembly, and the Board of Church Ministry, on the medical condition of any church worker.

(9) To explore the expansion of medical work being done by the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

(10) To seek capital grants from both within and without Nigeria for the expansion and/or development of any Presbyterian hospital or medical institution, exclusive

of ordinary running and maintenance costs.

Other Boards and/or Agencies (Incorporations)

This section does not refer to General Assembly Boards. (See G-13.0300)

The General Assembly may for various reasons allow for the incorporation of other bodies into Boards and/or Agencies. Such Boards and/or Agencies, however, may not work in cross-purposes to the mission of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, nor in antagonism to or competition with the work of any General Assembly Board, and shall come under the portfolio of, and/or work in close cooperation with, one or more existing General Assembly Boards.

For non-incorporated organizations, see G-09.0900.

1. Formulation

No other Board or Agency may be formed until a full proposal of aims and objectives and accountability and viability has been presented to and approved by the General Assembly. The General Assembly is responsible for thoroughly investigating the implications of the proposed aims and objectives, accountability and viability before granting approval, and also for notifying each Parish in writing not less than three months before the meeting of the General Assembly the intention of any body to incorporate.

2. Reporting

- a. Any other Board or Agency must report regularly and not less often than annually (i.e. than twelve months apart) to their own Boards of Governors, and
- b. Any other such Board or Agency must also report annually to the General Assembly either through an existing Board of the General Assembly or directly to the General Assembly, as the General Assembly may direct.

3. Property

All landed property shall be vested in the name of the Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

4. Incorporation

Any such other Board or Agency which desires to incorporate, must get specific approval for the act of incorporation from the General Assembly.

5. Liability

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall not be liable for any loss financial or otherwise, incurred by any such other Board or Agency, even though the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria may have granted approval for its incorporation.

6. Termination of such other Boards or Agencies

The General Assembly may terminate any Board or Agency at any time when such Board or Agency becomes redundant or embarrassing to the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria or is working at cross-purposes to the mission of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, or is financially insolvable or for any other reason.

Ordination for Church Office

1. Ordination

The persons elected by the Church to service in the offices of the Church (G-06.0103)

shall be ordained to these offices by the Church. Ordination is the act by which the Church sets apart persons to be presbyters (Ministers of the Word and Sacrament or Elders - (ie "Teaching Elders" or "Ruling Elders"), and is accompanied with prayer and the laying on of hands. Ordination to the office of Minister of the Word and Sacraments is an act of the Presbytery. Ordination to the office of-Elder is an act of the Session, except in the case of the organization of a new congregation (G-07.0302.)

2. Commissioning

Other persons called to perform special services in the Church or in the world may be commissioned ("designation" and "recognition", in the Order of the Diaconate) by the appropriate governing body of the Church through a service of dedication.

3. Servant Style

The purpose and pattern of leadership in the Church in all its forms of ministry shall be understood not in terms of power or status or mere employment, but of service, after the manner of the servant ministry of Jesus Christ.

Electing and Ordaining Ruling Elders

1. Election Provisions for Ruling Elders

Every Parish shall elect men and women from amongst its active members, giving fair representation to persons of all ages and of all racial ethnic members of that Parish, to the office of Elder, by secret ballot, subject however, to the following provisions:-

a. Term of Service

See (G-06.0308 and G-10.0104.

b. Number of elders required

The Session shall determine the number of elders required for the oversight of the congregation, and the time when a new election is to take place. The Presbytery

however, shall ensure that every Parish has -sufficient elders, and unless there is sufficient justification to the- contrary, the ratio of Ruling Elders to communicants shall not be less than one elder for twenty-five communicants and not more than one elder per fifteen communicants. (See G-06.0306.)

c. Nomination and Election at a Parish Meeting

When the Session has resolved that it is expedient to have an election of elders, and has fixed the number to be elected,-and the date of the election, due intimation stating the time, place, and purpose thereof shall be made at the time of public worship in all congregations of the Parish on at least the two successive Sundays immediately preceding the date of election. It is desirable to give the congregations even earlier intimation of an intended election so that the members may have time to inquire regarding persons suitable for the office, -who shall be members of the Parish in full communion and who shall have attained then age of twenty-one years. All congregations in the Parish shall be adequately represented on the Parish Session.

(See G-10.201; G-07.0101 & .0402.a.).

d. Mode of election

The mode of election shall be by the direct vote of the communicant members of the Parish at a Parish meeting-held in the presence of the Session. The Clerk of Session is the Clerk of this meeting.

Voting shall be taken; only communicant members in good standing are eligible to vote, and must be present at the election. The Moderator of Session or a minister of the Church authorized by him in writing shall preside and open the meeting with devotional exercises. The names proposed and seconded shall he taken down. After full opportunity has been given for proposing names the moderator shall ascertain whether any additional names are to be proposed and if none be proposed he shall declare the nominations ceased.

The Moderator shall then put the question; “Are you now ready to proceed to the election of Elders?” If it is ready, the election may proceed by ballot. Voting papers

(ballots) shall be provided, and communicants shall write down the names of their choices from amongst the nominees up to the number of elders required to be elected. Counters, chosen at the Parish Meeting, shall tally the results and up to the number required, those having the highest number of votes shall be declared to be elected, subject to the judgment of the Session.

e. Judgment of Session and Preparation for Office

When persons have been elected to the office of Elder, the Session shall confer with them as to their willingness to undertake the office. After a period of study and preparation with special reference to this Practice and Procedure the Session shall

examine them as to their personal faith, knowledge of the doctrine government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, and the

duties of the office. If the examination is approved the Session shall appoint a day for the service of ordination and admission to office. If the examination is not approved for one or more elected officers, the Session shall report its action to another duly called Parish Meeting and which shall bring nomination(s) and election for any office not filled.

f. Edict

The Session Clerk shall prepare an edict to be read from the pulpit on two consecutive Sundays prior to the date fixed for ordination, giving intimation that if any person have objection to the life or doctrine of any of those proposed to be ordained or admitted, such objection must be given in to the Session at a meeting duly intimated in the edict, to be held not less than seven free days after the edict is first served, with certification that if no objection be given and substantiated at the time and place of which notice is given. The Session will proceed with the ordination or admission at the time appointed for it. (For Form of Edict, see Appendix G-13:05.)

g. Objections

At the time and place intimated in the edict the Session shall meet to receive any objection which may be offered. The edict having been returned, certified as having been duly served the Session shall intimate that it is prepared to hear objections. Any objection made must refer to the life or doctrine of the elder-elect. If any objection be made, and forthwith substantiated, or if the Session judge that further inquiry is necessary, the Session shall not proceed to the ordination or admission of the person objected to until the objection is disposed of. Objections which in the judgment of the Session are frivolous or unsupported by evidence are to be set aside, and the ordination or admission to office proceeded with.

2. Office of Elder is perpetual

Elders being once ordained are not divested of office by the circumstance of not being re-elected to serve in the Session of a particular Parish, or by ceasing to be a member of the particular Parish in which he or she was ordained. (See G-06.0301).

3. Service of Ordination and Admission

At a public service the ordination and admission of elders to office shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of serving Him through the mission and ministry of the Church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The Minister presiding shall state briefly the nature of the office of Elder.

The Session having been constituted, the moderator shall narrate the steps that have been taken, and put the prescribed questions. On receiving satisfactory answers, and after the elders-elect have signed the Formula (See Appendix G-13:05) ,he shall admit to office in the congregation any who have already been ordained to the eldership, and ordain by prayer and admit to the office of ruling elder in the congregation those not previously ordained, commending them to the grace of God for the work to which they are appointed; the right hand of fellowship shall be given by the Moderator and other

members of Session to the newly admitted elders, and the service concluded with suitable exhortations to them and to the congregation. Thereafter the newly ordained and admitted elders have their names added to the roll and take their seats in the Session.

4. Constitutional Questions to the Elders-elect

The Minister shall ask those preparing to be ordained and/or admitted to office to stand before the Congregation and to answer the following questions:-

- (1) Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Saviour, acknowledge Him Lord of all and Head, of the Church, and through Him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
- (2) Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
- (3) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our Church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
- (4) Will you fulfill your office in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and be continually guided by our confessions?
- (5) Will you be governed by our Church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?
- (6) Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbours, and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- (7) Do you promise to further the peace, unity and purity of the Church?
- (8) Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?
- (9) Will you be a faithful Elder, watching over the people, providing for their worship, nurture, and service. Will you share in government and discipline, serving in governing bodies of the Church, and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

5. Constitutional Questions to the Congregation

The Elder-elect, having answered the above questions in the affirmative, the Minister shall ask the Congregation to answer the following questions:-

- (1) Do you, the members of the Church, accept (name)..... as Elders,
chosen by God through the voice of this Parish to lead us in the way of Jesus Christ?
- (2) Do you agree to encourage them, to respect their decisions, and to follow as they guide us, serving Jesus Christ who alone is Head of the Church?

6. Prayer and Laying On of Hands

The members of the Church, having answered these questions in the affirmative, those to be ordained shall kneel for prayer and the laying on of hands by the Minister only. Those previously ordained shall stand to the right and left of the Minister. The Congregation shall also stand for the prayer of ordination and admission to office.

The Moderator shall say to those who have thus been ordained and admitted to office:

“You are now Elders in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this Parish Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Amen.”

Then the members of the Session and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the newly admitted or ordained and admitted, elders into their fellowship and ministry.

7. Dissolution of Relationship

An Elder may resign from the Session for good cause, with the Session's consent. On ceasing to be an active member of a particular Church, an Elder ceases to be a member

of its Session.

When an Elder, because of change of residence or disability is unable to perform the duties of the office for a period of one year, the active relationship shall be dissolved by the Session unless there is good reason not to do so, which reason should be recorded.

Candidates for the Office of Minister of Word and Sacraments

1. Presbytery Responsibility

It is important that those who are to be ordained as Ministers Of the Word and Sacrament receive full preparation for their task. For this purpose, Presbyteries shall take under their care candidates for the ministry. After having received persons as candidates and after a competent testing of their call and their gifts, the Presbytery may ordain them to the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

2. Candidates defined

Candidates must be active members of the Church who believe themselves called by God to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament, and who accept the care and guidance of the Presbytery in their course of study and practical training in preparation for the office of Minister of Word and Sacrament.

3. Procedure for Applications

Applicants must fulfill the following steps in seeking to be taken under the care of a Presbytery as a candidate:-

- a. Active member for at least twelve months.
- b. The applicant shall apply through his or her Session.
- c. Presbytery may have up to six months for consideration, after receiving the application.
- d. Presbytery committee must make a definite recommendation to the Presbytery.

- e. Presbytery shall receive the report and examine the applicant in person with respect to his or her Christian faith, forms of Christian service undertaken and motives for seeking the ministry.
 - f. If the examination is approved, the Presbytery shall. Make recommendation to the Board of Christian Education.
 - g. If the candidate pass all of requirements of the Board of Christian Education, the Presbytery shall be informed, and the Presbytery shall receive the applicant under it care, as a candidate after the following manner. The Moderator of Presbytery shall propose the following questions:-
 - i. Do you believe yourself to be called by God to the ministry of the Word and sacrament?
 - ii. Do you promise in reliance upon the grace of God to maintain a Christian character and conduct, and to be diligent and faithful in making full preparation for this ministry?
 - iii. Do you accept the proper supervision of the Presbytery in matters that concern your preparation for this ministry?
 - iv. Do you desire now to be received by this Presbytery as candidate for the ministry of word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria?
 - h. If these questions are answered in the affirmative, a brief charge shall be given, the candidates name shall be recorded on the Presbytery's roll of candidates and the proceedings shall close with prayer.
 - i. The Presbytery may decide, if it so wishes, to have a brief service of reception by a commission of Presbytery in the candidates home Congregation.
4. Duties of Presbytery to the Candidate
- a. The candidate continues to be an active member of his or her Parish, and subject to the concern and discipline of its Session.
 - b. In matters relating to preparation for the ministry, the candidate is under the oversight

of the Presbytery, It shall be the duty of the Presbytery to support the candidate with an understanding and sympathetic interest and to give guidance where necessary.

5. Candidate's Service

The candidate shall be encouraged to engage in some form of service to the Church, with the approval and under the direction of the Presbytery, in so far as possible. A candidate shall not undertake to serve as pastor of a Church, even as temporary supply without the approval of the Presbytery having jurisdiction over that particular Church, as well as the approval of the candidate's Presbytery, and in all cases the Board of Christian Education.

Under no circumstances may a candidate serve as Moderator of a Session, administer the Sacraments, or perform a wedding ceremony.

6. Annual Report by the Candidate

The Presbytery shall require the candidate to make an annual written report concerning progress in studies and service to the Church, including a report from the candidate's institution of learning. The Board of Christian Education shall similarly make a report to the Presbytery regarding the candidate's progress.

7. Extraordinary Applicant

If the Presbytery judges that there are good and sufficient reasons why the requirements for candidacy should not be met by the extraordinary applicant it shall make an exception only by a three-fourth vote of the members of the Presbytery present, and a full account of the reasons for such an exception shall be included in the minutes of Presbytery. The decision of the Presbytery shall be sent to the Board of Christian Education for ratification before any further procedure.

8. Removal of Candidates

A candidate may, upon request withdraw from the care of the Presbytery. The Presbytery may also, for sufficient reason, remove the name of candidate from its roll; but in such case it shall report its action and the reasons to the candidate, to the Session of the candidates Parish, and if appropriate, to the education institution in which the candidate is enrolled. Whatever the reason for the withdraw; the candidate must first of all secure the approval of the Board of Christian Education.

9. Licensing

See G-11.0404.a.

Ordination for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament

1. Ordination of Candidates

Ordination for the office of Minister of the Word d Sacrament is an act of the whole Church carried out by the Presbytery, setting apart a person to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. Such a person shall have completed him or her basic theological training and have satisfied the requirements of the Board of Christian Education.

Such a person shall also have served at least one year as a Probationary Minister after him or her licensing.

2. Academic Requirements

- | | |
|---------|---------------------|
| a. | DETAILS YET TO COME |
| b. | DETAILS YET TO COME |
| c. etc. | DETAILS YET TO COME |

3. Examinations

Areas which must be included in examinations, either in the course of training or at

the pleasure of the Presbytery, are:-

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| a. | Open Book Biblical Exegesis | DETAILS YET TO COME |
| b. | Bible Content - general | DETAILS YET TO COME |
| c. | Theological competence | DETAILS YET TO COME |
| d. | Worship and Sacraments | DETAILS YET TO COME |
| e. | Church Polity | DETAILS YET TO COME |

4. Appearance before Committee of Board of Christian Education

The Committee shall inquire among other things, the following subjects:-

- a. The results of the prior steps towards ordination;
- b. Any plans for the candidates continuing study and growth;
- c. The compatibility of the candidate's theological views with the confessional statements of the Church;
- d. The candidate's understanding of the meaning of the questions required for ordination;
- e. The candidate's commitment to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament within the discipline of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria;
- f. The presentation to the committee of a written sermon, together with a description of contemporary need to which it was addressed and an exegetical interpretation of the

biblical material out of which the sermon arose. This sermon shall be preached before Presbytery as a part of the appearance of the candidate as set forth in G-

14.0404.a. vi.

