

Appendix for

HANDBOOK

FOR

CLERKS OF SESSION

IN THE

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

(U.S.A.)

Frank Walmsley

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A. Request for Letter of Transfer

For Presbyterian churches, address the letter to Clerk of Session. Addresses of Presbyterian churches should be available in your church office or from your pastor in a booklet published by the General Assembly or at <http://www.pcusa.org> under Find a Congregation . For churches other than Presbyterian, address the letter to Membership Secretary. Addresses of churches are available on the Internet at various yellow page listings such as <http://www.yahoo.com> under Yellow Pages or <http://www.yellowpages.com>.

Include full names and family relationships where appropriate. Use Mary Smith Jones and Robert F. Jones rather than Mr. & Mrs. R. F. Jones. Use William Lopez and his daughter Alice rather than William and Alice Lopez. Small churches will have little problems but better details will substantially help large churches.

Dear Friend:

Mary Smith Jones and Robert F. Jones have met with our Session and expressed their desire to unite with First Presbyterian Church by transfer from your church. Will you please issue the necessary transfer paper at your earliest convenience? Thank you.

It is always appropriate to add a few words where appropriate such as:

Mary and Bob have been attending regularly and have already become active in the Sunday School and the Dinners for Eight group. We are fortunate to have them join our fellowship.

B. Form for Membership Transfer

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Certificate of Transfer

This is to certify that

_____ is/are in full communion and in good and regular standing in the
_____ Presbyterian Church
of _____ and upon _____ own request is/are
hereby dismissed and affectionately recommended to the fellowship of the
_____ Church
of _____, and when so received,* and not before,
_____ special relation to this Church will cease.

By order of the Session: _____ Moderator

Given at _____

Date _____

Clerk of Session

*FORM OF GOVERNMENT, G-10.0302 b(1): "When a certificate of transfer has been issued, the name of the member shall be retained on the appropriate roll by the church issuing the certificate until the person is received into membership in the other church."

C. Template for Session Minutes

This template is for a stated meeting and no space is left to enter written material to save space recognizing that this template probably will not serve exactly for your use.

CHURCHNAME
CityState

MINUTES

STATED SESSION MEETING, *date*
place

MEMBERS OF THE SESSION PRESENT:

Rev. *pastorname*, Moderator; *clerkname*, Clerk; Ruling Elders *elder1*, *elder2*, *elder3*, . .

MEMBERS OF THE SESSION EXCUSED:

elder1, *elder2*, . . .

MEMBERS OF THE SESSION ABSENT:

elder1, *elder2*, . . . ALSO PRESENT: *person1*, *person2*, . . .

The meeting was opened with prayer by the Moderator at *time1*.

It was determined that a quorum was present. Session voted to excuse the elders noted above.

Session approved the minutes of the stated meeting of *date1* and the called meeting of *date2* as presented.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Births:

Deaths:

Weddings:

Baptisms:

Lord's Supper:

Requests for baptism:

Requests for wedding:

Other information and action.

CLERK'S REPORT

Information and action.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Membership Committee

Information and action.

Christian Education Committee

Information and action.

Worship Committee

Information and action.

ETC.

OLD BUSINESS

NEW BUSINESS

The meeting was closed with prayer by the Moderator at *time2*.

D. Clerk's Report

New Members

How joining (letter of transfer affirmation of faith, reaffirmation of faith, restoration), where from (if letter of transfer), maiden name if married female, whether adult (18 or older) of child, if adult has minor children, names and birthdates and whether or not baptized

Transferring Members

Where transferring to (another church or Inactive Roll)

Removing Members

Baptisms

Date of baptism, person's full name, if child: parents' names, birthdate (including year), place of birth, minister's name

Death

Date of Death, whether or not an elder (either active or inactive), whether active member or inactive member

Weddings

full names of couple, minister officiating, date, place (all weddings in the church and those performed by the pastor elsewhere)

E. Letters of Appreciation

Dear Mary,

At our last Session meeting, we were informed of your recent honor as an outstanding volunteer at Warm Springs Hospital. The Session asked me to convey to you its congratulations and its appreciation of members like you who give of their time to others. Your service and diligence are an inspiration to us all.

