

# CREC Council Book of Procedures

**BOP Reconciliation Document**  
as provided for in  
CREC Constitution Article IV.A.6,  
which reads, in relevant part:

*The Book of Procedures may be altered or amended at any time by a simple majority of an assembly. The various presbyteries may modify their respective Books of Procedures between meetings of council. Each meeting of council will review these various modifications and harmonize the various Books of Procedures, in accordance with the provisions of the CREC Council Book of Procedures. Presbyteries may then approve further modifications for their own use, to be followed in turn by conciliar review. Maintenance and publication of a current Book of Procedures is the responsibility of the minister.*

Since Council met in 2011, one presbytery (Athanasius) has modified its Book of Procedures. The amendment can be seen below at Article XI.1.f (p. 14). The amendment adds a **new subsection f**. It is proposed as an amendment to the Council Book of Procedures. As a conforming amendment, the heading for Article XI, Section 1, is changed to “General Provisions.”

## Table of Contents

Article I	Preface .....	3
Article II	Definitions .....	3
Article III	Receiving New Members .....	4
Article IV	Mission Churches .....	5
Article V	Election of Ministers .....	8
Article VI	Conduct of Meetings.....	9
Article VII	Formation of New Presbyteries .....	10
Article VIII	Notification of Ministers .....	11
Article IX	Conducting a Trial.....	11
Article X	Appeal Procedures .....	13
Article XI	Ordination Examinations.....	13
Article XII	Recognition of Ordained Ministers .....	17
Article XIII	Fraternal Relations.....	18
Article XIV	Miscellaneous Provisions .....	19
Appendix A	Summary of Robert’s Rules of Order .....	21
Appendix B	Ordination Guidelines and Procedures.....	25
Appendix C	Golden Rule for Cooperation among Churches .....	46

## **Article I** Preface

The CREC council Book of Procedures provides standard operating procedures for both the Council and the Presbyteries. Each presbytery must adopt the current version of the CREC Council Book of Procedures as the foundation for its own book of procedures, and may add additional procedural standards to its own book of procedures provided the additional standards are not in conflict with the CREC Council Book of Procedures or the CREC Constitution and by-laws. If there is good cause for not following these standard operating procedures in a given situation, the reason for the deviation must be stated in writing and approved by the relevant broader assembly.

## **Article II** Definitions

The following definitions apply with regard to terms used in the Constitution and this Book of Procedures:

### 1. Adopt

When the assembly wishes to approve and endorse assembly minutes or the factual findings or opinions of a committee as set forth in a report, or when the assembly wishes to implement the recommendations or resolutions of a committee as set forth in a report, the proper motion is to “adopt” the minutes or specified portion(s) of the report. If a committee report contains statements of fact or opinion which are only for the assembly’s information, the assembly may simply “receive” the report, unless the assembly wishes to endorse and assume responsibility for the statements, in which case the assembly should “adopt” them. (Robert’s Rules ¶¶33, 54).

### 2. Mediation

The attempt to settle a dispute through the active participation of a third party (the “mediator”) who works with disputing parties to clear up misunderstandings, heal offenses, find points of agreement, and persuade them to agree on a fair and just resolution. The role of mediator may be performed by an individual or a committee.

### 3. Non-binding Arbitration

An informal mini-trial conducted by a third party or panel in an attempt to assist disputing parties to more objectively assess the respective merit of their positions and the likely outcome of a formal trial. The outcome of non-binding arbitration is advisory only.

4. Present

An item (e.g., committee report, correspondence, etc) is “presented” to the assembly when a delegate reads or, as appropriate, summarizes or describes the item to the assembly and hands it to the presiding officer or secretary. (Robert’s Rules ¶153)

5. Ratify

When the assembly wishes to confirm the action(s) of a Minister under Article IV.C.7 of the Constitution, or to make valid a past action by an officer, committee, or delegate which requires prior approval of the assembly, the proper motion is to “ratify” the action. By definition, the assembly may ratify only such actions of its ministers, officers, committees, or delegates as it had the right to authorize in advance. (Robert’s Rules ¶139).

6. Receive

A report or other item is “received” by the assembly when it is presented it to the assembly as specified in these definitions. (Robert’s Rules ¶¶153-54).It is not necessary to move to “receive” a presented item, for it has already been “received.” “Receiving” an item does not indicate approval, endorsement, or adoption by the assembly.