5. Appearance before Presbytery

An appearance before the Presbytery in which the candidate shall make a brief statement of personal faith and of commitment to the ministry of the Word and Sacrament.

The Presbytery, having heard the candidate and having received the recommendation of the Board of Christian Education, shall conduct any further examination desired. If the Presbytery is fully satisfied of the candidate's qualification, it shall vote to proceed to his or

her ordination, appointing a time and place for the service of ordination.

6. Extraordinary Candidates

The Presbytery shall not omit any of the requirements for ordination set forth in G-14.0400, except in the case of an extraordinary candidate, in which case the Presbytery may waive the formal educational requirements of G-14.0402 on the condition that the Board of Christian Education has agreed that such requirements have already been otherwise met. A full record of such action must be recorded in the minutes of both the Presbytery and the Board of Christian Education. If the Board of Christian Education does not approve, it shall communicate in writing to the Presbytery, the reasons for its non-approval. If the Board of Christian Education does approve, it is still required that not less than three-fourths of the members present at a Stated meeting of the Presbytery must also give their approval.

7. Time and Place for Ordination

The ordination of candidates to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament shall ordinarily take place in the presence of the Parish in which the candidate is called to minister, at the time and in the place for the regular worship of that Congregation.

If it is mutually agreed upon by the candidate and the Presbytery in which he or she will serve, the candidate may be ordained in another Presbytery that might be willing to do so. However, it is still required that the candidate, though ordained outside the Presbytery in which he or she shall serve be inducted by the Presbytery into him or her Parish.

On the two Sundays immediately proceeding the date of ordination, an edict for the proposed ordination must be read in every Congregation in the Parish, and having been read, must be attested. The edict to be read is provided by the Clerk of Presbytery who shall authorise the Session Clerk of the Parish where the ordination shall occur to read.

The edict shall state the proposed time and place of ordination and the place where the Presbytery shall meet to consider any objections.

For form of edict, see Appendix G-13:05. The edict, when completed and attested to shall be lodged in the permanent record of the Presbytery.

8. Ordination Service

The Presbytery, or commission of Presbytery appointed for this purpose shall convene and shall call the Congregation to worship. The service shall focus upon Christ and the joy and responsibility of the mission and ministry of the Church, and shall include a sermon appropriate to the occasion. The member named to preside shall state briefly the proceedings of the Presbytery (i.e., the narration of steps) preparatory to the ordination and shall point out its nature and importance.

9. Constitutional Questions

The member presiding shall then ask the candidate to answer the following questions:

- (1) Do you believe in one God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?
- (2) Do you believe the word of God which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to be the supreme rule of faith and life?
- (3) Do you accept the Constitution and Declaratory Articles adopted by this Presbyterian Church at the meeting of its Synod held on 19th October, 1945?
- (4) Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith; and do you accept the Apostle's Creed and the Nicene Creed as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith?
- (5) Do you acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God; and do you promise to be subject in the Lord to this Presbytery and to the superior court of the Church and to take your due part in the administration of its affairs?

- (6) Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church; to uphold the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline thereof, and to cherish a spirit of brotherhood towards all the followers of the Lord?
 - (7) Are not zeal for the glory of God, love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of men so far as you know your own heart your great motives and chief inducements to enter into the office of the Holy ministry?
 - (8) Do you engage, in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live a godly and circumspect life; and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge the duties of your ministry, seeking in all things the advancement of the Kingdom of God?
 - (9) Do you accept and close with the appointment to be Pastor of this charge; and do you promise through grace to study to approve yourself a faithful Minister of the Gospel among this people?
-
- (1) Do you trust in Jesus Christ your Saviour, acknowledge Him Lord of all and Head of the Church, and through Him believe in one God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit?
 - (2) Do you accept the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be, by the Holy Spirit, the unique and authoritative witness to Jesus Christ in the Church universal, and God's Word to you?
 - (3) Do you accept the Constitution and Declaratory Articles adopted by this Presbyterian Church at the meeting of its Synod held on 19th October 1945 along with all subsequent amendments?
 - (4) Do you sincerely receive and adopt the essential tenets of the Reformed faith as expressed in the confessions of our Church as authentic and reliable expositions of what Scripture leads us to believe and do, and will you be instructed and led by those confessions as you lead the people of God?
 - (5) Will you be a Minister of the Word in obedience to Jesus Christ, under the authority of Scripture, and continually guided by our confessions?
 - (6) Will you be governed by our Church's polity, and will you abide by its discipline? Will

you be a friend among your colleagues in ministry, working with them, subject to the ordering of God's Word and Spirit?

- (7) Will you in your own life seek to follow the Lord Jesus Christ, love your neighbours and work for the reconciliation of the world?
- (8) Do you promise to further the peace, unity, and purity of the church?
- (9) Will you seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination and love?
- (10) Will you be a faithful Minister, proclaiming the good news in Word and Sacrament, teaching faith, and caring for people? Will you be active in government and discipline, serving in the governing bodies of the Church; and in your ministry will you try to show the love and justice of Jesus Christ?

The candidate will sign the Formula (See Appendix G-13:05), and/or the Constitutional Questions (above).

It is usual, in connection with an ordination to the holy ministry for the newly ordained Minister to be inducted at the same time, except where the ordination takes place in a different Presbytery. The service shall proceed with the elements indicated in G-14.0510 before returning to the prayer and the laying on of hands.

10. Prayer and the Laying on of Hands

The candidate, having answered the questions in the affirmative, shall kneel and the Ministers of the Presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of Minister of the Word and Sacraments. The Moderator of Presbytery shall then say:

“(Name)....., you are now ordained a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ. Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him Amen.”

Then the members of the Presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the new Minister into the ministry of the Word and Sacraments. At the conclusion of the ordination service, the new Minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.

11. Ordination Recorded

The Presbytery shall record the ordination as a part of its official records along with the acceptance and subscription of the new Minister to the obligations undertaken in the ordination vows. It shall also be the duty of the Stated Clerk of the Presbytery to enroll the newly ordained Minister as a member of the Presbytery and to notify the Session of the particular Church of which the candidate has previously held his membership so that the Session there may record the fact that the candidate is now ordained and that his

name has been transferred to the role of the Presbytery.

Calling and Inducting Ministers of the Word and Sacraments

1. Ministers and Associate Ministers (or Co-Ministers)

Every parish should have the pastoral services of a Minister of the Word and Sacrament. The permanent pastoral relationships which may exist between any Parish and the ministry are that of either Minister or Associate Minister. (See G-06.0201).

Associate Ministers are ministers who are called and inducted with an equal responsibility for the Parish ministry. Ministers and Associate Ministers shall each be considered a pastor/Minister and they may share duties within the Parish as agreed upon by the Session and approved by the Presbytery.

2. Induction Service

On the day designated for the induction the Presbytery or commission thereof appointed for this purpose shall convene and shall call the Congregation gathered to worship. The service shall have the same focus and form as the service of ordination, and the person being inducted shall be asked to answer the questions asked at the time of ordination. (See G-14.0409.) Following the affirmative answers to the questions asked of

the person being inducted, an Elder shall face the Congregation along with the Minister-elect (Or Associate Minister-elect) and shall ask them to answer the following question(s);

“Do you, the members of this Parish, receive Mr (or Mrs or Miss)
to be your Minister promising him (or her) all due honour and support in the Lord; and will you give of your means, as the Lord shall prosper you, for the maintenance of the Christian ministry and the furtherance of the Gospel?”

- a. “Do we, the members of the Church accept (name) as our Minister (or Associate Minister), chosen by God through the voice of this Parish to guide us in the way of Jesus Christ?
- b. “Do we agree to encourage (name), to respect his (or her) decisions, and to follow as he (or she) guides us, serving Jesus Christ, who alone is Head of the Church?
- c. “Do we promise to pay him (or her) fairly and provide for him (or her) welfare as he (or she) works among us; to stand by him (or her) in trouble and share his or her joys?
Will we listen to the word he (or she) preaches, welcome him (or her) pastoral care, and honour him (or her) authority as he (or she) seeks to honour and obey Jesus Christ Our Lord?”

The members of the Parish having answered these questions in the affirmative a candidate being ordained and installed shall kneel and the Presbytery shall, with prayer and the laying on of hands, ordain the candidate to the office of Minister of the Word and Sacrament and induct him or her in the particular Ministerial responsibility. A Minister previously ordained, who is being inducted may kneel for the prayer of induction.

The member presiding shall then say:

“(name)you are now a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in the Church of Jesus Christ and for this Parish, Whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. Amen.”

For a Minister previously ordained, say only; “You are now a Minister of the word in and for this Pariah. Whatever you do.....etc.

Then, the members of the Presbytery, and others as may be appropriate, shall welcome the newly ordained and inducted (or newly inducted) Minister into their fellowship in the ministry of the Word.

Persons invited by the Presbytery may then give brief charges to the Minister or Associate Minister and to the Parish to be faithful in their relationship and in their reciprocal responsibilities.

At the conclusion of the service the newly ordained and inducted, (or newly inducted) Minister may make a brief statement and shall pronounce the benediction.

The Presbytery shall duly record in its Minute Book the fact of the service of induction.

3. Welcome

After the installation service, the officers and members of the Church should come forward to their Minister or Associate Minister and give him or her an appropriate expression of cordial reception and affectionate regard.

4. More than One Congregation

The induction of a Minister or Associate Minister who is to serve more than one Congregation may take place in a joint service, provided each Congregation is present and answers for itself the constitutional questions set forth in G-14.0510.

5. Interim Ministers (or Temporary Ministers Stated Supply)

When a Parish does not have an inducted Minister or while the Minister is unable to perform her or his duties, the Session should obtain the services of a Minister of this denomination in a temporary arrangement.

An Interim Minister may be an honourably retired Minister who works under a contract arrangement, subject to the approval of the Presbytery and the Board of Church Ministry. The arrangement must be reviewed annually, and in no case may a Parish engage a contract Minister when another candidate is available.

An Interim Minister is different from an Associate Minister. (See G-14.201.c.)

6. Commissioned by Preacher

A commissioned lay preacher is a person granted a local commission by the Presbytery to lead worship and preach the gospel. This commission is valid only in one or more Congregations designated by the Presbytery. The person is selected by the Presbytery and trained. The person shall be instructed in Bible, Reformed Theology and Sacraments, Presbyterian Polity, preaching and teaching. The person so trained shall be examined by a committee of the Board of Christian Education as to him or her personal faith, motives for seeking the commission, and general competence.

The commission shall be valid for a period Of up to three years. It may be renewed at expiration, or terminated at any time by the General Assembly Board of Church Ministry.

The Board of Christian Education shall provide resources for the person's spiritual and intellectual development. There shall be an annual report to the Parish and the Presbytery concerned and to the General Assembly Board of Church Ministry.

The commissioned lay preacher may not moderate a Session, administer the Sacrament of baptism, or perform a Christian service of marriage or marriage or marriage blessing. The commissioned lay preacher may administer the Lord's Supper only under the explicit authorisation of Presbytery as concerns time and place.

The commissioned lay preacher shall work under the supervision of the Presbytery through the Moderator of the Parish Session being served. The Presbytery may revoke the commission of any lay preacher who does not abide by these provisions.

The commissioned lay preacher shall answer in the positive the same Constitutional Questions asked of candidates for ordination in G-14.0409, but substituting the words 'Lay Preacher' for Minister" and deleting all expressions referring to the administration of the Sacraments, Commissioned lay preachers may be ordained as Elders, when appropriate,

by a Parish Session. Commissioned lay preachers may not to be ordained to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, except when having fulfilled all of the steps towards such ordination as indicated in G-14.0300.G-14.0600

Dissolution of a Pastoral Relationship

1. Termination of Appointment

The termination of a Ministers service in any Parish is effected by a decision of the Board of Church Ministry.

2. Termination at Request of the Minister

When a Minister wishes to terminate his or her appointment to a particular Parish or agency of the Church, he or she shall put his or her request into writing along with his or her supporting reason, sending a copy to the Board of Church Ministry, and a copy to the Clerk of Presbytery. The Presbytery Moderator and/or Clerk shall inquire into the matter to determine if the supporting reasons are justified, and shall report the same to the next meeting of the Board of Church Ministry.

3. Termination at the Request of the Parish

When a Parish wishes to terminate the service of their Minister, the Parish Session may write to the Presbytery Clerk through their Minister or in such circumstances when such procedure is impractical, the Parish Clerk may write to the Presbytery Clerk stating the views and the reasons of the Session or any members thereof. The Presbytery shall be obligated to investigate the matter, and if substantiated by the Presbytery, shall forward a recommendation to the Board of Church Ministry.

4. Termination due to Age or Length of Service

The Board of Church Ministry shall automatically terminate the appointment of any Minister who has served the Church for a period of forty years or upon the date of his or her sixtieth birthday.

5. Contract Appointment

A Minister, upon his or her official retirement, may serve the Church under term of Contract appointment, as listed in the most recent edition of Conditions of Service.

6. Activities following Termination

A Minister may serve as an interim Minister or Temporary Minister under contract appointment for one year at a time, subject to the approval of him or her Presbytery and the Board of Church Ministry. (See G-11.0404.i, ii.)

7. Termination for Ministers not holding Charges

The provisions of G-06.0220 and G-14.0604 relating to the termination of relationship because of age shall apply also to all Ministers serving the Church, its governing bodies, and its Boards and agencies.

Ecumenical Commitment

1. Openness

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, as part of the universal church, (See Constitution: Declaratory Articles (ii) and (iii), and G-04.0101) seeks to manifest more visibly the unity of the Church of Jesus Christ, and will be open to opportunities for conversation and co-operation with other ecclesiastical bodies. (See G-04.0203.)

2. Other Christian Bodies

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria will seek to initiate to maintain, and to strengthen relations to, and engage in mission with other Christian bodies, especially those of

Presbyterian and Reformed persuasion, as well as other Christian bodies whose outlook is ecumenical in character.

Care shall be taken, however, in view of the proliferation of independent churches, the radical emphasis on culture (including elements of 'traditional religion'), the divisive potential of materialism and ethnicity, and the theological extremes such as present emphases on healing, sanctification, tongues and other 'charismatic notions', to support only that which is consistent with the constitution of this Church and the historic principles of Presbyterianism.

3. All Levels

All governing bodies of the church, in consultation with the next higher governing body, shall be authorized to work with other Christian denominations, provided always that:

- a. Activities at any level below General Assembly shall regularly be reported to the next higher governing body, and
- b. Activities at any level below General Assembly may be terminated if the higher governing body determines the relationship not to be in the best interests of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, and
- c. Activities at any lower level of the Church shall be consistent with that of the higher level.

In case of questions or uncertainty, an inquiry shall be made of the Board of Faith and Order for guidance.