Once again, we all congratulate you on your award and we thank you for being such an excellent representative of what Jesus would have us do.

Sincerely, -----

To the staff, parents, and children of the church Children's Enrichment Center

From the Session:

Whereas Session members are people

Whereas cookies are enjoyable

Whereas people like cookies

Whereas cookies make people feel happy

Therefore

Let it known that The Session thanks you for the cookies.

Signed by the hand of the Clerk.

F. Sample Ballots

CONGREGATION NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Write names of the persons you wish to vote for; vote for no more than five

(5).

BALLOT FOR ELDERS
Vote for no more than four (4).

Nominee 1

Nominee2

Nominee3

Nominee4

BALLOT

Vote either FOR or AGAINST.

For the motion _____

Against the motion _____

G. Financial Categories for Annual Session Statistical Report

RECEIPTS

- a. Contributions
 - pledges
 - loose offering (cash and checks)
 - special offerings
 - One Great Hour of Sharing
 - Joy Gift
 - Souper Bowl
 - Designated gifts that pass through the church such as someone specifying a gift to the Food Bank
 - etc.
- b. Capital and Building Funds
 - building fund
 - organ fund
 - gifts specified for other capital expenses such as new oven, etc.
- c. Investment and Endowment
 - interest/dividends from savings accounts, money-market accounts, stocks, bonds
 - receipts from sale of stocks/bonds
- d. Bequests money received from a person's estate value of one-time contributions of anything of value from a person's estate including stocks
- e. Other Income
 - other money received such as income from day care/preschool, fees for use of church facilities, etc.
- f. Subsidy or Aid money from other churches, presbytery, synod, or General Assembly for use in local programs

EXPENDITURES

- a. Local Program
 - salaries, wages, pension, benefits, utilities, office supplies, insurance, etc

- b. Local Mission
local mission projects within the church's general geographical area (city) directed by the session or by a local ecumenical (church related) organization. Local mission causes not local or not by an ecumenical organization go under Other Mission.
- c. Capital Expenditures
money paid toward mortgages
purchase of new equipment such as stoves, air conditioners, etc.
extraordinary repairs or renovations
- d. Investment Expenditures money newly placed into stocks, bonds, etc. brokers' fees.
Not money moved from one type of investment to another.
- e. Per Capita Apportionment
as billed by Presbytery
- f. Validated Mission
Unified Giving (paid to Presbytery)
One Great Hour of Sharing
Joy Gift
Hunger Offerings
Disaster Relief
Women's Birthday Offering
Peacemaking Offering
Witness Offering
Women's Birthday Offering
Disaster Relief (paid to GA or Presbytery)
etc.
(these are usually paid to Presbytery; other Presbyterian missions such as Presbyterian Children's Home, Pan American School, Menaul School, Stillman College, Austin Theological Seminary should be included here)
- g. General Assembly Theological Education Fund
- h. Other Mission that are not Presbyterian and not included under Local Mission
- i. NOTE: If you are not certain what category to place an item, use your best judgment.

H. Church Group Financial Reporting Form

For purposes of financial reporting to the General Assembly via the Session Annual Statistical Report, please submit this form to the Clerk of Session at the end of the year. The categories on this form match those on the Statistical Report. See the Clerk if you have questions about the categories.

STARTING BALANCE (all funds) _____

RECEIPTS

Contributions (all income except interest) _____

Interest _____

TOTAL _____

EXPENDITURES

For Local Program (includes items such as office supplies) _____

Local Mission _____

Presbyterian Mission other than Local
(includes money sent to Presbytery for disbursement) _____

Other Mission (mission not included in b and f) _____

TOTAL _____

ENDING BALANCE _____

I. About the Author

I am an inorganic chemist and a university professor. I was on the faculty of The University of Toledo, a comprehensive doctoral institution with over 20,000 students that is a part of the Ohio state university system, for 25 years. During that time I spent one year as Visiting Professor at Michigan State University. After taking early retirement, I have taught part-time at The University of Texas at San Antonio and at Trinity University. I have published chemistry textbooks and articles for scientific journals based on both my scholarly research and on my teaching.

