

THE PRESBYTERY OF SUSQUEHANNA VALLEY

SESSION RECORDS REVIEW WORKSHEET

Name of Church _____

City _____ State _____

Complete the Clerk of Session Contact Information and fill in the page numbers **BEFORE** the meeting and bring it with you to the meeting. The minutes will be read by a reviewer in Fall, 2011, and that person will add comments. The information in the parentheses are references to where the requirement is specified in the Book of Order. If you have any questions, contact the Stated Clerk (statedclerk@susvalpresby.org or cell phone 607-423-6423).

Clerk of Session Contact Information

Name:	Home Phone:	
	Cell Phone:	
Home Address:		
City:	State:	Zip:
Email:		

Do you prefer to receive mail ___ at home ___ at church ?

When does your term as Clerk of Session end? _____ (if you're not standing for re-election).

Do you know who will replace you? _____.

Session Records to be reviewed (indicate page # and dates)

From Minutes Book Page _____ to Page _____ Dates: From _____ to _____

The following checklists and Reviewer's comments are the report on the review of your Session record.

The general criteria used in reviewing your minutes are:

- 1) The proceedings have been correctly recorded;
- 2) The proceedings have been regular and in accordance with the Book of Order;
- 3) The proceedings have been prudent and equitable;
- 4) The proceedings have been faithful to the mission of the whole church; and
- 5) The lawful injunctions of a higher governing body have been obeyed. (Book of Order D-3.0105)

G-3.0107 Records

Each council shall keep a full and accurate record of its proceedings. Minutes and all other official records of councils are the property in perpetuity of said councils or their legal successors. When a council ceases to exist, its records shall become the property of the next higher council within whose bounds the lower council was prior to its cessation. The clerk of each council shall make recommendation to that body for the permanent safekeeping of the body's records with the Presbyterian Historical Society or in a temperature and humidity controlled environment of a seminary of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

Session and Congregational Meeting Minutes are permanent important records of your church and Session. As permanent records, they are to be correctly recorded and carefully preserved. References used are per Book of Order (2011/2013) and Roberts Rules of Order.

CONTINUING REQUIREMENTS:

The following items must appear in every set of Session minutes:

Page	Item	Reviewer's Comments
	1. Date, hour, and type of meeting (stated or called). The Session shall meet at least quarterly (G-3.0203, Roberts Rules of Order).	
	2. The Session shall not meet without the Pastor or designated Moderator (G-3.0201).	
	3. Meeting opened and closed with prayer. (G-3.0105).	
	4. Attestation of a quorum, with names of those ruling elders present. (Robert's Rules of Order)	
	5. The Minutes of the previous meeting were approved (Roberts Rules of Order)	
	6. Record of meeting duly attested (signed) by Clerk (Roberts Rules of Order).	

The following must appear in the minutes, but not necessarily each time:

	7. Session has provided a place where the congregation may regularly gather for worship, education, and spiritual nurture (G-3.0201a)	
	8. Provisions for the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper to be celebrated at least quarterly; dates (eg 1 st of month) and occasions (eg Maundy Thursday) listed (G-3.0201b, W-2.4009 & W-2.4012)	
	9. Baptisms authorized by Session prior to celebration, candidates instructed and examined. (W-2.3011a and W-2.3012b). Full names & date of sacrament.	
	10. Name of Teaching elder (minister) officiating at sacraments if not the installed pastor.	
	11. Marriages officiated by pastoral staff or weddings in church building, with full names, date and minister presiding. (W-4.9003)	
	12. Receiving and dismissing members with full names, and whether received by Confession of Faith, Reaffirmation of Faith, or Transfer of Certificate (including name & place of transferring church). (G-3.0201c) Information on ordination and children should also be included.	
	13. Session has provided for regular preaching of the Word (G-3.0201a)	
	14. Study of the Directory for Worship is part of the education of church officers. (W-1.4007)	
	15. Approval of hymnals, songbooks, Bibles and other worship materials for congregational use, with concurrence of Pastor (in consultation with church musicians, educators) (W-1.4006)	
	16. Session has planned and led regular efforts to reach into the community and the world with the message of salvation and the invitation to enter into committed discipleship (G-3.0201a)	
	17. Session has planned and led ministries of social healing and reconciliation in the community in accordance with the prophetic witness of Jesus Christ (G-3.0201a)	
	18. Session has initiated and responded to ecumenical efforts that bear witness to the love and grace of God. (G-3.0201a)	
	19. All financial offerings are counted and recorded by at least two duly appointed persons, or by one fidelity bonded person (G-3.0205a)	
	20. Financial books and records adequate to reflect all financial transactions have been kept and are open to inspection by authorized church officers at reasonable times; (G-3.0205b)	