Relations with Other Christian Denominations

1. Churches in correspondence

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is in correspondence with the highest governing body of the churches with which it has had historical relations outside of Nigeria and of those Nigerian churches which are members of ecumenical bodies in which the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria holds membership. To be 'in correspondence' does not necessarily infer any agreement in theology or other principles.

2. Recognition of Ordination into the Ministry

When an appropriately trained and ordained Minister of another denomination wishes to work with, or become a full member of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, and after the candidate shall have satisfactorily completed any additional requirements laid down by the Board of Church Ministry, and after the constitutional conditions (G-14.0409) have been met, the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall recognize his or her previous ordination to the Ministry.

3. Recognition of Ordination into Ruling Eldership

Inasmuch as the Ruling Eldership in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria requires a knowledge of Presbyterian polity and inasmuch as the meaning of eldership and church polity varies greatly in other Christian Churches, the ordination of Ruling Elders from another denomination shall not be recognized in any Parish of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, except:-

- a. That there is satisfactory documented evidence of such ordination by the laying on of hands at a public worship service and
 - b. That there is satisfaction that the Elder concerned understands Presbyterian polity as recorded in this Practice and Procedure and that he or she fully subscribes thereto.
- (See G-06.0307).

4. Reception of Churches

When a particular church of another denomination requests that it be received by a Presbytery of this denomination, the Presbytery shall:-

- a. Inquire of the particular Church/Parish of their reasons
- b. Inquire of the Board of Faith and Order if there be any known reasons for rejecting the request, and if not,
- c. Verify that the church has been regularly dismissed by the governing body of that denomination and shall then receive the church and its property in accord with its responsibilities and powers. (G-11.0401.h,i,j.)
- d. In cases where a denomination is not willing to dismiss the congregation and where the transfer of property is not involved, any sizeable number of its members may present a Constituting covenant (See G-07.0301) and be organized as a new congregation.

When an individual church of no denominational affiliation requests that it be received by a Presbytery of this denomination, the Presbytery shall receive from that congregation:-

- a. A letter of request from the proper officials of that congregation, along with a properly signed Constituting Covenant similar to that of G-07.0301, and, where possible, a statement of doctrine or belief.
- b. Upon receipt of the request, the Presbytery shall appoint a property qualified commission whose task shall be:-
 - i. to examine the above letter, covenant, doctrinal statement,
 - ii. to meet with the officials of the church and to discern, inter alia:-
 - (a) Reasons leading to their decision to request membership in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
 - (b) Whether the interested Church is willing to subscribe to the Constitution and the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
 - (c) Whether there be doctrines or practices incompatible with those of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.
 - (d) The intention of the current officials regarding their offices.
 - (e) Questions as to property, financial matters including any incumbrances or debts.
 - iii. to report the same in detail to the Presbytery, and, if desirable, to make recommendations.
- c. If the Presbytery wishes to bring the congregation into the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, it may temporarily attach the congregation to an existing Parish, or may request General Assembly to create it as an Extension Charge. (See G-11.0404.1.)
- d. If the congregation is large enough to be a Parish on its own, the Presbytery may then proceed to create a Parish according to G-11.0404,m, making certain to also communicate with the Board of Church Property Development regarding any acquisition of real property and the Board of Church Ministry regarding Ministerial appointments.

5. Recognition of Baptism

In questions of membership, whether for reasons of transfer of membership or of confirmation the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria shall recognize the baptism of any Christian church as valid, provided that such baptism was publicly done with water, and “...in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.” The mode of baptism may be by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion: the place of baptism is immaterial.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria recognizes Roman Catholic baptism as valid.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria does not recognize the baptism of the following Churches or cults as valid (Min.2221.3-1981):

- a. Salvation Army: Do not believe in sacraments at all
- b. Christian Scientists: Do not practice baptism.
- c. Brotherhood of Cross and Star: ???
- d. Cherubim and Seraphim: ???
- e. Jehovah's Witnesses: They practice immersion in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. But are they a church or a cult?
- f. Mormons (Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints): They practice immersion, but a statement from their 'Doctrine and Covenants' says: “...Thou shalt declare repentance and faith on the Saviour, and remission of sins by baptism...” (19:31).
"Verily, verily I [Christ] say unto you [Joseph Smith] they who believe not on your words, and are not baptized in water in my name, for the remission of sins, that they may receive the Holy Ghost, shall be damned” (84:74). A church or a cult?
- g.
- h.

Representation on behalf of the Church

Reform

1. Reform by Amendment

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria would be faithful to the Lordship of Christ and to its historic tradition of the church reformed always reforming, by the Spirit of God. In this faith, amendment procedures are understood as a means to faithfulness as God breaks forth yet more light from His Word. (See G-02.0203.)

The Constitution and the Declaratory Articles (See G-01.0500.)

2. Amendment procedure

The procedure for amending the Constitution and the Declaratory Articles of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is found in the last article of the said Constitution, to wit:-

"25. The Declaratory Articles contained in Paragraph 3 of this Constitution may only be altered by the procedure as set out in Article vi, No alteration shall be made in the remainder of the Constitution, as contained in the above Paragraphs 1,2 and 4 to 24, except with the approval of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, expressed by three fourths of the members present at a statutory meeting of the General Assembly, after notice of the proposed alteration has been given in writing at the previous statutory meeting of the General Assembly."

1. Amendments to Confessional Documents

Amendments to the confessional documents of this church may be made only in the following manner:-

- a. The proposed amendment shall have first been reviewed by the Board of faith and

Order, who shall provide the General Assembly with their comments on the proposal, both pro and con. The proposal need not come as a recommendation of the Board to the General Assembly, but may come as an Overture from a lower court. All Overtures from lower courts must reach the Board of Faith and Order at least one hundred and twenty (120) days before the opening of the General Assembly to allow time for the Board, to formulate an opinion to present to the General Assembly.

- b. The proposed amendment, if approved by a majority of the General Assembly, shall be sent to the Presbyteries under the Barrier Act, and the approval in writing of not less than two thirds of the Presbyteries shall be required.
- c. The approval of the next General Assembly is required before enactment.

2. Creation of Confessional Documents

The General Assembly shall be free to create any confessional document, provided always that such a confessional document shall be in accord with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

Amendments to the Practice and Procedure

1. Amendments to the Practice and Procedure

Amendments to the Practice and Procedure may only be made in the following manner:-

- a. DETAILS ARE YET TO COME
- b. DETAILS ARE YET TO COME

SOURCES AND CREDIT

This revision of the Practice and Procedure of the Presbyterian Church of

Nigeria draws heavily, not only from the previous edition of 1971 in use by this Church, but also from various editions of:

The Practice and Procedure of the Church of Scotland.;

The Book of Order of the Presbyterian Church (USA)

The Book of Forms of the Presbyterian Church in Canada.

The Presbyterian Church of Nigeria is deeply grateful to these our "sister churches" for the inspiration and material which has been studied, adapted, and revised for our own use.

QUESTIONS TO BE USED IN THE RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

ON THE OCCASION OF ADULT BAPTISM:

QUESTIONS TO THE CANDIDATES FOR BAPTISM:

1. Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier and Guide?
2. Do you repent of your sins with a humble and contrite heart, and put your trust in the mercy of God which is in Jesus Christ?
3. Do you promise to give regular attendance at public worship, to be regular in daily prayer and the reading of the Scriptures to make diligent use of the means of grace, and to be a faithful member of the Church of God?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

Do you promise to receive these friends in love as fellow members of the Church and to pray for them and help them in their service of the Lord Jesus?

ON THE OCCASION OF BAPTIZED PERSONS SEEKING CONFIRMATION:

QUESTION TO THE CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION:

1. Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier Guide and Upholder?
2. Do you dedicate yourself to God and promise in dependence on His grace to serve Him and to walk in his ways all the days of your life?
3. Do you promise to give regular attendance at public worship and to be faithful in daily prayer and the reading of the Scriptures?
4. Do you promise to partake regularly in the sacrament of the Lords Supper?
5. Do you promise to submit to the courts of the Church as being over you in the Lord?
6. Do you promise to contribute according to your ability with your strength, time and money towards the support of the Church and to the furtherance of the gospel at home and abroad?
7. Do you accept responsibility for making Christ known among your friends and neighbours; and will you strive constantly to bear witness, by word and deed, to the Lord Jesus Christ?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

Do you promise to receive these friends in love as fellow members of this Church, to pray for them, and to help them in their service for the Lord?

ON THE OCCASION OF THE RECEPTION OF MEMBERS ON TRANSFER FROM OTHER
CONGREGATIONS:

QUESTION TO THE PERSONS ABOUT TO BE ADMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP:

Do you promise to be a faithful member of this congregation, giving of yourself in every way, and so fulfill your calling as a disciple of Jesus Christ the Lord?

Do you promise to persevere in the diligent use of the means of grace, to seek the peace and

welfare of the Church, and faithfully to support its work and worship?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

Do you promise to receive these friends in love as fellow members of this Church to pray for them, and to help them in their service for the Lord?

ON THE OCCASION OF RE-INSTATING PERSONS WHOSE MEMBERSHIP HAS LAPSED OR WHO HAVE BEEN UNDER SUSPENSION:

QUESTION TO THOSE SEEKING RE-INSTATEMENT:

Do you, (name), repent of your coldness of heart and carelessness of purpose, and promise again to take an active part in the life of this congregation, being as faithful in your attendance upon worship as God may enable you, and also to give fully of your time and money?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

Do you promise to receive these friends in love as fellow members of this Church, to pray for them, and to help them in their service for the Lord?

APPENDIX G-05:02

THE MINIMUM STANDARDS OF INSTRUCTION FOR CONFIRMATION AND MEMBERSHIP

DETAILS YET TO COME

THE MARRIAGE ORDINANCE

The following is not the complete Marriage Ordinance (Cap. 115, Paragraphs 1—57) of Nigeria. It is however, a list of those points which every Minister must know to avoid running foul of the law. The number

in parenthesis at the end Of each tern refers to paragraph in the law.

1. One of the persons intending to marry must go to the Registrar of Marriages, at east 21 days before the intended date of marriage, and give notice of the same. The Registrar will post a notice. (7-11).
2. the Registrar will demand that:-
 - a. One of the parties will have been resident in his district for at least fifteen days.
 - b. Each party be 21 years of age; those younger must provide written consent by the parent, guardian or other legally qualified person.
 - c. That the parties be not hindered from marriage because of kindred, affinity or other unlawful hindrance.
 - d. That neither of the parties to the intended marriage is married by native law and custom to any other person other than the person with whom such marriages proposed to be contracted. [11 (1)]
3. A recognized Minister of religion (or the Marriage Registrar, or an administrative officer) may have an affidavit in support of 2. a.b.c.d above sworn before him or her [11(2)] subject to the following conditions:
 - a. The Minister taking the affidavit shall explain to the person making the affidavit what are the

prohibited degrees of kindred and affinity along with its penalties paragraphs 47, 48 {See para. 26, below.)

b. If the Minister willfully fails to do so, he or she shall be liable to imprisonment for two years. [11 (3)]

c. The Minister taking such affidavit shall sign a declaration written thereon, that he or she has given

the required explanation to the person making such affidavit and that such person has appeared

fully to understand the same. [11 (4)]

4. The marriage must be performed within three months from the date of the notice. After that date, it has

expired and a fresh notice must be given before the parties can lawfully marry. [12]

5. Any person objecting to the marriage, whether because consent is required or for any other reason,

may go to the Registrar of Marriages, and enter a caveat against the issue of the registrar's certificate,

by writing at any time before the issue thereof the word "Forbidden." opposite to the entry of the notice in the marriage notice book and appending thereto his or her name and place of abode and the grounds

for the objection. The Registrar may not issue a certificate for the marriage until the caveat is removed.

[14 (1)]. The caveat is removed only by a judge of the High Court of the district. [15,16]. The judge may award compensation and costs to the party injured, if it appear that a caveat was entered on insufficient

grounds. [17].

6. Consent to the marriage, when either party is under 21, is given by the written consent of the father, or if

he be dead or of unsound mind or absent from Nigeria, of the guardian of such party before a certificate

can be issued. [18].

7. Marriage may be celebrated in any licensed place of worship by any recognized minister of the church, denomination or body to which such place of worship belongs, and according to the rites or usages of marriage observed in such church, denomination or body: provided that the marriage be celebrated with open doors between the hours of eight o'clock in the forenoon and six o'clock in the afternoon, and in

the presence of two or more witnesses besides the officiating minister. [21]

8. A minister shall not celebrate any marriage if he knows of any just impediment to such marriage, nor

until the parties deliver to him or her the Registrar's certificate. [21].

9. A Minister shall not celebrate any marriage except in a building which has been duly licensed (in some

cases where the Governor may issue a special license, see para. 14, below). [23]

10. The recognized Ministers of licensed places of worship shall hold books of marriage certificates in

duplicate and with counterfoils as in the Form E of the First Schedule. Such books shall be kept by

the recognized ministers for the time being of such places of worship, under lock and key, and be in

custody of..... the Minister, who shall So soon as all the certificates in any such books shall have been

used, send the said book with the counterfoils is duly filled in to the Principal Registrar. [24]

11. Immediately after the celebration of any marriage by a minister, the officiating minister shall till up in

duplicate a marriage certificate with the particulars required by the said Form E, and state also and

enter in the counterfoil the number of the certificate, the date of the marriage names of the parties and

the names of the witnesses [25]

12. The certificate shall then be signed in duplicate by the officiating minister, by the parties, and by two or more witnesses to the marriage. The minister having also signed his or her name to the counterfoil, he

or she shall sever the duplicate certificate therefrom, and he shall deliver one certificate to the parties, and shall within seven days thereafter transmit the other to the registrar of marriages for the district in

which the marriage takes place, who shall file the same in his office. [26]

13.. Marriage by Ordinance may also be completed in the Registrar's office. [27, 28]

14. Marriage may also be celebrated in other places than those licensed for marriages, but only upon the

authorisation of the Governor, who must give a special license. [13,29]

15. Marriage between a man and his deceased wife's sister or niece are lawful. [33 (1)]

16. The only grounds for an invalid marriage.. ..i.e., being null and void..... are when both parties knowingly and willfully agree to its celebration

a. in any place other than the Registrar's office, or a licensed place of worship, or in a place appointed

by the Governor.

b. under a false name or names,

c. without the Registrar's certificate of notice.

d. by a person not being a recognized minister of some religious denomination or body, or a Registrar

of marriages. [33 (2)]

17. Persons married under the Marriage Ordinance may not, during the continuation of such marriage, contract a valid marriage under native law and custom. Neither may a person, being married under the Marriage Ordinance, contract a marriage under Native law and custom at the same time the

marriage under ordinance is in effect. A valid marriage under native law and custom may be declared valid under

the Marriage Ordinance. [35,47,48]

18. Fees may be collected by the Registrar for filing notices, etc. The Ordinance does not preclude a minister from receiving the fees ordinarily paid to a minister of his or her denomination for the celebration of a marriage. [37— 39]

19. Whoever, being unmarried, goes through the ceremony of marriage under the Ordinance with a person

whom he or she knows to be married to another person, shall be liable to imprisonment for five years.

