

# **Clerk of Session Advanced Training - 2016**

**Presbytery of Tampa Bay**

# Introduction

- You should know at this point the basics of how to do your job: taking minutes, using the rolls and registers, and so on.
- This training is to help you get a better grasp on the “Advanced” topics that don’t come up as often, yet you are still expected to be a resource for.
- By request, we’ll also be taking a deeper look at both the Statistical Report and Clerk’s Survey.

# Goals for Our Time

- Additional Book of Order Training
  - Manual of Administrative Operations
  - Responsibilities of Session and Pastor
- Robert's Rules Training
  - Bylaws
  - Parliamentary Procedure
- Clerk's Annual Questionnaire Overview
- Annual Statistical Report Preparation
- Leadership Issues

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Introduction
  - What is it?
    - A collection of resources and policies specific to your church that ought to make your life easier
  - Why do you need it?
    - Book of Order requires it: G-3.0106:
      - Each council shall develop a manual of administrative operations that will specify the form and guide the work of mission in that council.

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Introduction
  - “specify the form”
    - Committee structure and so on. Roles and responsibilities.
  - “guide the work”
    - What to do in case of XYZ.
    - Over 50% of the questions I get are answered by: “What do your bylaws say?” Since nFOG we need to have this information handy, and your Manual is a good spot.
  - Best if it’s a living document that the Session is familiar with and has access to. Good way to train incoming elders.

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Items to include
  - Original Charter
  - Articles of Incorporation
  - Deed to Property
  - Bylaws of Church
  - Bylaws of Corporation
  - Mission Statement
  - Position descriptions for all non-ordained staff

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Items to include
  - Description of the Nominating Committee
    - Committee of the Congregation, *not* the session
    - At least 3 members, with at least one active Elder
    - Pastor has right to serve ex officio without vote
    - How many total? Who nominates? When? What term?
  - Quorum for session
  - Quorum for congregation
  - Quorum for corporation
  - Tax exemption certificate

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Items to Include
  - Personnel Procedures
    - Background check, credit check, etc.
    - Description of Performance Review
  - Procedure for counting and depositing collections
  - Procedure for canceling worship for emergencies
  - Procedure for responding to medical emergency or fire in worship
  - All insurance policies

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Items to Include
  - New member procedures
  - Descriptions of work of each committee
  - Expectations for those serving on committees
  - Job descriptions for the work of each committee or church organization
    - Instructions for ushers, greeters, communion servers and preparers, etc.
  - Policies and fees for use of building (eg, weddings)

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Items to Include
  - Sexual Misconduct policy
  - Child Protection policy
  - Procedure for responding to a lawsuit
  - Session Meeting policy (open, closed, etc)
  - Procedure for responding to requests for minutes from non-session and non-church members
  - Rules related to finance and audits
  - Stewardship and pledging procedures
  - Session Calendar (dates to elect nominating, etc)

# Book of Order

- Administrative Manual: Items to Include
  - Session Calendar (this can be just for the clerk and/or moderator instead of in the manual)
    - What month to approve calling congregational meeting for nominating
    - What month to have the annual review of the rolls
    - What month to have the annual review of the pastor's salary
    - What month to elect the Stewardship committee, etc.

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Sessions are responsible to:
    - Provide that the Word of God be truly preached and heard
      - G-3.0201a
      - Includes providing for preaching, worship, nurture and education
      - Planning and leading outreach efforts
      - Planning and leading social reconciliation
      - Initiating and responding to ecumenical efforts

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Sessions are responsible to:
    - Provide that the Sacraments be rightly administered
      - G-3.0201b
      - Authorizing the Lord's Supper at least quarterly
      - Authorizing Baptisms as appropriate
      - Exercising pastoral care among the congregation (in order for there to be the unity there the Lord's Supper represents)

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Sessions are responsible to:
    - Provide for congregational care
      - G-3.0201c
      - Receive and dismiss members (may be done by a commission)
      - Review active roll at least annually
      - Provide for training of new elders and deacons
      - Stewardship training/campaigns
      - Managing the property
      - Directing deacons, trustees and all other committees
      - Employing staff
      - Mission and Justice

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Sessions are responsible to:
    - G-3.0203
      - Call special session meeting when requested by 2 or more in writing, and reasonable notice given.
    - G-3.0205
      - Authorize offerings and distribute proceeds
      - Offerings must be counted and recorded by at least 2 appointed persons, or 1 fidelity bonded person
      - Keep financial records that are open to church officers
      - At least annual reports of all financial activities