**Article III** Procedure for Receiving New Members into Presbytery

1. The voting status of new member churches shall begin the next presbytery meeting following their acceptance into membership. The delegates can make motions but cannot vote.
2. Delegates about to become new members shall normally provide to the presbytery a one-page summary of their church (membership, elders, confessional standards, other useful descriptions, etc.).
3. When admitting a new church into membership in the CREC, the Minister will ask the following questions of the church’s delegation:

- a. Do you, with all the officers of your church, commit yourselves in the sight of God and before Christ Jesus to fight the good fight of faith, to lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed the good confession before many witnesses?
  - b. Do you, with all the officers of your church, sincerely receive and adopt the Doctrinal Standards of this Confederation, subscribing to those standards with honesty and in full submission to the Word of God, which is the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
  - c. Do you, with all the officers of your church, take heed unto yourself, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you presbyter, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood?
  - d. Do you, with all the officers of your church, commit yourselves in faithfulness to the churches in this Confederation: to keep with them the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to pray for them, to comfort them, to encourage them, to admonish them, and to rule with them in accordance with the Constitution of this Confederation and in full submission to the Word of God?
4. When affirmative answers have been given, the Minister will then read the following statement, and then ask the delegates of all member churches to signify their agreement with a corporate "amen."
- "Together with all the officers of our churches, we receive you and welcome you, our brethren, into membership in this confederation. To you we commit our blessings, our prayers, and the right hand of fellowship as you join with us in the rule of the church."

## **Article IV** Mission Churches

1. Purpose
  - a. To provide guidelines for the establishment of a relationship between a sponsoring church (i.e., mother church) and a mission work (i.e., daughter church), and to set forth the conditions for the particularization of that mission church.
2. Definitions

- a. Mission church: A constituted body of Christians under the oversight of a particularized church whose intent is to establish a new particularized church.
- b. Particularized church: A constituted body of Christians who have met all the criteria established by this policy to become a separate church governed by its own session.

### 3. Procedure

- a. Mission Church: A church shall be considered a mission church of a member CREC church when the following conditions have been met:
  - i. A constitution has been written to define and govern the mission work.
    - 1. The mother church approves the constitution and doctrinal standards of the mission church (which may or may not be identical to the mother church's).
    - 2. The mother church appoints a session *pro tempore* over the mission church.
    - 3. These actions put the mission church into existence.
  - ii. Under this constitution and session *pro tempore*:
    - 1. New members can be received.
    - 2. The mission's constitution may be modified by its own amendment process.
    - 3. New officers may be examined, ordained and installed.
- b. The Session
  - i. The session *pro tempore* of the mission church shall be composed of all or some designated part of the session of the mother church along with any duly elected and installed pastors/elders of the mission church until the rest of the conditions for particularization have been fulfilled.
  - ii. The session *pro tempore* shall not be the session of the mother church, but only the session of the mission church.

- iii. Upon the particularization of a church, the pastors/elders from the mother church who had been assigned to serve *pro tempore* on the mission church's session shall no longer be members of the new session. However, should the new church deem it useful, these former session members may continue to serve in an *ex-officio* capacity for a season.
    - iv. Acts of session *pro tempore* must be appealed first to the regular session of the mother church, whose acts may in turn be appealed to the CREC, as per Constitutional procedure.
  - c. Conditions for Particularization
    - i. The mission church shall have its own constitution and bylaws.
    - ii. The mission church shall have been formally constituted for not less than two years.
    - iii. The mission church shall have at least two member pastors/elders, not including pastors/elders of the mother church who have been assigned to serve *pro tempore* on the mission church's session.
    - iv. The mother church may require other conditions.
    - v. The session of the mother church has formally acknowledged that conditions for particularization (i-iv above) have been met.
    - vi. Presbytery acknowledges that conditions i-v above have been met, and does so by receiving the mission church into presbytery membership.
    - vii. Existing churches that have been constituted for at least two years, have two or more local elders, and can sustain themselves financially may come under the care of a member CREC church as a "Mission Church," and may be considered for full Member status at the next meeting of the Presbytery.
  - d. Relationship to the CREC
    - i. All mission churches of CREC member churches shall automatically have mission status in the CREC.
    - ii. This mission status may be maintained until the mission is particularized.
    - iii. Once conditions are met for particularization, the mission church shall be eligible for full CREC membership at the next CREC presbytery meeting.