[40]

20. Whoever performs..... the ceremony of marriage, knowing that he or she is not duly qualified so to do,

or that any of the matters required by law for the validity of such marriage has not happened or been

per formed, so that the marriage is void or unlawful on any ground, shall be liable to imprisonment

for five years. [43]

21. The penalty for neglecting to fill up or transmit certificates of marriage is liability to imprisonment for two

years. [44]

22. Impersonation in marriage, with intent to deceive the other party in marriage is punishable by five years

of imprisonment. [45]

23. Ministers performing the ceremony of marriage, when they know that the marriage is void on any

ground, are liable to imprisonment for five years. [46]

24. Ministers celebrating marriages where minors have not obtained written consent shall-be liable for

imprisonment for two years. [49]

25. Marriages where at least one party is non-Nigerian have certain other regulations. The Minister should

check the Marriage Act paragraphs 50 —54.

26. The list of kin where marriages not allowed:

1. Relationships by consanguinity:

A man may not marry his:

Mother

Daughter

Grandmother

Grand-daughter

Sister

Aunt

Niece

Great-grandmother

Great-granddaughter

These forbidden relationships include half-blood as well as full-blood relationships and they apply

even when traced through, or to, any person of illegitimate birth.

2. Relationships by affinity

A man may not marry his:

Ex-wife's mother or daughter

Ex-wife's grandmother or
grand-daughter

Father's ex-wife

Son's ex-wife

Grandfathers ex-wife

Grandson's ex-wife

The forbidden relationships apply even when traced through, or to, any person of illegitimate birth.

3. Relationships by adoption:

A man may not marry his:

Adoptive mother or former
adoptive mother

Adopted daughter or former
adopted daughter

MARRIAGE BY NATIVE LAW AND CUSTOM

CUSTOMARY OBLIGATIONS

1. There shall be a written statement that customary obligations have been fulfilled.

MONOGAMY:

1. A man who is married to one wife and who desires to be baptized or admitted to full membership of the Church, but whose wife does not agree to do so, shall be required to take the Christian vows to marry no other and not to divorce his wife (except in the case of her adultery). He shall not be admitted if he puts away his wife and seeks admission as a single man.
2. A woman who is married to a monogamist and who desires to be baptized or admitted to full membership of the Church, but whose husband does not agree to do so, shall be required to take the Christian vows, not to leave her husband (except in the case of his adultery) or to marry another. She shall not be admitted if she leaves her husband and seeks admission as an unmarried woman.
3. The first wife of a polygamist who desires to be baptized or admitted to full membership of the Church while remaining with her husband, shall not be required to take any vow.
4. The wife (other than the first) of a polygamist who desires to be baptized or admitted to full membership of the Church must first obtain divorce.
5. A polygamist who desires to be baptized or admitted to full membership of the Church shall put away all his wives save one (preferably the first wife) making suitable provision for those thus put away. The provision deemed suitable by the Session must be reported to and sanctioned by the Presbytery before action is taken by the Session. He shall then be required to take Christian vows not to divorce his remaining wife (except in the case of her adultery) and not to marry another.
6. A communicant member of the Church who deliberately becomes a polygamist in spite of all warning, shall be excommunicated.

7. No minister of the Church may solemnize the marriage of a Christian with a non-Christian; but under the rules laid down by the General Assembly, the marriage may be solemnized of a Christian

with a person under regular instruction for baptism, or of two such persons together.

8. Without detracting from the Christian idea of one man and one wife until death do then, part, there

may be cases which call for Christian sympathy. A widow who felt she was not safe remaining single, and found it impossible to secure a bachelor or widower for a husband, could be allowed to

be married to a polygamist without losing her church membership; or was eligible for admission to

full membership after the sincerity of her motive had been attested by the Minister.

(1958-828; 1962-1132;

1973-1786)

APPENDIX G-06:03

THE MINISTER AND MONEY

THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1. A general principle, the Parish Board administers the Parish money, and the Minister handles his or

her personal money.

2. All financial transactions of the Church, or any part or organization of the Church), shall be done

with full accountability, and always, in a manner so as to avoid the appearance of fraud, deception,

personal appropriation, or other misuse of funds.

3. The Minister is expected to be the best example integrity in the Parish, and therefore it is very important that his or her handling of financial matters, whether public or private, be done in a manner above reproach.

THE INTERPRETATION

1. Although the Parish Board administers the Parish's money, this does not mean that the Minister has nothing to do with money in the Parish:
 - a. The Parish Minister, more than any other person, is responsible for promoting stewardship (time, talent, and money) by his or her preaching and teaching.
 - b. It is the Parish Minister who receives the offerings during worship and offers the prayer of blessing.
 - c. The Minister is the Chairman of the Board (unless he or she has handed over to another) (see G-07.0501 .e.), and it is the Board that expends the money. It is the Chairman who usually signs the authorisation for expenditure voucher on behalf of the Board.
 - d. The Minister (along with the Elder Commissioner) are the Parish's chief interpreters of Presbytery, Synod, and General Assembly assessments.

The Minister may handle money (physical cash):

- a. When such money is his or her own salary which has been paid to him or her by the Parish Treasurer. The Minister shall give no accounting to the Board. Neither shall the Minister or his (or her) spouse be required to give any accounting for personal gifts of money received.

- b. When it is for allowances paid to him or her by the Board. If so requested by the Board he or she may be required to give an accounting of expenditure of allowances.

- c. When the Minister is acting as a carrier of the funds on behalf of the Parish Treasurer; e.g. for transporting Parish funds to, the Presbytery, Synod, or General Assembly. It is to be noted that in this capacity the Minister is only a carrier (transporter) of funds, and has no other authority over the funds except to transport and deliver the same. In every case there ought to be a covering letter from the sender to the receiver stating the amount and for what purpose.

- d. When the Minister has been given the sole jurisdiction over the expenditure of the Poor Fund. He or she is expected to give an accounting of the same.

- e. When the Minister, in the course of his or her Parish visitation, is entrusted with amounts from bed-ridden and infirmed members, to be handed over to the Parish Treasurer or put into the Sunday worship offerings, or lodged with the keeper of the Pledge System offerings, etc. The Minister may not however, solicit funds privately.

- f. When the Minister has privately been given money to be put in the Thanksgiving offering during worship because the donor cannot or does not wish to personally make the presentation. In such cases, however, it is preferable for the donor to make the donation in a sealed envelope and the envelope put into the plate in the sight of the entire congregation. If an envelope is not used, the Minister ought to announce the amount of the donation at the moment he or she is putting it into the plate, so as to avoid any suspicion of fraud.

g. When the Minister receives gifts for his services as in the case of marriages or burials, the Minister

is entitled to retain the same. He or she need not report such gifts to the Parish Board, neither may

the Board deduct such amounts from his or her salary as if they were salary already received. Such

gifts remain gifts and cannot become salary. The Minister may not, however, refuse ministerial services on the presumption (or fact) that some financial consideration shall not be forthcoming, nor

may he set any fee for services rendered. He may, however, be reimbursed for out-of-pocket expenses.

h. When a Minister receives gifts, either in the form of money or in material gifts, as on the occasion of

his or her licensing, ordination, induction anniversary, retirement, or some such similar occasion he

or she is not responsible to the Parish for the use of such gifts. Care must be taken, however, to distinguish between gifts which are made to the Minister, and gifts which are made to the Church

(and which happen to be used primarily by the Minister). Physical gifts made to the Parish or Congregation must be entered into the Parish Inventory. (See G-07.0501 .g.)

i. When a Minister is given a bonus by the Parish in appreciation for his or her services, the Minister is

not accountable to the Parish for the expenditure of such bonus.

The Minister ought NOT to handle Parish money (physical cash):

a. Except in very rare circumstances, the Minister shall not be the Treasurer of a Parish or congregation.

b. While the Minister under certain circumstances may supervise the counters of money at the end of worship services he or she ought not to be a counter (except, perhaps, in areas of great illiteracy he or she may be called upon to validate the work of other counters).

c. The Minister ought not to be responsible for holding Church funds. However, in such places where

it is not expedient to do otherwise, the Minister ought to receive such funds only in sealed packets.

The Minister shall not open any such sealed packet The Minister, on demand, shall deliver them to

the Treasurer who shall in the presence of witnesses, first of all validate that have been returned untampered.

MISUSE, MISUNDERSTANDING, FRAUD

1. No Minister shall be deprived of any right or privilege (including that of voting), because his or her

Parish has not paid its assessment to the General Assembly, Synod, or Presbytery. However, he or

she may be tried in the courts of the Church, with subsequent punishment and/or denial of privilege, for thwarting or refusing to implement any decisions of General Assembly, Synod, or Presbytery relating to the finances of the Parish.

2. A Minister may not convert any Church funds in his or her care to personal use. Any Minister doing

so may be charged with misappropriation of Church funds, if not outright theft.

3. A Minister may not demand of the Parish Treasurer any Church funds except those which have been approved by the Parish Board, either as Standing Orders for payments (as in the case of salary and allowances) or as the result of Board decisions. Neither may a Minister in a non-Parish situation demand of any Treasurer in the Church any funds whose payment has not been previously authorised by the respective responsible body.

4. Loans by the Parish Board to Ministers (or anyone else) are discouraged. However, in such cases where loan agreements are entered into, the Minister is hilly responsible for completing repayment

even though he or she may be transferred to another Parish or another responsibility, Loan repayments may be withheld from a Ministers salary when necessary.

5. When the Minister (or any other person) is advanced funds for any purpose on a "cost only" basis,

all funds in excess of the actual cost involved must be return to the Treasury which provided the funds as soon as possible, along with an accounting of any amounts spent.
6. A minister may not impose any levy.

OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

1. See also G-06.0217 for other regulations concerning the Minister and other remunerative employment.
2. The Minister is responsible for any and all taxes, levis, and fines of a personal nature, as distinguished from those taxes which arise from Church property assessment end for which the Parish Board is responsible. However, a Parish, if it so desires, may pay any of the Minister's personal taxes, levies, and/or fines on his or her behalf if it so desires.
3. The Minister's salary may be attached:
 - a. For any deductions required by the General Assembly, the Synod, or the Parish, as, for example, in the case Of Pension dues.
 - b. For failure to repay any loan, when the decision for such a deduction is made by the Presbytery or any higher court of the Church.
4. A Minister may be a signatory to any Church current account in a bank only when requested by, and authorised by, a decision of the Parish Board. He or she shall similarly surrender such power at the request of the Parish Board, and absolutely must do so when handing over and/or transferring out of the Parish. He or she shall sign no cheques on any Parish account except the Bearer's prior and out of the Parish. He or she shall sign no cheques on any Parish account except the Board's prior and explicit approval.

ACCOMMODATION AND FURNISHINGS TO BE PROVIDED FOR CHURCH WORKERS

ACCOMMODATION

1. Clergy:

Not less than a three-bedroom flat with self-contained facilities (kitchen and toilet) which may be either, owned or rented by the employing body. Windows must be screened with wire gauze, doors and windows must be lockable, the roof free from leakage, and in general the flat must be in

good repair.

2. Deacons and Deaconesses, General Assembly Evangelists, Junior staff:

Not less than a two-room living situation with shared facilities (kitchen and toilet) which may be either owned or rented by the employing body. Windows must be screened, doors and windows

lockable, the roof free from leakage, and in general the accommodation must be in good repair.

FURNISHINGS

1. Clergy:

- a. Three double beds
- b. Three dressers
- c. Set of cushion chairs
- d. Dining table, 6 chairs
- e. Writing desk and chair

Deacons and Deaconesses, General Assembly Evangelists, Junior staff:

- a. Two double beds

- b. One mirror
- c. Set of cushion chairs
- d. Dining table, 4 chairs
- e. Writing desk and chair

LIMITATIONS

1. These are the MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS before a Parish may be created. Parishes are free to provide larger or better accommodations and/or furnishings, e.g., floor coverings, air conditioning, radio, television, clothes drying racks, etc.
2. An inventory of the property shall be conducted annually by the Parish, and triennially by the Presbytery. (See G-07.0501g; G-10.0506 and G-11.0405.V with Appendix G-11:01.)
3. When a Minister or Church Worker also personally owns any of the above listed items, care shall be taken to distinguish between personal property and Church property. Parishes are enjoined not to prevail upon a Minister's generosity to provide his or her own personal furnishings; neither may a Minister or Church Worker claim damages for wear and tear on personal property even though used in the interests of the Church, unless a prior written agreement had been made.
4. Because the public's impression of the Church and of the gospel is often influenced for better or for worse by the quality of accommodations and furnishings in which Ministers and Church workers live, it is important that such accommodations and furnishings be periodically inspected and repaired or replaced.
5. These minimum standards are required of all Parishes and Presbyteries not later than January 1 1989.

(-BCM No. 333 and 1987-GA0078.6)

TRIENNIAL VISITATION: MATTERS FOR ENQUIRY

(A) CONFERENCE WITH ITO MINISTER

1. Sunday Services:-

- a. What services are held in the church on Sunday?
- b. Are the attendances higher or lower than at the last Triennial Visitation?
- c. How faithful are the full communicant members?
- d. How punctual are the services in starting?
- e. What steps are taken to encourage children to attend Church? (brevity, Bible pictures, etc.)
- f. If any services are held beside those in Church, whether occasional or regular. State their nature.
- g. Do all of the literate members own and use a Hymnbook and a Bible?
- h. Experiments in worship: To what extent do you use.
 - i. African music?
 - ii. New hymns?
 - iii. Responses?
 - iv. Participation by members?
- i. What kind of relationship does the Minister have with the choir, and does he or she feel that the
choir's behaviour is generally conducive to worship?

2. Week-day Services:-

- a. Daily Prayers:
 - i. How is the attendance?
 - ii. What part is taken by the elders?

- b. What about open air services, campaigns, and retreats?
- c. Do weddings adhere to General Assembly rulings?
- d. Do funerals adhere to General Assembly rulings?

3. Christian Education:-

- a. What part does the Minister take in work among the young?
- b. How does he supervise-
 - i. Sunday Schools?
 - ii. Bible Class?
 - iii. Training of teachers for above activities?
- c. What arrangements are made for utilizing youth and young people in the Church?
- d. What method of teaching is used in:-
 - i. Sunday School? (Syllabus used?)
 - ii. Bible Class?
- e. What instruction is given to those preparing for Confirmation?
- f. What instruction is given to those offering themselves for full membership in the Church?
- g. What use is made of young people's organizations such as Christian Girls In Training, Girl's Brigade, Boy's Brigade, Boy Scouts, etc.?

4. Preaching:-

- a. Is the Minister usually in a pulpit on Sunday?
- b. How are pulpit arrangements made when the Minister is absent on duty elsewhere?
(See G-.06.0210)
- c. (Where applicable) are Preacher's lists prepared in advance, and how are the Preachers being prepared to preach.
- d. If the ordinary Services in the Church have ever been omitted since the last visitation, state the

circumstances. (Check the Service record book.)

