

**SUPPLEMENT
TO THE
PCA DIGEST
1994-1998**

**A Digest of the Minutes
of the
General Assembly
of the
Presbyterian Church in America**

PART I: Assembly Actions

PART II. Interpretations Of The Constitution

PART III: Judicial Cases

PART IV: Bylaws, Manuals and Guidelines

PART V: Position Papers

COMPREHENSIVE INDEX

VOLUME 3

Edited by Paul R. Gilchrist

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PREFACE

In 1980, the General Assembly of the PCA adopted the following directive to the Stated Clerk: "[That] the General Assembly instruct the Stated Clerk to prepare a Digest of Assembly Actions taken which provide guidance in the interpretation and application of our *Book of Church Order*" (M8GA, page 123). The *Digest of the Minutes of the General Assembly* is in keeping with the tradition started back in 1809 when the America Presbyterian Church charged the Stated Clerk "with the business of preparing a book, and having entered therein such decisions of the Assembly as relate to the general government and discipline of the Church, and the duties of judicatures, that such decisions may hereafter be selected and printed for the general use of the churches, if a future Assembly shall so order" [Minutes (1809), page 424].

This third volume of the PCA Digest summarizes the significant actions of the General Assemblies of the PCA from 1994-1998, and thereby supplements the first two volumes published in 1993. In doing so, we also have sought to correct some important omissions of the previous volumes. This Volume III, *Supplement to the PCA Digest, 1994-1998*, follows the same principle of organization as the first two volumes had, namely, Part I, Digest of Assembly Actions, Part II, Interpretations of the Constitution, Part III, Judicial Cases, Part IV, Bylaws, Manuals and Guidelines for committees and agencies, and Part V, Position Papers. All of these parts are covered in the *Supplement to the Digest* for the years 1994 through 1998.

By far the most important addition is a complete index to all three volumes. In giving the page numbers to all three volumes it becomes a more useful tool and corrects the inadequate Table of Contents found in Volume I. This Index also makes reference to the *Documents of Synod*, a compendium of significant actions and position papers taken by the Reformed Presbyterian Church, Evangelical Synod which joined the PCA in 1982. Unfortunately this volume is out of print. In 1981, the 9th General Assembly of the PCA adopted a report which included the following:

"In receiving these denominations, the Presbyterian Church in America recognizes the history of the respective denominations as part of her total history and receives her historical documents as valuable and significant material which will be used in the perfecting of the Church."

In addition, at the beginning of Part III of this volume, there is a complete list of the Judicial Cases covered by the General Assembly from the earliest years. These include a brief subject title, and appropriate cross reference to volume I as well as volume III. These cases are important as an expression of the mind of the church at that point in time. The actions are "binding and conclusive on the parties" involved, but as all other actions and deliberations of the General Assembly, they should be "given due and serious consideration by the Church and its lower courts when deliberating matters related to such action." They may also "be appealed to in subsequent similar cases as to any principle which may have been decided." (See BCO 14-7). Please see the "Directions for Use of the Digest" given on the following page.

The publishing of this volume concludes my formal service as the Stated Clerk for the General Assembly from 1988 to 1998. However, it would be inappropriate for me not to give

credit to those who have labored in this project giving much of their time and energy to see it completed. Chaplain J. Robert Fiol, who has served so ably as Assistant to the Stated Clerk did a yeoman's task in putting so much of this material together. Mrs. Laurel DeBert, our Administrative Assistant, had put together every year much of the material for the *Supplement*. Mrs. Peggy Little ably assisted all of us by doing the bulk of the word processing. Without the gracious willingness and faithful work of these people, it would not have been possible to accomplish this task.

May the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and Head of his Church be pleased to use this and the previous volumes for His own glory and for the perfecting of this branch of the Church.

Paul R. Gilchrist, Editor

October 9, 1998

DIRECTIONS FOR USE OF THE DIGEST

1. Arrangement of Material

Part I: The Digest is an alphabetical listing by topic.

MAIN TOPICS are capital letters and bold.

SECONDARY TITLES are small caps and bold.

Third Level Titles are lower case and bold.

Fourth Level Titles are lower case, indented and italicized.

Part II: Constitutional interpretations have been listed in the order of the *WCF* and the *BCO* paragraphs to which they refer.

Part III: The Judicial Cases are listed in chronological order.

Part IV: Bylaws, Manuals, and Guidelines are found in connection with the Committee or Agency to which they refer.

Part V: Position Papers are listed by topics in alphabetical order.

2. Quotations from the *Minutes*

Year, page, and paragraph references (i.e. 1996, p. 65, 24-57, 3a.) introduce direct quotations from the *Minutes of the General Assembly*.

3. Editor's Notes

Anything in brackets is an editor's note (i.e. [Note:]).

4. Cross References

Cross references are in parenthesis and refer to titles in the Digest as indicated in #1 above.