- iv. As extensions of a member CRE church, all mission churches shall meet the constitutional and doctrinal requirements of the CREC.
- v. As extensions of a member CREC church, all mission churches shall have the protection of the CREC courts and other CREC constitutional protections and requirements.
- e. Ordination of Teaching and Ruling Elders
  - i. As the daughter church is under the oversight of the mother church (a CREC member), all ordination exams shall be conducted under the oversight of the mother church and according to CREC guidelines.
  - ii. The actual ordination and installation of officers shall be conducted under the oversight of the mission church session *pro tempore*.
- f. Termination of Relationship
  - i. Termination of the relationship between mother and daughter church can happen in two ways:
    - 1. The daughter church becomes particularized, defined by being received into CREC membership;
    - 2. A unanimous vote of the mother church's session to terminate the relationship.
- g. Visits
  - i. It is recommended that representatives of the mother church visit the mission church on a regular basis (perhaps quarterly), sometimes to conduct meetings or worship, and sometimes to observe.
  - ii. It is also recommended that the mission church cover the expenses of the mother church (e.g., travel and honorarium).

## **Article V** Conducting Elections for Ministers of Broader Assemblies

1. All nominations for the position of Minister should be pre-posted on the agenda. Churches wishing to nominate candidates for the position of Minister or Minister *pro tempore* shall submit their nominations to the Minister at least thirty days in advance of the opening of the meeting.
2. Following the election of Minister, the delegates may nominate candidates for the office of Minister *pro tempore*. The nominees need not be limited to the delegates nominated for the office of Minister.



3. The Minister and Minister *pro tempore* shall be elected according to the procedure delineated in Article IV.C of the CREC Constitution.
4. Election of Minister and Minister *pro tempore*
  - a. If there are no nominations pre-posted on the agenda, the Minister shall receive nominations from the floor from any delegate in order to create a roster of candidates.
  - b. In order for a nominee to be recognized as a candidate his nomination must be seconded on the floor and the nominee must express his consent to be a candidate. The nomination and second may not come from two delegates representing the same church.
  - c. In due time, the Minister will close the nominations and identify the candidates. A motion from the floor to close nominations shall require a two-thirds vote.
  - d. The Minister will open discussion about the candidates. Delegates may use this time to ask questions of the candidates or elicit statements from them. Delegates also may speak for or against any candidate.
  - e. A roll call vote will be taken unless by majority vote or at the Minister's discretion, a vote by ballot is requested. The candidate receiving a majority of votes will be elected Minister. The outgoing Minister will tally the votes and then shall declare the results of the election.
  - f. If there is only one candidate, he must receive at least a two-thirds majority of the assembled delegate votes to fill the position of Minister. In elections with more than one candidate, a candidate must receive the votes of more than 50% of the delegates present and voting to become Minister-elect. If no candidate meets this requirement, the candidate receiving the fewest votes is eliminated and another vote taken. In the event of a tie vote between two candidates, the Minister will break the tie, if necessary, to elect a Minister or eliminate a candidate from the ballot.

## **Article VI**            Conduct of Meetings

1. The official language of the broader assemblies of the CREC will be English.
2. All meetings will be conducted in English.

3. Any [non-English speaking]\* delegates to Presbytery or Church Council must be accompanied by an interpreter.
4. Robert's Rules of Order exist to facilitate the decision-making process at meetings. They help ensure that discussion is clear and that the rights of both the majority and the minority are protected. Before each meeting, the Minister shall distribute the summary of some of the basic rules, redacted from Robert's Rules and set forth in Appendix A, which will familiarize all attendees with them and help our meetings run more smoothly and keep discussion on track.

## **Article VII**      Formation of New Presbyteries

1. Specifications
  - a. Future proposals to form new presbyteries in the CREC shall, to the greatest extent feasible, conform to these Guidelines:
    - i. The optimum size of a presbytery in the CREC shall be ten churches;
    - ii. When a presbytery exceeds a membership of twenty churches, it shall begin taking steps to propose to Council the formation of a new presbytery, except as, after giving due consideration to the existing condition and strength of its constituent churches, the presbytery deems it unwise to propose division at that time. In this case, presbytery shall report said decision to Council;
    - iii. The factors to be considered in forming new presbyteries shall include the following:
      1. to the extent feasible, each new presbytery should contain at least ten churches;
      2. each new presbytery should include members that have long ministerial experience (graybeards);
      3. each new presbytery should contain members that have a good working acquaintance with CREC culture;
      4. each new presbytery should contain some churches of significant size (not all small churches);

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\* Bracketed language inserted by Minister of Council for clarification.