5. The Sacraments

a. Baptism

i. Is the Sacrament of Baptism normally administered in the Church during a service of worship?

ii. In the case of Infant Baptism, what steps are taken to explain to parents the meaning and

responsibility of baptism?

iii. Is the Sacrament of Baptism administered in accordance with G-06.0211?

iv. Are questions as approved by the General Assembly used at Baptism?

b. Lord's Supper

i. Is there a preparatory Service held prior to the Lord's Supper? If so, when, how long does it

last, and how many of those partaking the Lord's Supper attend?

ii. Is the Minister satisfied with the frequency of the Lord's Supper?

iii. What arrangements are made for bed-ridden members?

6. Pastoral Care:-

a. Visits to Members:

i. How often does the Minister visit members who are ill?

ii. What oversight does he or she give to suspended members?

iii. How well does he or she visit members of ethnic groups other than his or her own?

b. Visits to non-members: -

i. How does he or she follow-up the visits of non-members to Church worship services(or other

functions)?

ii. Does the Minister visit stranger communities within his parish area?

c. Keeping or records: Does the Minister keep his or her personal diary? (Note: it is not intended to be

examined as part of the Triennial Visitation.)

d. Is the Minister keeping contact with possible future Evangelists, Deaconesses, and/or Ministers; is

he or she giving advice regarding studies and training?

7. Community Service:-

a. In what other ways does the Minister serve in the community?

b. Are new opportunities for service opening up?

c. Does the Minister regularly attend the local Ministerial Association, the local Council of Churches,

the Christian Association of Nigeria, the Christian Council of Nigeria or other similar group?

d. Does the Minister act as Chaplain (school, hospital, prison, or other)? If so, does the congregation

take the opportunity of sharing in this work?

8. Presbyterian:-

a. Does the Minister attend meetings of Presbytery regularly?

b. Does the Minister take his or her due part in the affairs of the Courts of the Church?

9. The Manse:-

a. Is the Manse conveniently situated?

b. Is it a comfortable and workable house?

c. Is there sufficient garden (where applicable)?

d. Is the Manse and environs reasonably clean?

e. Does the congregation take any responsibility for the upkeep of the Manse and environs?

10. Transportation:-

a. Is the Minister provided with adequate transportation to accomplish the duties of the parish?

11. Special problems:-

a. Are there any special circumstances connected with the parish or congregation or any other difficulties which should be reported?

(B) CONFERENCE WITH THE SESSION

1. The Session

a. How often are the regular meetings of Session? (See G-10.0203.)

b. Now many active elders-are there? How many inactive not-on-duty, inactive) elders are there?

(See G-06.0309.)

c. Is the composition of the Session representative of all groups within the Church, in keeping with G-

04.0403?

d. Is the rotation of elders fixed, and does each elder know when his or her term of office will expire?

(See G-10.0105.)

e. Is the number of active elders sufficient? (See G-10.0106.)

f. If not are steps being taken to secure others?

g. Are there any elders who have served more than six consecutive years?

(See -G-6.0308; -G-0104, 0105.)

h. What arrangements are usual in this parish for the election, training and admission to office of

elders-elect.

i. Elder's Districts:

- i. Do all active elders have districts? (See G-10.0305.d.)
 - ii. Do all districts have an active elder appointed to them?
- j. How many times a year does each active elder visit in each home in his or her district (on the average)?
- k. Has the Session appointed an elder commissioner to Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly and has the same been reported to the Presbytery clerk?
- i. Has the elder commissioner to Presbytery, Synod, and the General Assembly been regular in his or her attendance at these meetings, and does he or she report regularly back to the Session?.
- m. Do elders take any special part in the work of the congregation?
- n. Is the Church Register attested by the Session each year? (See G-10.0305.b.)

2. Congregation:-

- a. What was the membership of the Parish (and each of its congregations) during the past four years?

19— :— 19— :— 19— :— 19—

- b. How many partook of the Lord's Supper at east once during each year?
- c. What is the Overage attendance at normal Sunday services?
- d. What is the approximate turn-over of members per year? (Percentage formula: (1) add number of "transfers-out' to number of "transfers-in" and divide total by two to determine average number of turn-overs. (2) divide average number of turn-overs by the number of members on the Lords Supper Roll (including the Supplementary Roll). The result is the percentage of "turn-overs."

- e. In each of the past four years, how many members were admitted:

19— 19— 19— 19—

- i. By confirmation
- ii. By Transfer Certificate
- ii. By Resolution of Session

f. Are all new members admitted in the face of the congregation, and do they all publicly answer to

the vows of membership?

g. What steps are taken to welcome new members into the congregation?

h. Are there any known factors likely to affect the congregation in the next three to five years? If so,

please describe.

3. Membership and the Administration of the Sacraments:-

a. Preparation for membership:

- i. Are regular confirmation training classes being held?
- ii. Are class roll-books for confirmed and being maintained?
- iii. Is instruction provided for those coming from non-Presbyterian

Churches?

b. Admission to membership:-

- i. Are all persons able to read?
- ii. If not, what provisions are made for literacy?

c. Lord's Supper

i. Is there a system for the orderly preparation of the Lord's Supper elements, and cleaning of

utensils and cloths afterwards?

ii. Is there a general attitude of reverence in the congregation during the administration of the

Lord's Supper?

iii. Is there an avoidance of business matters on the occasion of the Lord's Supper?

- iv. Are the Lords Supper Attendance Cards regularly maintained?
- v. Are Visitor's Cards for the Lord's Supper properly restricted?
- vi. Does the congregation offer an "ecumenical invitation"? (See

G-10.0303M.ii.)

d. Prevention of Lapsing-

- i. Are members given transfer Certificates on leaving the Parish in accordance with G-10.0305.C.?
- ii. Are newcomers visited as soon as possible after they come to reside in the Parish? Is the entire church involved in this visitation, or only the Minister?

4. Church Discipline:-

- a. Does the Session exercise pastoral concern in regard to the scandalous conduct of any Church member?
- b. What steps does the Session take in regard to those whose attendance at worship is unsatisfactory, and who show a lack of interest and support for the work of the congregation?

5. Church Organisations:-

- a. Is there an active branch of the Men's Christian Association, the Women's Guild, the Presbyterian Young people's Association of Nigeria in the Parish?
- b. Is there a periodic visitation of each organisation by members of the Session?
- c. Is the Session satisfied that all agencies are in satisfactory condition?

6. Christian Education:-

- a. How does the Session encourage and direct the work of Christian Education among all sections of the congregation?

b. Does the Session ensure that funds are available for the equipping of Sunday Schools and the

training of teachers and other leaders?

c. What efforts have been made to promote Christian Education amongst the adult membership?

d. What courses have been attended by adult members to further their Christian knowledge?

7. Congregational Praise:-

a. Is there a choir?

b. Are regular choir practices held?

c. Is there a junior choir?

d. What means are taken to develop congregational praise?

8. Congregational Mission:-

a. What Parish Visitation, or other effort by the congregation as a whole, have recently been carried

out?

b. How is EVANGELISM EXPLOSION (or similar evangelism programme) being carried out in the

congregation?

c. To what extent is the Parish engaged in Mission work or the establishing of a Mission Station? (See

G-10.308.)

9. Church Buildings:-

a. Are existing Church Hall accommodation adequate for Church requirements?.

b. To what extent is the Church or Church Hall being used by organisations, both within and without

the Church?

10. Neighbouring Congregations:-

- a. In what ways does the Session encourage cooperation with neighbouring congregations and
Parishes?

11. Ministerial Assistance:-

- a. Is there any Ministerial assistance, e.g. Associate Minister, Probationer, Deaconess, Catechist,
etc.?
- b. If not, does the Session think that ministerial assistance is necessary?
- c. State what other assistance s provided for the Minister, whether secretarial, driver, night watch, etc

12. Official Communications:-

- a. Are all communications and schedules authorised by the General Assembly and their Boards
submitted to the Session and noted in the Minutes?
- b. Are all communications from the Presbytery submitted to the Session and noted in the Minutes?

13. Records:-

- a. State the place of custody of records currently in use and if protected from fire and other damage,
- b. Have all records more than fifty years old been deposited in the Archives of the Presbyterian
Church of Nigeria (See G-09.0407; G-10.0505.)

C. Are all of the following records being maintained, and in good order?

- i. The Session Minute Book
- ii. The Church Register
- iii. The Lord's Supper Roll
- iv. The Supplementary Roll

- v. The Baptismal Rolls
- vi. The Transfer Certificate Books
- vii. The Register of Church Property
- viii. The Confirmation Certificate nook
- ix.
- x.

© CONFERENCE WITH THE PARISH BOARD

1. The Congregational Board

- a. Is the number of members in keeping with the provisions of G-07.0501?
- b. Is the composition of the Congregational Board evenly distributed in keeping with G-04.04403?
- c. Is the system of rotation established? i.e, does each member know when he or she will relinquish office? (See G -07.0501 .c.)

2. Methods of Contributing:-

- a. Apart from the regular plate and thanksgiving offerings, which of the following are also used?
 - i. The Pledge System?
 - ii. Tithing?
 - iii. A third offering, (after plate and thanksgiving) for special Sundays?
- b. If the Pledge System and/or Tithing is promoted in the congregation, how many members use it?
- c. Is the Christian liberality of the Parish commensurate with the Member's resources?
- d. What means are taken to encourage and increase interest and support for the wider work of the Church?
- e. List the total income of the Parish for each of the last four years:

19—:— 19—:— 19—:—

19—:—

3. Methods of Recording and Reporting:-

a. Are the offerings counted by at least two people and recorded immediately (signed by the counters)

in the Record of Services Book?

b. Is the congregation regularly notified of the amount of the offerings received?

c. Is the congregation regularly notified (perhaps quarterly) regarding expenditure?

4. Records and Funds:-

a. Is the Record of Church Service up-to-date, and without any omissions?

b. Is the Minute Book of the Parish Congregational Board in order and up to date?

c. Are the Minutes of the Stated Annual Meetings entered into the same book?

d. Are there signed audited financial statements which have been accepted and adopted by the stated

Annual Meeting on file?

e. Are the Treasurer's books in order and up-to-date? If there is a Financial Secretary, do their

records agree?

f. Are the various congregational accounts (arms of the church, Presbytery, Synod, or General

Assembly assessments, etc.) kept separate? i.e., though they may be in the same main Parish or

Congregational account book, are they credited/debited to various accounts therein?

g. Are funds collected for the higher Courts of the Church regularly remitted?

h. Are the Minister and other salaried persons paid up-to-date?

i. Are there completed copies of the Annual Returns on file?

Is there other income for the Congregation, other than the Sunday offerings? (Ex: farm/garden produce, etc.)

k. Are the records of the Parish Congregational Board preserved in a safe place?

5. Property:-

a. Are the buildings of the Parish in good repair?

b. If there is a burial ground, is it properly maintained?

6. Literature:-

a. Is there sufficient literature and supplies for the Sunday School and other departments?

b. Are the publications of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria made available to the congregation?

c. If the Parish has a common library, is it in good order? Is it well stocked?

(D) CONFERENCES WITH THE STAFF (WHERE APPLICABLE)

1. With the Associate Minister

a. Is the division of labour between the Minister and the Associate Minister plainly laid-out? (See G-

06.0201 .c.)

b. Is the Associate Minister generally happy in his or her work?

c. Is the Associate Minister generally successful in his or her work?

d. Does the Associate Minister attend all the regular meetings of the Session?

e. In all cases where the Associate Minister works primarily with a different Congregation although in

the same Parish, all of the questions of Section (A) Conference with the Minister (above), shall be

asked.

2. With the Deacons and Deaconesses

- a. Are the specific responsibilities of the Deacon or Deaconess in the Presbytery or Parish spelled out
in detail?
- b. Does the Deacon or Deaconess possess a written copy of these responsibilities?
- c. Does the Deacon or Deaconess know to whom he or she is primarily responsible?
- d. Is his or her salary paid up to date?
- e. is he or she properly housed, complete with the proper amenities?
- f. Is he or she provided with transport (where required) to accomplish his or her assignment?
- g. Does the Deacon or Deaconess have a time-table for his or her work?
- h. Does the Deacon or Deaconess keep a diary in relation to his or her work?
- i. Is the Deacon or Deaconess generally happy in his or her work?
- j. Is the Deacon or Deaconess generally successful in his or her work?

(E) Conferences with the Leaders of the Arms or Organisations in the Church

NOTE: The following questions should be asked primarily of the leadership (President, Secretary, Treasurer) of each of the arms of the Church with the Minister of the Parish also present. Each Arm or Organisation should be met with separately, but the same questions asked of all.

1. The Arms and Organisations usually included are:

The Men's Christian Association,
The Women's Guild The Youth Fellowships,
The Christian Girls in training,
The Boy's Brigade and others.

2. Questions to be asked of the above organisations:
 - a. Are meetings held regularly?
 - b. Are attendance records kept?
 - c. Are Bible lessons given regularly in their meetings?
 - d. Are minutes of business meetings regularly kept?
 - e. Is a proper account book kept of income and expenditures?
 - f. Is a regular quarterly report of income and expenditures presented to the organisation?
 - g. Does the organisation engage in activities in support of the Church?
 - h. Is there any provision for the training of its officers?

3. Questions to be asked of the Sunday School Department (Minister and Superintendent(s):-
 - a. Is the teaching staff sufficient in number?
 - b. Does the Sunday school follow the Syllabus provided by the General Assembly?
 - c. Are the classes grouped according to age?
 - d. Is there an adult class?
 - e. Is there a weekly preparation class for the teachers?
 - f. Is there adequate space for the classes to meet without being disturbed or disturbing one another?
 - g. Has the Session made any plans for the expansion of the Sunday School?
 - h. Is the Sunday School being promoted by the Minister and the Session?

4. Questions to be asked of the Choir (Minister, Choirmaster(s), Organist and/or Leader of traditional Instruments):-
 - a. Does the Minister discuss with the Choirmaster and musicians the themes of forthcoming sermons
with a view to selecting appropriate choral music?
 - b. Does the choir have a sufficient variety of music?
 - c. How much time does the choir spend in rehearsals each week?

- d. Does the choir have an adequate place to rehearse?
- e. What efforts are being made to teach the choir-
 - i. new hymns and anthems?
 - ii. to sing from notation as well as from tonic-solfa?
- f. Does the organist play music well, or is there considerable hesitation, missed notes, etc?
Does the
 - organist rehearse the music used each week?
- g. Is the organ adequately protected from theft, the elements, and from vermin?
- h. What use is made of traditional instruments? Are they-
 - i. used throughout the worship service? If so, are they used in a manner in
keeping with the
 - mood of the service?
 - ii. used only for the thanksgiving offering?
- i. Are the traditional instruments adequately cared for and protected?
- j. the choir given the opportunity to have a special choral singing programme at some time
during the
 - year?
- k. Is the choir encouraged to participate in the national choir competition?
- l. Is there any effort to have a youth or children's choir in addition to the adult choir? If so,
on what
 - occasions do they sing?