ANNUAL CONSTITUTIONAL & PRESBYTERY REQUIREMENTS:

The items following shall be included in the minutes annually:

Page	Item	Reviewer's Comments
	21. Session shall review, at least annually, the roll of members (baptized, active, affiliate), and shall counsel with those neglecting the responsibilities of membership. (G-3.0204a)	
	22. Session has sought to restore members to active participation and provided written notice before removing them from the active roll. (G-3.0204a)	
	23. Election of ruling elder (need not be a current member on Session) to serve as Clerk of Session, for a term determined by the Session, e.g. one year, 3 years) (G-3.0104)	
	24. Budget established by the Session, determination of benevolences and setting of special offerings. (G-3.0205)	
	25. Election by Session of Church Treasurer. (G-3.0205)	
	26. Records of all financial transactions reported at least annually. (G-3.0205c)	
	27. Full financial review performed every year (G-3.0113).	
	28. Nominating Committee has at least 3 active members of the congregation plus at least 1 ruling elder on Session. The Pastor has served ex-officio, without vote. (G-2.0401)	
	29. Ruling Elder & deacon terms of office are no more than 3 years length, with no more than 6 consecutive years of service at a time. (G-2.0404)	
	30. Session sets dates for congregational meetings to elect officers and appoints days for services of ordination & installation. (G-2.0402)	
	31. Session has provided for study & preparation by elected officers before they are ordained and installed into office (G-2.0402). Elected officers examined on "personal faith; knowledge of the doctrine, government, and discipline contained in the Constitution of the church; and the duties of the ministry"	
	32. Session has elected a ruling elder as commissioner to presbytery and has heard reports back on presbytery meetings (G-3.0202a)	
	33. The church has an Manual of Administrative Operations to guide its work and mission. (G-3.0106)	
	34. Session has adopted and implemented a Sexual Misconduct Policy. (G-3.0106)	
	35. Session has arranged for property and liability insurance coverage to protect its facilities, programs, staff, and elected and appointed officers. (G-3.0112)	
	36. Session has done an annual review of the Pastor's Terms of Call. (G-2.0804).	
	37. Record of pastoral annual Terms of Call, including amount of housing allowance (if the is no manse). (COM Policy 20)	
	38. Continuing Education/Study leave planned by Pastor, approved by Session, reported back to Session by Pastor. (COM Policy 20)	
	39. General administrative review of all the entities related to the Church (committees, trustees, deacons, PW, Youth Group etc.) (G-3.0108).	
	40. Send to Presbytery and to General Assembly requested annual statistics and other information (G-3.0202f)	

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS:

The following is a checklist for Minutes of Meetings of the Congregation:

Page	Item	Reviewer's Comments
	41. Adequate public notice is given of Congregational Meetings (G-1.0502)	Y/N
	42. Business for special meetings is limited to what was announced in the call (G-1.0501) (eg to elect officers)	Y/N
	43. There is a quorum of active members. (Roberts Rules)	Y/N
	44. The Moderator is listed – usually installed pastor. (G-1.0504)	Y/N
	45. Either the Clerk of Session serves as secretary or the congregational elects someone if the clerk can't serve. (G-1.0505)	Y/N
	46. The Minutes are attested (signed) by the Moderator AND Clerk.	Y/N
	47. The congregation has elected ruling elders (and deacons and trustees – if those are also officers in a particular church). <i>May be at a special meeting other than Annual Meeting.</i> (G-1.0503a)	Y/N
	48. The congregation has voted on calling a pastor, associate pastor or co-pastor and has voted on any changes in pastoral terms of call – terms listed (G-1.0503b,c)	Y/N
	49. The congregation has voted on buying, selling or mortgaging real property (G-1.0503d) <i>Session also votes and recommends such action to the congregation.</i>	Y/N
	50. if the minutes of the Congregational meeting are not approved before adjournment, the next Session meeting reads and approve them on behalf of the congregation.	Y/N
	51. The full Annual Meeting Minutes and reports or summary of reports are included in Session Minute Book.	Y/N
	52. Record if a separate meeting of the Corporation is held (NYS statutes) and officers elected (President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer).	Y/N
	53. Minutes of all congregational meetings are included in the Session Minutes book.	Y/N