5. the churches of each new presbytery should share geographic proximity, and have historic connections to one another;
  6. the preference of international churches (and domestic churches if circumstances warrant), should be given significant weight when assigning them to a particular presbytery.
- b. Newly formed presbyteries will be named on the model of Anselm and Augustine, that is, after figures from Church history.
  - c. Each new presbytery shall, within one year of its formation, publish on its web page a brief biography of the saint for which it is named.

**Article VIII** Notification of Ministers

1. The session of elders of each CREC church shall notify the Minister of Presbytery under the following circumstances:
  - a. Before formally admonishing a minister (pastor) or elder (formal admonishment consists of an act of the session, entered into the minutes and delivered to the minister or elder verbally or in writing).
  - b. Before dismissing a minister (pastor) or elder or calling for his resignation.
2. Ministers of Presbytery shall report to the Minister of Council the same information.

**Article IX** Procedures for Conducting a Presbytery Trial

1. Establishment of Judicatory
  - a. All presbyters are voting members of the judicatory with the exception of those who, to set aside conflicts of interest, are removed from the judicatory by a three-fourths majority of presbytery. Should the Minister be removed in this way, presbytery will elect a Minister *pro tempore* to moderate the hearing.
2. Introduction to the case
  - a. A written complaint (including any charges or specifications), provided by the Complainant, is published to each member of the judicatory and read by the Minister.

- b. Here or at any later point in the introduction to the case, any member of the judicatory may interject a motion to dismiss the case. If the motion carries by a three-fourths majority, the hearing will not proceed and the matter will be regarded as settled. The presbytery will not hear frivolous matters.
      - c. The Minister invites the Complainant to introduce the matter.
      - d. The Minister invites the Respondent to introduce the matter.
3. The Minister (or his designee) charges the parties, witnesses, and the judicatory from the Scriptures, and then opens the hearing with prayer.
4. Presentation of Complainant's case
  - a. The Complainant calls a witness, directs him by questioning, and members of the judicatory may follow up with questions of their own.
  - b. The witness may then be examined by the Respondent, followed by another invitation to questions from the judicatory.
  - c. If the Complainant wishes to redirect the witness, he may do so, but the same opportunities for follow-up questions must be provided.
  - d. The Complainant may present any documentary or physical evidence during the course of his presentation. When the Complainant concludes his presentation, the judicatory may again pose final questions to the Complainant or to any of his witnesses.
5. At this point, any member of the judicatory may interject a motion to dismiss the case. If the motion carries by a three-fourths majority, the hearing will end and the matter will be regarded as settled.
6. Presentation of Respondent's Case
  - a. Respondent's presentation is patterned after the Complainant's presentation as described above.
7. The Minister invites the judicatory to ask any further questions of any available witness.
8. Deliberation and Judgment
  - a. Deliberation begins with prayer. Judgment requires a simple majority of the judicatory. Minority opinions, if formally offered, must be received into the record.
9. Closing prayer is offered by the Minister or his designee.

## **Article X** Procedures for Appealing Decisions

1. Amidst any appeals procedure within the CREC, reconciliation between parties will remain a central objective. Such reconciliation may render it unnecessary to press these procedures through to completion.
2. The Minister of the appropriate judicatory will determine whether a party is qualified to bring an appeal.
3. Appellant will notify both the Respondent and the Minister of the appropriate judicatory of his intent to appeal within four weeks of the decision he is appealing.
4. Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Minister per his instructions, and the Appellant must supply to the Respondent a copy of all materials relevant to his appeal.
5. Once an appeal is submitted, it cannot be withdrawn without the approval of the Minister.
6. The Minister may seek the counsel of other presbyters to assist in his decision to hear or dismiss the case.
7. If the Minister chooses to allow the case to move forward, he shall appoint a court of at least three presbyters (representing at least three different CRE churches, excluding conflicts of interest, with no more than two from any one church) to hear the appeal and to render a decision. The court's decision will be regarded as the decision of presbytery, unless it is nullified by the full presbytery.
8. The court shall report its findings to the full presbytery. By vote, the presbytery will either sustain or, if there is cause, nullify the court's decision.