APPENDIX G-11-.02

PRESBYTERIES WITH SYNODICAL POWERS

COME

DETAILS YET TO

APPENDIX G-11:03

POLICY ON EVANGELISTS AND OUTSTATIONS

A. EVANGELISTS:

1. Evangelism (Definition)

Evangelism shall be defined as the communication of the gospel in its wholeness that Christ's life, death, and resurrection may transform both persons and the society that people create.

2. Evangelist (Definition)

While all Christians have the responsibility to share the good news of Christ, Evangelists are those Christians with a special calling of God to spread the gospel, and a special training to enable them to do the same.

3. Evangelist's Responsibility:

An evangelist's top priority is to reach non-Christians with the gospel, with a view (a) to their conversion to Christ and (b) to their membership in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

The Work of an evangelist is distinctively different from that of the minister who is responsible for the "ministry of the Word, the conduct of public worship, the dispensing of the sacraments, the instruction of the young, and the preparation of first communicants." (cf G-06. 0209)

All activities, therefore, which will likely result in the formation of a Presbyterian congregation in an area where a Presbyterian congregation does not presently exist, are the proper work of an evangelist.

4. Evangelist's Relationships:

To General Assembly:

- a. The General Assembly determines who is eligible to be a General Assembly approved evangelist, (Presbyteries and Parishes may also engage other suitable persons as evangelists but not necessarily providing the General Assembly defined amenities).
- b. The General Assembly posts evangelists to parishes (in consultation with the Presbytery concerned).

To Presbytery:

- a. The Presbytery regulates and supervises the scope of work assigned by the parish Session to the evangelist.
- b. The Presbytery regularly reviews the growth/progress on all Parish outstations
- c. The Presbytery may not move an evangelist from one Parish to another without the prior approval of the General Assembly (see BCM Min, 120 10 and Appendix G-14:04, item 9).

To Parish:

- a. The evangelist must transfer his or her membership to the Parish where he or she is posted.
- b. The evangelist is not normally attached to serve in the 'parent' congregation of the Parish. In cases where he or she is attached to the 'parent' congregation, his or her ministry must be full time in reaching out to non Presbyterians; The evangelist may not preach in a worship service, nor teach a Sunday School class, nor conduct a prayer meeting, except as an addition to a 'full-time evangelism load -i.e. the evangelist may accept it in the same way as a school

in addition to teacher or office employee, etc., would take such church responsibilities
clerk, typist driver, professional responsibilities. The evangelist is forbidden to function as a
night-watch, etc., for the labourer, messenger gardener, revenue collector, cook, babysitter,
Parish or its Minister or any member.

To Session:

- subject to Presbytery
- a. The Session determines the location of the evangelist in the Parish, approval.
 - b. The Session regularly reviews the progress of the evangelist's work. Where progress is slow or nonexistent, the Session must look into the causes and seek to rectify where possible.

To the Parish Board:

as per the The Board is responsible for the payment of the evangelist's salary, housing, etc.,
Conditions of Service.

To the Minister:

- evangelist's work in day-
- a. The Minister in charge of the Parish has the general oversight of the to-day affairs.
 - b. The evangelist confers with the Minister in problems relating to his or her work.
 - c. The Minister carries the Evangelists concerns to the Session, the Congregational Board the Presbytery, etc., as necessary.

d The Minister transmits the Evangelist's Reports to Presbytery and to the General Assembly,

B. THE DEVELOPMENT Of MISSION STATIONS: (formerly called 'Outstation')

It is the natural intention of an evangelist's work that t develop into an Mission Station, and later the

Mission Station becomes a Parish. The formation of Mission Stations are directly the responsibility of

the Minister and the Session of that particular Parish. (See G-10.308: G-11, 0404k; G-07.0200-0300)

Therefore, to ensure that the interest of the parent congregation be maintained in the Mission Station:

1. A Parish may use an evangelist to:
 - a. Bring new converts into faith in Christ at the Mission Station,
 - b. Preach at the Sunday morning worship services not more than 50% of the Sundays in any month.
 - c. Teach the catechism to new converts and prospective members in lieu of the Minister.

The parish Minister, however, is still responsible for baptism, confirmation, and/or membership classes.
2. Each Parish Session must review at least quarterly, the growth of all Parish Mission Stations.
3. No Mission Station may have the services of evangelist for a period longer than three years,

and which may be renewed only once for an additional two years in exceptional cases by the

Presbytery in conjunction with the Board of Church Ministry and the Board of Propagation and Publication. If a Mission Station is not viable at the end of three years (or five years in special cases), the Presbytery must make other arrangements for its continuation as a Mission Station or preaching point.

(1985—2583.1 & 1985 Appendix XIV)

APPENDIX G-11:05

THE CRITERIA FOR EXAMINING SESSION RECORDS

APPENDIX G-13.O1

THE BARRIER ACT, INTERIM ACTS, AND DECLARATORY-ACTS

A. THE BARRIER ACT

Before any change can be made which affects the Constitution of the Church in its doctrine, government, worship, or discipline, a certain procedure must be followed, and the sanction of the whole Church must be obtained through the Presbyteries, which form, its constituent courts for the purpose of such reference. The General Assembly cannot of themselves alone effect such a change. The procedure is known as the operation of the Barrier Act. Its intention was to prevent hasty and ill-considered legislation,

which might appear at the moment to be of value, but might prove to be really prejudicial to the best interests of the Church. It is for that reason then, that before General Assembly decisions regarding matters of doctrine, movement, worship, or discipline can become the “binding rules and constitutions to the Church,” they must first be presented to the General Assembly in the form of Overtures then approved by the General Assembly, and then sent down to the Presbyteries for consideration and reporting back to the General Assembly.

The full text of the Barrier Act, as passed by the Church of Scotland in 1697 and which is still in-effects is as follows:-

The General Assembly, taking into their consideration the Overture and Act made in the last

Assembly concerning innovations, and having heard the report of the several commissioners from

Presbyteries to whom the consideration of the same was recommended in order to its being more ripely

advised and determined in this Assembly; and considering the frequent practice of former Assemblies of

this Church, and that -it will mightily conduce to the exact obedience of the Act of Assemblies that

General Assemblies be very deliberate in making of the same, and that the whole Church have a previous knowledge thereof, and their opinion be had therein, and for preventing any sudden alteration innovation, or other prejudice to the Church, in either doctrine or worship or discipline, or government

thereof, now happily established: do therefore, appoint, enact and declare, that before any General

Assembly of this Church shall pass any Act which are to be binding Rules and Constitutions to the

Church, the same Acts be first proposed as overtures to the Assembly, and, being by them, passed as

such, be remitted to the consideration of the several Presbyteries of this Church, and their opinions and

consent reported by their commissioners to the next General Assembly following, who may then pass

the same in Acts, if the more general opinion of the Church thus had agreed thereunto.

B. DECLARATORY ACTS

The Barrier act is required only in matters affecting the doctrine, government, worship, and discipline of the Church. There are other possible areas in which the General Assembly may be required to make decisions. In these other matters, the Church may pass Declaratory Acts stating not what should be,

but what is the law; and so long as these Acts do not contravene anything which has already been enacted

with regard to there categories, and do not contain anything inconsistent with the law as formerly existing,

the Assembly are entitled to pass legislation and bring it immediately into effect. However, even where legislation might have been thus immediately affective because it did not concern doctrine, worship, government, or discipline, but where it seemed advisable that the opinion of Presbyteries should be obtained before a change in existing practice was made, the General Assembly has employed the machinery of the

Barrier Act, although not compelled to do so.

C. INTERIM ACTS

It has sometimes been the ca that the General Assembly has found that although a decision has been

reached under the Barrier Act and has become the 'binding rule and constitution of the Church, that an immediate change in the law is urgently necessary, and in these circumstances they hold themselves at

liberty to pass an Interim Act to the effect desired, but at the same time the Assembly send it to Presbyteries

in the form of an overture for their opinion Such an Interim Act has force only till the next succeeding Assembly, which may then, if a majority of the Presbyteries have signified approval, make it permanent law,

or in the contrary event may discharge it, so that it ceases to have validity.

No Interim Act which has been disapproved by a majority of Presbyteries may be continued in the same form, If it should appear that the approval of Presbyteries has not been sufficiently strong, or that the

majority has not been sufficiently large to show that the measure has commended itself to the Church, it is competent for the General Assembly again to remit the measure for their opinion, either in the same or an altered form, continuing it meanwhile as an Interim Act. Further even when an overture sent to Presbyteries

for their opinion has received the approval of a majority of them courts, the succeeding Assembly do not automatically pass it into the "standing rules and constitutions to the Church," but are required again to put it

to a vote of the Assembly for confirmation or rejection.

An Interim Act should be passed only in a case of emergency, and urgency, for this reason at least, that

it is liable to be set aside, if the overture which it expresses should be disapproved by a majority of Presbyteries, a procedure by no means unknown; and it is undesirable, as tending to confusion or possible

injustice that legislation on any matter should operate only a year.

APPENDIX G-13:02

RULES AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING THE TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NIGERIA

I. GENERAL

(a) The Trustees of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria thereafter referred to as ("the

Church") for the purpose of the Land (Perpetual Succession)
Ordinance, Chapter 98, shall

be appointed by the General Assembly of the Church

(b)
nine in number and shall

Such Trustees (hereinafter referred to as "the Trustees) shall be

CHURCH OF

be known as THE REGISTERED TRUSTEES OF THE PRESBYTERIAN

NIGERIA'

(c)
hold office if he/she:-

Trustees may hold office for life, but a Trustee shall cease to

by a Court of Competent

i. Resigns his/her office

ii. Ceases to be a member of the Church,

iii. Becomes insane,

iv. Is officially declared bankrupt,

v. Is convicted of a criminal offences involving dishonesty

Jurisdiction

vote of members present at any

vi. Is recommended for removal from office by a majority

meeting of the General Assembly of the Church, or

vii. Ceases to reside in Nigeria.

(d)
Assembly of the Church

Upon a vacancy occurring In the number of Trustees, the General

be one of the

shall at its next succeeding meeting appoint another eligible person to

Trustees.

(e)

The Trustees shall have a Common Seal,

(f)
General Assembly of

Such Common Seal shall be kept in the custody of the Clerk of the
the Church Who shall produce it when required for use by the Trustees

(g)
fewer than five of

All documents to be executed by the Trustees shall be signed by not
them and shall be sealed with the Common Seal.

(h)
under the Land

The Trustees shall apply to the Minister for a Certificate of Incorporation
(Perpetual Succession) Ordinance, Chapter 98.

(i)
and hold in trust all

Church, subject to such

If such Certificate is granted, the Trustees shall have power to accept
land belonging to the Church and to acquire land on behalf of the
conditions as the Minister may impose.

(j)
money received and expended showing the matters in respect of which such receipt and expenditure
takes

least every year

sheet ascertained

audited statement

the General

The Trustees shall ensure that true accounts are kept of the sums of
place and of the property, credits and liabilities of the Church. One at
these accounts shall be examined and the correctness of the balance
by Auditors appointed by the General Assembly of the Church, and the
of accounts, with any report made by the Auditors, shall be submitted to
Assembly annually.

(k) The Trustees shall act in accordance with the Constitution of the Church and upon the instructions of a meeting of the General Assembly or its Executive Committee.

ii. SPECIAL CLAUSE

(a) THE INCOME AND PROPERTY of the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria, whencesoever derived, shall be applied solely towards the promotion of the Objects of the Church as set forth in these RULES AND REGULATIONS/CONSTITUTION; and no portion thereof shall be paid or transferred directly or indirectly, by way of dividend, bonus or otherwise howsoever by way of profit to the members of the Church;

PROVIDED that nothing herein shall prevent the payment, in good faith of reasonable and proper remuneration to any officer or servant of the Church, or to any member of the Church, in return for any service actually rendered to the Church; nor prevent the payment of interest at a rate not exceeding five per cent per annum on money lent or reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let by any member to the Church; but so that no member of the Council of Management or Governing Body shall be appointed to any salaried office of the Church or to any office of the Church paid by fees; and that non remuneration or other benefit in money or moneys shall be given by the Church to any member of such Council of Management or Governing Body except

on money lent and repayment of out-of-pocket expenses and interest at the rate aforesaid
reasonable and proper rent for premises demised or let to the Church;

apply to any payment to PROVIDED that the provision last aforesaid shall not
which such member any company of which a member of the Church may be a member in
member shall not hold more than one hundredth part of the capital and such
member shall not be bound to account for any share of profits he/she may receive in respect of any such
payment.

AND (b) No addition, alteration or amendment shall be made to or in the RULES
same have been REGULATIONS/ CONSTITUTION for the time being in force, unless the
previously submitted to and approved by the Minister.

(c) If upon the winding up or dissolution of the Presbyterian Church of
Nigeria there remains, after the satisfaction of all its debts and liabilities, any property
whatsoever, the same shall not be paid to or distributed among the members of the Church, but
shall be given or transferred to some other institution or institutions having objects
similar to the objects of the Church, and which shall prohibit the distribution of its or their
income and property amongst its or their members to an extent at least as great as is imposed
on the Church under or by virtue of the Special Clause hereof, such institution or
institutions to be determined by the members of the Church at or before the time of
dissolution and if and

so far as effect cannot be given to the aforesaid provision then to some charitable object.

Signed:.....

.....

Assembly Moderator at General Assembly

Clerk of General

Date:.....

(1963-1271/1218)

III. THE REGISTERED TRUSTEES ARE:

1. Elder Ezeogo Dr. Akanu Ibam
2. The Very Reverend Nwachukwu Eme
3. Elder Ndidem Usang Iso
4. Elder Chief Bassey Esieri Okon
- 5 The Very Reverend Etim Akpan Onuk
6. Elder Chief Okon Akpan Akpayun
7. Elder Andrew Agha Okoro
8. Elder Ekpo Ekpenyong Efiok
9. The very "Reverend Inya Okata Agha Ude

(1982-2301)

FORMULAS GOVERNING MEMBERSHIP IN THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE AND THE BOARDS OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Moderator of General Assembly, (Chairman)

Principal Clerk of General Assembly, (Secretary)

Treasurer of General Assembly

Deputy Clerk of General Assembly

Secretaries of General Assembly Boards

Presbytery Moderators

Presbyter Clerks

Principals (or their representatives) of Institutions.

General Assembly Legal Adviser

Moderator of each Synod Clerk of each Synod

the current Moderator of General Assembly (for the previous year only (if different person than in year)).