CHURCH REGISTER OR RECORDS (ROLLS) BOOK**Reviewer's Comments**

	54. There shall be rolls of baptized, active and affiliate members (G-3.0204a)	
	55. Active Members need full names and whether received by affirmation of faith, re-affirmation of faith or transfer of certificate and date	
	56. Affiliate Members need date received and name of other church where full membership is retained	
	57. There shall be registers of baptisms authorized by Session. (G-3.0204b)	
	58. Infant baptisms need full name of infant, parents' names, date & place of birth; for adult baptisms, record full name of the individual, including the full maiden name of a married woman, and date of birth of those being Baptized.	
	59. There shall be registers of ruling elders and deacons (G-3.0204b) Use full names and show dates of service	
	60. There shall be register of installed Pastors with dates of service. (G-3.0204b)	
	61. Marriages and memorial services/funerals that are held on church property or officiated by pastoral staff should be recorded.	
	62. Full names of marriage partners should be entered, along with address. Wedding license information, including county, license # and witnesses to the wedding should be recorded.	
	63. Full name of the deceased should be entered, along with address, date of death and interment location or cremation noted.	
	64. All information in Church Rolls & Registers must match with Session Minutes when action was taken.	

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS:

The full record of disciplinary proceedings must be recorded as outlined in the Rules of Discipline. Please consult the Stated Clerk as soon as allegations are received so that Clerk of Session may be guided through this complex process!

Item	Reviewer's Comments
65. Clerk of Session reports that allegations have been received. (D-10.0103)	Y/N
66. An Investigating Committee (IC) is appointed of 3-5 members, none of whom can be currently serving on Session (D-10.0201)	
67. On completing investigation, the IC may initiate an "Alternative Form of Resolution," which has to be approved by the Session by 2/3 vote, recorded in the Minutes of Session including name of accused and substance of charges and terms of resolution (D-10.0202h3). If the settlement is not satisfactory to both the IC and the accused, then charges are filed.	
68. The report of the IC to the Session to press charges or not (that fact alone) is recorded. (D-10.0202i, 10.0303)	
69. The Clerk of Session shall have kept a record of the charges, the plea entered, transcript of trial, properly marked trial exhibits, the written decision at the end of the trial, any actions or orders (eg degree of censure) with the vote recorded. (D-11.0601d1-6)	
70. After a trial conducted in accordance with the Rules of Discipline, the Session announced in an open meeting its decisions regarding a verdict for each separate charge. (D-11.0403d)	
71. In the case of a guilty verdict, the Session met privately to determine degree of church censure (rebuke, exclusion or removal and whether temporary or permanent) and announced it in an open meeting, with the Clerk of Session delivering a copy to each named party by personal service or certified delivery. (D-11.0403e)	

PRESBYTERY REQUIREMENTS:

The following are not constitutional requirements, but are requested by the Presbytery.

Page	Item	Reviewer's Comments
	72. The annual membership and financial statistics submitted to General Assembly are recorded in the Session records after the report is approved by Session.	
	73. An annual statement of all indebtedness recorded in the Session minutes and reported to the Annual Meeting of the Congregation.	
	74. Notice of any official communications to the Session from a higher council (presbytery, synod) and action taken or referral made.	
	75. Minutes format – Have approved Minutes Record Book or a page size not to exceed 8 ½" X 11" Be recorded on acid-free, paper with cloth content Be on pages that are numbered consecutively, with no more than 400 leaves (800 pages) in each volume Be typed on both sides of the page, with sufficient margins to allow for marginal notes or corrections.	
	76. Minutes format – NO: erasures, footnotes, insertions of other paper, or large blank areas between minutes (spaces may be X-d out)	
	77. Record the Annual Review of Session records (Minutes book and Church Register) by a presbytery review and note any exceptions to minutes. (G-3.0108a).	

Failing to fulfill a Book of Order mandate or to follow Robert's Rule of Order as listed above is an "exception."

Name of Reviewer: _____ Date of Review _____

Any Exceptions found: _____

Reviewer's Other Comments:

THE REVIEWER RECOMMENDS THAT:

_____ the minutes be approved without exception.

_____ the minutes be approved with the exceptions noted above.

_____ the minutes be disapproved for the following reasons: _____

_____ the minutes be disapproved

_____ the Presbytery take the following action: _____

DATE OF READING: _____ **BY:** _____