I have served on Session at two different churches for a total of 12 years being Clerk of Session for 12 years. My Session committee assignments have included Adult Christian Education, Membership, Worship, Fellowship, Stewardship, Communication, ad hoc Committee to Reorganize Session Meetings, and ad hoc search committees for secretary (twice) and Christian Education Director (twice). For the congregation I have served on the Church Nominating Committee. There have also been two short periods as editor of the church newsletter. At the Presbytery level, I have served on one Administrative Commission (session replacement) for Maumee Valley Presbytery. For Mission Presbytery I served as chair of the Trustees of the Henrietta M. King Memorial Fund, chair of the Clerk's Committee, and chair of the Worship Task Force. I also have served on the Steering Committee of the Lay Leadership Institute of Mission Presbytery and been involved in teaching at its programs. I also served on a Task Force for Mission Presbytery to assist a church in need of training. Currently for Grand Canyon Presbytery I serve on the Commission for Preparation for Ministry. I have been a reader of ordination exams four times.

It has been a combination of my scholarly training and activity and my church activities that has led me to write handbooks for clerks of session, for elders, for session committee moderators and for church nominating committees. In addition, I have written a series of Sunday School lessons for adults originating with some sermons I have preached and incorporating my perspective as a scientist which I hope to publish as a book.

J. Certificates

Examples of these certificates are included.

Membership
Infant Baptism
Adult Baptism
Confirmation/Membership
Ordination of Elder
Ordination of Deacon
Installation of Elder
Installation of Deacon



Certificate of Membership

This is to certify that

NAME

has been received as a member of

**Oak Hills Presbyterian Church
San Antonio, Texas**

This DAY day of MONTH YEAR

PASTORNAME, Pastor

CLERKNAME, Clerk of Session



Certificate of Baptism

This certifies

Child's Name

*Child of PARENT 1 and PARENT2 LASTNAME
Born on the DAY day of MONTH YEAR
in CITY STATE*

Received **Christian Baptism**

on the DAY day of MONTH YEAR

at Oak Hills Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas

PASTORNAME, Pastor

ELDERNAME, Elder

Certificate of Baptism



This certifies that

NAME

*Upon Confession of Faith
has been baptized
on the DAY day of MONTH YEAR*

at

Oak Hills Presbyterian Church, San Antonio, Texas

PASTORNAME, Pastor

ELDERNAME, Elder



Certificate of Confirmation/ Membership

This is to certify that

NAME

was confirmed in the faith and has been received as a member of

**Oak Hills Presbyterian Church
San Antonio, Texas**

This DAY day of MONTH YEAR

PASTORNAME, Pastor

CLERKNAME, Clerk of Session

Certificate of Ordination



NAME

having been examined and ordained

Ruling Elder

*in the Oak Hills Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, Texas
according to the Constitution of the*

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

this DAY day of MONTH YEAR

PASTORNAME, Pastor

CLERKNAME, Clerk of Session

Certificate of Ordination



NAME

having been examined and ordained

Deacon

*in the Oak Hills Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, Texas
according to the Constitution of the*

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

this DAY day of MONTH YEAR

PASTORNAME, Pastor

CLERKNAME, Clerk of Session

Certificate of Installation



Name

*having been previously ordained
has been regularly elected and installed*

Ruling Elder

*in the Oak Hills Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, Texas
agreeably to the Word of God and according to the Constitution of the*

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

*has been acknowledged and received by the congregation of this church
this DAY day of MONTH YEAR*

PASTORNAME, Pastor

CLERKNAME, Clerk of Session

Certificate  Installation

Name

*having been previously ordained
has been regularly elected and installed*

Deacon

*in the Oak Hills Presbyterian Church of San Antonio, Texas
agreeably to the Word of God and according to the Constitution of the*

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

*has been acknowledged and received by the congregation of this church
this DAY day of MONTH YEAR*

PASTORNAME, Pastor

CLERKNAME, Clerk of Session