BOARD OF CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Four General Assembly appointees, including Chairman and Secretary

Theological Tutors

Principals of Church Institutions

One appointee from each Presbytery

General Assembly officers (ex officio)

BOARD OF CHURCH LIFE

Four General Assembly appointees, including Chairman and Secretary

One appointee from each Presbytery

One representative from the Order of the Deaconate
General Assembly officers (ex officio)

BOARD OF CHURCH MINISTRY

The Principal Clerk of General Assembly (Chairman)
The Deputy Clerk of General Assembly (Secretary)
All Presbytery Moderators All Presbytery Clerks
Theological Tutors
Principals (or their representatives) of Church institutions
General Assembly officers (ex officio)

BOARD OF CHURCH PROPERTY DEVELOPMENT

Four General Assembly appointees, including Chairman and Secretary
Project Managers
One appointee from each Presbytery
The Trustees of General Assembly,
General Assembly officers (ex officio)

BOARD OF FAITH AND ORDER

Twelve General Assembly appointees, including Chairman and Secretary
Theological Tutor
One non-Nigerian Church Worker
General Assembly officers (ex officio)

FINANCE BOARD

Four General Assembly appointees, including Chairman and Secretary
All Presbytery Treasurers
General Assembly officers (ex officio)

MEDICAL BOARD

All Presbyterian Medical doctors

Moderators of Itu, Uburu, Agbo, and Abiriba Parishes

Presbyterian matrons of:—

Mary Slessor Joint Hospital

Eja Memorial Joint Hospital

Presbyterian Joint Hospital, Uburu,

(or a Presbyterian senior Nursing Sister if

Matron is not Presbyterian)

Presbyterian Hospital Secretaries

Ten General Assembly or Board appointees

General Assembly officers (ex officio)

PRESS AND BOOKSHOPS BOARD

???

General Assembly officers (ex-officio)

BOARD OF PROPAGATION AND PUBLICATION

Four General Assembly appointees, including Chairman and Secretary

One appointee from each Presbytery

The Manager of Presbyterian Press and Bookshops

General Assembly officers (ex officio)

NOTE:

General Assembly officers are members 'ex officio' of all of the Boards. These officers include 1) the Moderator, 2) the Principal Clerk, 3) the Treasurer, and 4) the Deputy Clerk.

APPENDIX G-13:04

THE STANDING ORDERS FOR GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RULES OF DEBATE:

Any Commissioner to General Assembly may make a motion on any matter coming regularly before the Court. The motion should be committed to writing and handed to the Principal Clerk. If

the motion is not seconded, it falls to the ground without discussion, and it is not recorded in the minutes. A motion duly moved and seconded cannot be withdrawn or altered without the

permission of the Court. Amendments to the motion and/or counter-motions may be moved and seconded by other members who object to the first motion as it stands. A motion, duly proposed

and seconded to pass from the matter or 'proceed to the next item of business' is competent,

In the discussion on a motion, any member is entitled to speak only once, but he or she may

ask leave to explain something he or she had said which seems to be misunderstood Leave is

usually granted. The Commissioner who introduced the first motion, however, has a right to reply

but is not permitted to introduce any new matter into the reply. After the reply the discussion is held

to be closed, and the vote is taken.

SPEAKING DURING PROCEEDINGS:

Any person or persons who desire to contribute during debates, shall move to the microphone, queue up, and speak in turns as the Moderator may allow.

ADDRESSING THE COURT:

Before, any speech from the floor is made, the speaker shall identify himself or herself by stating his or her name and his or her standing in the Court; for example:

Rev (name) from (name) Presbytery, (name) Parish,
or
.....
.....

Elder Mr (or Mrs or Miss) (name) Commissioner from (name) Presbytery,
(name) Parish, or

.....
Mr (or Mrs or Miss) (name) Secretary of the Board of (name)

CALL TO ORDER:

A speaker is not to be interrupted, unless upon a "Call to Order" which may be made by any Commissioner. When so interrupted, the speaker resumes his seat until the point of order is decided. The member calling to order states his or her grounds upon which he or she makes the call. The speaker who

has been interrupted may reply briefly in explanation to show that he or she is not out of order; but no other member is entitled to speak to the point of order unless at the request of the Moderator, with whom the

decision rests.

VOTING ON MOTION:

The following method of taking votes is recommended. When there is only ONE MOTION, the vote is FOR or AGAINST. When there are TWO OR MORE motions inconsistent with each other, the first vote is a vote in favour of each of them, put in the order in which they were proposed. The result for all motions are announced after all voting is concluded. If any of them obtains a majority of voting, it becomes the judgment. If none of them does so, the motion having the fewest votes is struck off and the vote taken again, and so on. If the lowest two be equal, the Moderator makes the casting Vote between them.

AMENDMENTS:

When amendments are proposed, that is, proposals not inconsistent with the general tenor of the motion, each may be disposed of immediately it has been moved, seconded, and spoken to, the vote on each being FOR or AGAINST. Thereafter, the motions as amended, if amended, are voted on in the way already stated above, It lies with the Moderator to judge whether a motion is to be treated as an amendment or as a counter-motion, and the Moderator's ruling is final.

METHOD OF VOTING:

The vote is usually taken by a show of hands, but It may be taken by calling out the Role of Commissioners, if the Court so determines. Or, alternatively, the Moderator may call for Commissioners to vote by standing, or by written ballots. In the case of voting by show of hands or by standing. Commissioners are expected to keep their hand raised or remain on their feet until the vote has been taken.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE:

Commissioners who have a right to vote are provided with some form of identification peculiar to

that meeting of the General Assembly. This identity is usually in the form of coloured badges, certain colours being reserved for Commissioners, The Moderator may exclude the vote of any

Commissioner however well known, who cannot produce his or her identification as a voting member

of the present court at the moment of voting (reasons of loss, misplacement, forgotten identity not

withstanding).

Although a person may have been a voting member at any previous General Assembly, he or

she is excluded from voting without current credentials.

DISSENT:

Any Commissioner who has voted contrary to the decision of the house may state his or her

dissent from the resolution or judgment of the General Assembly before the General Assembly

proceeds to other business. Reasons may begin with the dissent. The dissent must also be in writing

and handed to the Principal Clerk before adjournment, Other Commissioners who voted against the resolution or judgment may adhere to a dissent by also appending their own names or if the reasons

be different by submitting their own separate dissents.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE:

And Commissioner or Special Guest seeking leave of absence from proceedings shall submit a

written application to the Moderator who may then grant him or her permission to be absent

ROLL CALL:

And Commissioners are expected to be present at all the proceedings of The General Assembly.

The Moderator of the General Assembly may call the roll at any (or every) sitting of the Court. Commissioners whose absence from the court has not been granted by the Moderator, shall be liable

to such discipline at the Court may impose.

LEAVING AND ENTERING THE COURT: (When the Court is in Session)

As a mark of reverence to the Court, any person leaving or entering the Court when proceedings

are in progress, shall bow his or her head towards the chair of the Moderator.

APPENDIX G-13.05

QUESTIONS TO BE USED IN THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH

A. ON THE OCCASION OF INFANT BAPTISM:

QUESTIONS TO THE PARENTS OR GUARDIANS:

1. In bringing forward your children for baptism, do you anew profess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, and In the Holy Spirit as your Guide and Upholder throughout life?
2. Do you promise so the behave that your child/children will have in you an example of Christian living?
3. Do you undertake to bring up your child/children in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ as the

Lord of life?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

1. Do you, the members of the congregation, promise to receive this child/these children in love as fellow members of the church and to pray for him/her/them, and help him/her/them by your example in the Christian life?

B. ON THE OCCASION OF ADULT BAPTISM:

QUESTIONS TO THE CANDIDATES FOR BAPTISM:

1. Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier and Guide?
2. Do you repent of your sins with a humble and contrite heart, and put your trust in the mercy of God which is in Jesus Christ?
3. Do you promise to give regular attendance at public worship, to be regular in daily prayer and the reading of the Scriptures, to make diligent use of the means of grace, and to be a faithful member of the Church of God?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

1. Do you promise to receive those friends in love as fellow members of the Church, and to pray for them and help them in their service of the Lord Jesus?

C. ON THE OCCASION OF BAPTIZED PERSONS SEEKING CONFIRMATION:

QUESTION TO THE CANDIDATES FOR CONFIRMATION:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. | Do you confess your faith in God as your heavenly Father, in Jesus Christ |
| as your Saviour and | |
| | Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as your Sanctifier, Guide and Upholder? |
| 2. | Do you dedicate yourself to God, and promise in dependence on His |
| grace to serve Him and | |
| | to walk in His ways all the days of your life? |
| 3. | Do you promise to give regular attendance at public worship and to be |
| faithful in daily prayer | |
| | and the reading of the Scriptures? |
| 4. | Do you promise to partake regularly in the sacrament of the Lord's |
| Supper? | |
| 5. | Do you promise to submit to the courts of the Church as being over you |
| in the Lord? | |
| 6. | Do you promise to contribute according to your ability with your |
| strength, time and money | |
| | towards the support of the Church, and to the furtherance of the gospel |
| at home and abroad? | |
| 7. | Do you accept responsibility for making Christ known among your |
| friends and neighbours; and | |
| | will you strive constantly to bear witness, by word and deed, to the Lord |
| Jesus Christ? | |

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

- | | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Do you promise to receive these friends in love, as fellow members of |
| this Church to pray for them, | |
| | and to help them in their service for the Lord? |

ON THE OCCASION OF THE RECEPTION OF MEMBERS ON TRANSFER FROM OTHER
CONGREGATIONS:

QUESTION TO THE PERSONS ABOUT TO BE ADMITTED TO MEMBERSHIP:

Do you promise to be a faithful member of this congregation, giving, of
yourself in every way, and
so fulfill your calling as a disciple of Jesus Christ the Lord? or

Do you promise to persevere in the diligent use of the means of grace,
to seek the peace and
welfare of the Church, and faithfully to support its work and worship?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

1. Do you promise to receive these friends in love as fellow members of
this Church to pray for them,
and to help them in their service for the Lord?

D. ON THE OCCASION OF RE—INSTATING PERSONS 'WHOSE MEMBERSHIP
HAS LAPSED

OR WHO HAVE BEEN UNDER SUSPENSION:

QUESTION TO THOSE SEEKING RE-STATEMENT:

Do you, (name), repent of your coldness of heart and carelessness of
purpose, and promise again to take an active part in the life of this congregation, being as faithful in your
attendance upon
worship as God may enable you, and also to give fully of your time and
money?

QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

1. Do you promise to receive these friends in love as fellow members of
this Church, to pray for them, and to help them in their service for the Lord?

E. ON THE OCCASION OF A MARRIAGE OR THE BLESSING OF A MARRIAGE:

QUESTIONS TO THE HUSBAND:

1. (Mr) (name), do you declare in the presence of God and before the
congregation that you are not

any other than (Miss) married by Native Law and Custom or under any Marriage Ordinance to

(name)

2. Do you promise in the presence of God and before this Congregation to have (name), as your only

wife; and to be to her a loving and faithful husband till God shall separate you in death?

QUESTIONS TO THE WIFE:

1. (Miss) (name) do you declare in the presence of God and before the congregation that you are not

married by Native Law and Custom or under any Marriage Ordinance to any other than (Mr)

(name)?

2. Do you promise in the presence of God and before this Congregation to have (name) as your only

husband; and to be to her a loving and faithful wife till God shall separate you in death?

APPENDIX G-14:01

TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY: PROCEDURE FOR CANDIDATES

1. A candidate, feeling that he or she is called by God, should write to him or her Parish Session, stating

his or her request to pursue a vocation in the Church.

2. The Session has the candidate complete an application form which would have a section on their personal and church lives, their call and their personal data. Photocopies of educational certificates, baptismal confirmation and marriage certificate must be attached to the application. (A Medical Certificate in duplicate by a Presbyterian Medical Officer would be completed after the candidate was

accepted by the Board of Christian Education (1985—2565.2).

3. The Candidates' Minister completes a confidential report to be passed with the application.

4. The Session calls the candidate for an interview, examining the candidate's Christian character, conduct, marriage, and service to the Church. The Session must ascertain the genuineness of the candidate's call, his or her suitability for the work of the Church, as well as the genuineness of all documents and certificates. Where baptismal and/or confirmation certificates are not available, the

certification of the Session shall be entertained (1985-2565.2)

5. The Candidate must be 21 years of age, but not more than 50 years of age.

6. If the Session find no reason for disallowing the application, the Session Clerk must complete the pro

per section of the application form and forward it along with all supporting documents to the Presbytery.

7. The Presbytery has the main responsibility for the selection of candidates. It must review all documents with the application form and call the candidate for an interview. Only when satisfied as to the quality of

the candidate does the Clerk of Presbytery complete the proper section of the application form and

forward it to the General Assembly Board of Christian Education.

8. The Board of Christian Education sets an examination in Bible Knowledge English and General Knowledge and calls all potential candidates to sit these examinations. These examinations may be

done in Presbyteries, in centres, or done centrally, but must be administered under the authorization of

the Board of Christian Education

9 The Board of Christian Education then interviews all potential candidates, scrutinizing their application forms, supporting documents examination results, and letters of reference.

10. The Board of Christian Education shall -then submit a list of those eligible to write the entrance

examination to the Principal of the training institution.

11. From the results of the entrance examination, the Board of Christian Education chooses the successful candidates and informs them of their acceptance. He or she is then considered to be a candidate for the

holy ministry in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.

12. Through the entire course the candidate remains under the supervision of the Presbytery which

originally certified him or her. If a candidate wishes to transfer from one presbytery to another, they may

do so only up to the point of entering the second year of training, and only with the approval of bolt.

Presbyteries affected.

13. During the long vacation of the first and second years, the candidate shall be given vacation work

somewhere in the Presbytery. A report of this work should be kept on Presbytery file, and one copy to

the Board of Christian Education.

14. The Board of Christian Education must submit to Presbytery each year a copy of his or her end of term

results.

15. The Presbytery should interview each candidate once a year before they return to the College,

examining the candidate's progress in studies, and fitness to go forward to the office of the Ministry. The Presbytery must inform the Board of Christian Education that the candidate has been certified to

continue his or her studies.

16. The candidate, in his or her last session of the Theological course shall apply for licencing to the Presbytery which sponsored him or her, and must inform the Board of Christian Education of the application.

17. The Board of Christian Education circulates a master list each year of all students and their

Presbyteries for licensing. The intimation should include the statement that if no objection be received from any other Presbytery before the end of the Session, the said Presbytery will proceed to take that

student on trials for licensing.

18. A Presbytery may begin the trials for licensing at any time after the regular school course work is completed; however it may not conclude the process until it has certification from the Board of Christian Education that the candidate has satisfied the requirements of that Board (1981-2206.2) A Presbytery may ask for testimonials of a student's character and conduct from any other Presbytery

within whose bounds he or she has resided at any time since becoming a candidate for the holy ministry (step 11,

above).

19. Trials for licence are to be set by the Board of Christian Education and the procedure carried out by Presbyteries. While the Board of Christian Education is free to change the content of the Trials for licence, they are at present the writing of a thesis, the preaching of a sermon and the conducting of a service of worship.

20. Presbytery shall pass judgment on each part of the trials separately and on it as a whole by a regular vote: 'Sustain or not sustain these trials' (Discussions when dealing with students trials are to be in camera,')

21. The Act of Licensing is to take place after General Assembly of each year (1981.2221.1). It is however, an act of the Presbytery concerned. It must be performed at a public service of worship.

22. The Clerk of Presbytery provides the licentiate with an extract (or certificate) of his or her licence.

23. The Clerk of Presbytery must send the name and address of licentiates and the date of licensing to the Board of Church Ministry.