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Sessions are responsible to:
    - Approve the budget (not the congregation)
    - Call Congregational Meetings (G-1.0502)
    - Review annually the compensation of the ordained staff (G-2.0804)
    - Approve use of building for all outside organizations and marriages
    - Train new members of session

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Pastors are responsible to:
    - G-3.0203
      - Moderate the session or invite another TE moderator.
      - Call a special meeting of the session.
    - G-2.0501
      - Teach the faith and equip the saints for the work of ministry
    - G-2.0504
      - Engage in pastoral care, prayer, teaching the Word, equipping the congregation, share in leadership, compassion, witness and service, and serve on higher councils of the church

# Book of Order

- Division of Powers Between Pastors and Elders
  - Pastors:
    - Can marry who they want to, but not necessarily in the church building
    - Installed pastors and associate pastors are members of session and may vote if they wish to, make motions, etc. (G-3.0201)

# Robert's Rules

- Administration Tips
  - Consent Agenda
    - Include all of the non-controversial items that require approval into one motion
      - Eg, approval of minutes, communion dates, changes to roll
  - Commissions
    - Commissions act with the full authority of the session
    - They are meant to lighten the administrative load for the rest of the session
    - Good uses include: receiving new members, reviewing the roll, personnel matters, approve special communion request

# Robert's Rules

- Bylaws
  - You don't *need* bylaws, but they are a nice place to put all of the Book of Order items that since nFOG need to be provided “by rule”.
  - Bylaws may be *more* restrictive than the Book of Order, but not less
  - If your bylaws and the Book of Order conflict, the Book of Order wins
  - You might have one set of bylaws for your church corporation, and one for the church

# Robert's Rules

- Bylaws
  - Common items often included in bylaws:
    - Quorum of session
    - Quorum of congregation for congregational meetings
    - Congregational meeting notification requirements
    - Nominating Committee procedures
    - Annual meeting provisions
    - Structural issues such as unicameral vs bicameral systems, size of each class for session and number of classes, etc.

# Robert's Rules

- Common items often included in bylaws:
  - Who approves Congregational Meeting Minutes
  - Election procedures for the Corporation
  - Provision for how to edit bylaws
  - Provision for election of Treasurer and/or Clerk
  - Procedure for filling officer vacancies

# Robert's Rules

- Parliamentary Procedure
  - Role of Clerk is sometimes parliamentarian
  - Motions
    - Once made and seconded may not be “withdrawn”
    - Require no second if coming from a committee
    - Are not able to receive “friendly” amendments, just amendments
    - You can amend a motion 2 levels down, but no further
    - Substitute motions

# Robert's Rules

- Parliamentary Procedure
  - Call the Previous Question vs. Call All Previous Questions
  - Committee of the whole
  - Executive Session
  - Lay on the Table vs. Postpone (in)definitely
  - Rescinding previous actions
  - Call for vote by ballot

# Clerk's Annual Questionnaire

## – Tips:

- Don't use \$, “,” or other symbols when entering amounts, just the numbers (this is also an issue for the Annual Statistical Report)
- Percentages are the exception; xx.yyy format
- You can always answer some parts then come back later

## – Walkthrough

- You need to get information on bequests, marriages, and the education of the pastor to answer all questions

# Annual Statistical Report

- 3 Major pieces of info:
  - Membership (which determines your per capita)
  - Education Attendance
  - Financials
- You need to be working on this all year, and you need to work with the Treasurer and whoever does the attendance as well. Enter each part as it becomes available.
- Enter the data in in “batches” as it’s done, not all at once.
- Keep the previous year in your register. When you update things there, you can also update the form, and it will be much easier to complete at the end of the year.
- Disability figures are subjective, not legal. “substantially limited” is the standard.

# Transitional Leadership Issues

- When the pastor leaves, people will look to the Clerk of Session for leadership quite frequently.
  - “Real” leaders vs positional leaders. Might not always be you.
- When to engage COM
- Stated Supply changes at the Board of Pensions
- You **MUST** have a moderator to have a Session Meeting.

# Other Leadership Issues

## – General Leadership Issues

- Long Range Planning
- Making sure the Pastor is taken care of
  - Personnel committee is Session
  - Annual review of adequacy of pastor's salary
  - Make sure they're not burning out or doing too much
  - Help them and support them
  - Bring sensitive matters to their attention

**Q&A**