24. Licentiates are to be addressed as The Reverend Mr/Mrs/Miss....." (1985—2565.2) and are known as Probationers.'

25. A Licentiate remains under the supervision and subject to the authority of the Presbytery which licensed him or her until he or she is regularly transferred from that Presbytery to another.

26. When arriving in a new Presbytery the licentiate must produce an extract of his or her licence and a Presbytery certificate of character from the Presbytery which he or she has left,

27. The licentiate is attached to an experienced minister for supervision during his or her period of probation. The supervising minister shall make a-confidential report on the Probationer to every regular

meeting of the Presbytery.

28. Licentiate shall serve a period of not less than one year and if no objection is submitted within that time, and if the candidate has passed all his or her examinations from theological college (1981—2206.2) Presbytery shall set a date for ordination (and induction) (1985—2565.2)
- (1985—2565.2)

APPENDIX G-14:02

CONTINUING EDUCATION POLICY

1. Applicants for a non-residential or a partial-residential extension court must have the basic entry requirements which include one of the following:
 - a. five (5) papers "0" level G CE. including English, or
 - b. a diploma in Theology from an institution recognized by the Board of Christian Education, plus four (4) papers "0" level G.C.E. or
 - c. four (4) papers W.A.S.C. including English, or Grade II Teacher's Certificate with English, or
 - d. the equivalent qualifications.
2. Any institution overseas to which a candidate may apply must be recognized by our partner churches in that country, and in the case of North Africa must be accredited by the American Association of Theological Institutions.
3. Every applicant for continuing education shall provide the Board of Christian Education with a current catalog, staff list, and courses list from the institution under consideration, in order for the Board to

adequately judge the character and quality of the course being contemplated.

4. The Board of Christian Education accept the traditional and logical progression of bachelors, to

masters, to doctorate degree.

5. The Board of Christian Education shall be provided with a complete transcript of any course, listing courses, grades received and the duration of the course. There must be evidence of public testing for

courses taken.

6. In the event of a person coming to the Board of Christian Education after the completion of a course,

but who has had no established relationship with the Board prior to his or her having taken said course, such person may present a transcript of his or her course along with information as to the duration of

the course and his or her final grades. The Board shall judge each case on its own merits, keeping"

mind the overall policies of the Board and the Church.

7. The Board of Christian Education shall recognize honorary degrees, but such degrees shall not attract

remuneration.

(1985-2565.1)

APPENDIX G-14:03

PROBATIONERS

I. DEFINITION

A Probationer is a person who has been in training for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament, and who

has been licensed by a Presbytery as candidate for the same.

II GENERAL ASSEMBLY POLICY RE: POSTING OF PROBATIONERS

1. Probationers will only be posted to parishes where there is a resident, full-time experienced

Minister or Interim Moderator in direct daily or weekly contact.

2. The Board of Church Ministry posts Probationers.

3. The Probationary year is still considered part of the training of a Minister and Probationers' families will not necessarily join them while they are serving this requirement.

4. The Church regards ordination as the true and notable date of entrance into the ministerial vocation. For counting years of service, the probationary year is counted.

5. Probationers are to be certified for ordination by their supervising Ministers and by the Presbytery in which they serve their probationary year. They are to be ordained in the station where they served their probationary year.

6. A Probationer is not to serve in his or her ancestral home Presbytery.

7. Except in exceptional circumstances a Probationer will be posted after ordination to a Parish away from his or her probation.

8. Language is not to be a major consideration in a Probationer's posting.

9. Ordination is to be done by the Presbytery in which the Probationer has
served not less than one
full year.

The steps which a candidate for the ministry therefore passes through are outlined thus:

- a. Theological training
- b. Trials for licencing by a Presbytery
- c. Licencing done by the home Presbytery of the intending Probationer
- d. Serving of the probationary year
- e. Ordination and induction as a Moderator in his or her first station at
completion of probationary
year.

(1985—2614.1 & App XV)

III. CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Conditions of service are those laid down in the General Assembly's Conditions of Service in its most recent edition along with any subsequent amendments.

Probationers are granted one month of leave during the year of probationary service.

IV. DUTIES OF SUPERVISORS OF PROBATIONERS

1. Supervisors must ensure that the Probationer has adequate accommodations and amenities,
transportation where necessary, and these must be in order before the arrival of the Probationer.

2. Supervisors must meet at least once a week with the Probationer. The intent of such a meeting is:

a. To assign duties and responsibilities to the Probationer. Note that apart from ministerial acts reserved for ordained clergy, the Probationer is to gain practical experience in all of the other

facts of preaching, teaching, and pastoral care,

b. To help the Probationer to understand any problems he or she may be experiencing in the line of duty and to give guidance on the solution to such problems.

c. To regularly point out to the Probationer how Presbyterian polity is at work within the Parish.

3. Supervisors must give a confidential written report on the Probationer to every regular meeting of the Presbytery, (cf G-11.0404.b)

4. Supervisors may use Probationers only in those responsibilities which are directly related to the ministry. Probationers may not be used as secretaries, treasurers, messengers, drivers, etc., or as the personal servant of the Supervisor.

5. Supervisors shall make certain that Probationers attend meetings of the Parish, Session, Probationers may be allowed to participate in discussion when recognized by the Moderator, but may not Vote. Probationers may not be elected to hold any Parish office such as Clerk of session, Treasurer, Chairman, etc.

APPENDIX G -14:04

POLICY ON REGULAR POSTINGS (1985)

1. Four-year Review

The Board of Church Ministry shall review all Church Worker's locations every four years based on written reports from all Presbyteries.

2. Parishes to submit lists

By the end of February every year Parishes must submit a list of their personnel requirements through their Presbyteries to the Board of Church Ministry. The Presbytery must endorse each request and make recommendations to the Board of Church Ministry.

3. Each Parish to have full-time Moderator

The ideal and the long-range goal is that all parishes must have a full-time Moderator, interim Moderators are accepted for short periods only until a full time Moderator is available.

4. Presbyteries appoint Interim Moderators

Presbyteries are to appoint Interim Moderators from within their ministerial ranks whenever there is a vacancy created, including such time as when the resident Moderator goes on annual leave.

5. Unified transfer dates

Transfers of Church Workers will be in one period of the year, preferably in September (The consideration here is for children in school,)

6. Discipline sub-committee

A sub-committee within the Board of Church Ministry called the Discipline Sub-Committee shall handle discipline problems referred to it by any Presbytery concerning either male or female workers. Relocation of the worker could be effected immediately by the Board of Church Ministry if this subcommittee makes

a recommendation to that effect,

7. Language

Language is not to be a major factor in any posting.

8. Workers' preferences

Workers shall be given the opportunity to state their aptitude and talents and general areas of Church

life where they believe they can fulfill their ministry.

9. Presbytery recommendations

Presbyteries may make recommendations to the Board of Church Ministry concerning postings, but

these recommendations must be approved by the Board. Notification of any transfer must come out

from the Board of Church Ministry.

No internal transfers should be done by Presbyteries or Synods. Rather, Presbyteries should regularly review their parishes, and make recommendations to the Board of Church Ministry,

10. Deacons and Deaconesses

Deacons and Deaconesses may be posted to either Presbyteries or Parishes, or may be seconded to

agencies asking for them.

11. Induction (or Recognition) without delay

A Minister must be inducted into his or her new Parish within three months of the posting date.

A Deacon or Deaconess is to be recognized in his or her new place of service within three-months of the posting date.

(1985-2614.2 APPXVI)

APPENDIX G-14-05

FORMS AND QUESTIONS PERTAINING TO ORDINATION

THE ORDINATION OF ELDERS

A. EDICT FOR THE ORDINATION AND ADMISSION OF RULING ELDERS

[NOTE: To be read before each and every congregation of the Parish on the same Sundays as stated below]

(To be read before the congregation at (name) in (name) Parish on Sunday the day of and on Sunday the day of and attested on each of these days by the officiating preacher as having been read by him.)

WHEREAS Mr/Mrs/Miss (names) members of this Parish and of the congregation(s)

at (names) have lately been elected to be Ruling Elders in this same Parish and

WHEREAS the Session of this Parish, having judge them to be duly qualified for the office has sustained their election arid

WHEREAS the aforesaid Mr/Mrs/Miss (names) have intimated their willingness to accept the office of Eldership and its accompanying responsibilities, that

NOTICE is hereby given to all concerned, that if any one have objection and are willing to state why

the said Mr/Mrs/Miss (names) or any of them, should not be ordained or should not be admitted

to the Office of Ruling Elder, let those persons meet with the Session on day of 19.....,ato'clock at (place) to state the same; if no relevant objection affecting life or doctrine be then made or sustained, the Session will proceed to the ordination and admission without delay.

By the
order of the Session

Date of this order..... (Signed).....Session Clerk

B. ATTESTATION OF EDICT BEING SERVED:

[NOTE: These two attestations are to be written on the same paper as the above edict.]

Attestation to the first reading of the edict;

.....congregation,.....Parish, the.....day of.....19.....

The above Edict was this day duly served by me in the face of the congregation.

(Signed).....Minister (or
Preacher)

Attestation to the second reading of the edict:

.....congregation,,Parish, the.....day of.....19.....

The above Edict was this day duly served by n in the face of the congregation.

(Signed).....Minister (or
Preacher)

C. QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO ELDERS-ELECT AT THEIR ORDINATION AND ADMISSION TO
OFFICE

1. Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained In the
Apostles' Creed
and the Nicene Creed?

2. Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church; to uphold the
doctrine, worship,
government, and discipline thereof; and to take your due part in the
administration of its affairs?

C. THE FORMULA

[NOTE: This formula (or, statement of adherence) MUST be signed by all Elders and Ministers who are
admitted to office in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.]

"I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Apostle's
Creed and the
Nicene Creed.

“I acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church, as laid down in its
CONSTITUTION

and DECLARATORY ARTICLES, to be agreeable to the Word of God, and promise that I will
submit thereto and concur therewith.

“I promise to observe the order of worship and the administration of all public
ordinances as the

same are or may be allowed in the Church.”

THE LICENSING ORDINATION AND INDUCTION OF MINISTERS OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

A. QUESTIONS TO BE PUT TO STUDENTS BEFORE THEIR LICENSING:

1. Do you believe in one God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess anew the
Lord Jesus

Christ as your personal Saviour?

2. Do you believe the word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New
Testament to be the supreme rule of faith and life?

3. Do you accept the Constitution and Declaratory Articles adopted by this Presbyterian
Church at the

meeting of its Synod held on 19th October, 1945?

4. Do you believe the fundamental doctrine, of the Christian faith; and do you
accept the Apostles’

Creed and the Nicene Creed as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith?

5. Do you acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be
agreeable to the Word of

God; and do you promise to be subject in the Lord to this Presbytery and to the
superior Court at

the Church, and to take your due part in the administration of its affairs?

6. Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church; to uphold the doctrine, worship,

government and discipline thereof, and to cherish a spirit of brotherhood towards all the followers of the Lord?

7. Do you have a zeal to glorify God, to love the Lord Jesus Christ, and a desire for the salvation of

men and women and do you believe that these are your great motives and chief inducements to

enter into the office of the Holy Ministry?

8. Do you engage, in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live a godly and circumspect life; and

faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge the duties of your ministry, seeking in all things the

advancement of the Kingdom of God?

B. THE FORMULA

[NOTE: This formula (or statement of adherence) MUST be signed by all Elders and Ministers who are admitted to office in the Presbyterian Church of Nigeria.]

"I believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith contained in the Apostles Creed and the Nicene Creed.

CONSTITUTION "I acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church as laid down in its

and DECLARATORY ARTICLES, to be agreeable to the Word of God, and promise that I will

submit thereto and concur therewith.

"I promise to observe the order of worship and the administration of all public ordinances as the same are or may be allowed in the Church."

C. EDICT FOR THE ORDINATION OF A PROBATIONER AND/OR THE INDUCTION OF A MINISTER

[NOTE: To be read before each and every congregation of the Parish on the same Sundays as stated below.]

(To be read before the congregation at (name) in (name) Parish on Sunday the day of and on Sunday the day of and attested on each of these days by the officiating preacher as having been read by him.)

WHEREAS the General Assembly has appointed the Rev (name) Minister of the Gospel to be minister of this Parish, and the appointment has been accepted by him (or her) and

WHEREAS the Presbytery has resolved to proceed to his (or her) ordination (or induction) on day of , 19....., unless something occur which may reasonably impede it, that

NOTICE is hereby given to all concerned, that if they or any of them have any objection to the life or doctrine of the said Rev (name) that they may speak to the Presbytery, which s to meet at o'clock on the day of , 19———at (place)

With certification that, if no relevant objection be then made and immediately substantiated, the Presbytery will proceed without delay.

Presbytery

By the order of the

(Signed).....Presbytery Clerk

Date of this order.....

D. ATTESTATION OF EDICT BEING SERVED:

[NOTE: These two attestations are to be written on the same paper as the above edict.]

Attestation to the first reading of the edict:

.....congregation,.....Parish,.....the.....day of.....19.....

The above Edict was this day duly served by me in the face of the congregation.

(signed).....,
Minister (or Preacher)

Attestation to the second reading of the edict:

.....congregation,.....Parish,.....the.....day of.....19.....

The above Edict was this day duly served by me in the face of the congregation.

(signed).....,
Minister (or Preacher)

E. QUESTIONS PUT TO MINISTERS BEFORE THEIR ORDINATION AND/OR INDUCTION

1. Do you believe in one God Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; and do you confess anew the Lord Jesus Christ as your personal Saviour?
2. Do you believe the word of God, which is contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament, to be the supreme rule of faith and life?
3. Do you accept the Constitution and Declaratory Articles adopted by this Presbyterian Church at the meeting of its Synod held on 19th October, 1945?
4. Do you believe the fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith; and do you accept the Apostles' Creed and the Nine Creed as witnessing to and safeguarding that faith?
5. Do you acknowledge the Presbyterian government of this Church to be agreeable to the Word of God; and do you promise to be subject in the Lord to this Presbytery and to the superior court of the Church, and to take your due part in the administration of its affairs?
6. Do you promise to seek the unity and peace of this Church; to uphold the doctrine, worship, government, and discipline thereof, and to cherish a spirit of brotherhood towards all the followers of the Lord?
7. Do you have a zeal to glorify God, to love the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire for the salvation of men and women, and do you believe that these are your great motives and chief inducements to enter

into the office of the Holy Ministry?

8. Do you engage in the strength of the Lord Jesus Christ, to live a Godly and circumspect life; and faithfully, diligently, and cheerfully to discharge the duties of your ministry, seeking in all thin the advancement of the Kingdom of God?

9. Do you agree to and accept the appointment to be Pastor of this charge; and do you promise through grace to study to approve yourself a faithful Minister of the Gospel among this people?

THE QUESTION TO THE CONGREGATION:

Do you, the members of this Parish, receive the Rev Mr/Mrs/Miss (name) to be your Minister, promising him (or her) all due honour and support in the Lord; and will you give of your means, as the Lord shall prosper you, for the maintenance of the Christian Ministry and the furtherance of the Gospel?