## **Article XI** Ordination Examinations

1. ~~Statement of Purpose~~ **General Provisions**
  - a. The pattern established in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 2:1-2) is that Timothy was to commit the things that he had learned to those faithful men who would be able to teach others. Having established elders in every city, it further was the pattern that this process of succession was perpetuated by those already established in the office. This task clearly requires that a determination be made as to whether a man is characterized by a faithful life and whether he is skilled in teaching others.
  - b. Our purposes are therefore twofold: first we must examine a Teaching Elder candidate's manner of life and doctrine and secondly his ability to teach scripturally. We

believe that it is the local session that primarily carries the burden of this critical determination.

- c. As a presbytery, our purpose is to provide assistance to the local session in this examination, while recognizing the limitations of a presbytery to review a pastoral candidate. First, it is the session that is preeminently qualified to examine a candidate's manner of faithful life and ability to teach. Second, it is prudent for the session to seek the accountability of the broader church as a protection to the flock, and it is a good testimony when they do so. Third, the broader church, as represented by the Presbytery, is generally better able to examine a candidate's doctrinal preparedness, ability to use the original languages, and his exegetical abilities, and knowledge of English Bible.
- d. The Committee of Presbytery (see paragraph 2.b., below) shall inquire of the local session as to the adequacy of the teaching elder (pastor or minister) candidate's compensation package (salary, housing, insurance, etc.).
- e. Ultimately, the session is charged with faithfully considering the wisdom of the broader church and is responsible before God for the ordination of a candidate.
- f. ***Local churches wishing to call previously un-ordained men to serve as pastors in their churches shall ordinarily have these candidates successfully complete the presbytery ordination exam process before having them move to the area and assume pastoral duties.***

## 2. Ordination Examination Process

- a. The examination process and related matters is described fully in the document Guidelines and Instructions for the Presbytery Ordination Exams and Related Matters of Ordination, which is Appendix B of this Book of Procedures.
- b. The examination process for ordination to the office of pastor (teaching elder) is divided into three phases: 1) Preliminary interview of the candidate by the Ordination Examination Committee appointed by the Minister of Presbytery (hereafter "Committee"); 2) A written examination overseen by the Committee; and 3) An oral examination administered at Presbytery, overseen by the Committee.
- c. Steps of the Ordination Examination Process

- i. A local church informs the Minister of Presbytery that it has a candidate for ordination. This must be done no later than four months before the meeting of Presbytery;
- ii. The Minister appoints an Ordination Examination Committee of five to oversee the evaluation;
- iii. The Committee chooses a chairman;
- iv. The Committee interviews the candidate, assessing his educational background and general preparedness to do well at the oral exam. This must be completed no later than three months prior to the Presbytery meeting;
- v. The chairman of the Committee provides the prescribed CREC written examination to the session;
- vi. The candidate takes the written exam;
- vii. The chairman distributes the *Sample Questions for Oral Examination* document to the Committee members and the candidate;
- viii. The candidate submits two exegetical papers (see the guidelines for these papers in Appendix B of the BOP), two sermons (one on an Old Testament text, one on a New Testament text), his answers to the written exam, and a written biographical statement explaining his Christian experience, ministerial aspirations, and confessional views (including exceptions to the confessional standards to which he plans to subscribe) to the Committee. This must be done no later than two months prior to the Presbytery meeting;
- ix. The Committee works with the candidate, preparing him for an oral examination on the floor of Presbytery;
- x. When the Committee is satisfied that the candidate will do well at the oral exam at Presbytery, the Committee informs the Minister, who schedules the exam. This must be done no later than one month prior to the Presbytery Meeting;
- xi. The Committee posts to the CREC Elder Email List a public notice of the candidate's scheduled oral exam at least thirty days prior to the exam;
- xii. The oral exam is then conducted on the floor of Presbytery, overseen by the Committee, and allowing questions from the assembled Presbyters;

- xiii. After the exam, the Presbytery, in executive session with the candidate present, deliberates and votes to either recommend the candidate for ordination, or not;
- xiv. The Committee then writes a report of Presbytery's action, and any other relevant information, and sends it to the candidate and the local session.

### 3. Recommendation Procedures

- a. At the end of the oral examination, Presbytery will, by majority vote, recommend or not recommend the candidate for ordination at that time. The Presbytery will report its decision and any other recommendations to the session of the local congregation. If the Presbytery does not recommend ordination and the session determines to proceed with ordination against the recommendation of the Presbytery, then the session is to indicate in writing to the Minister the reasons for disregarding the recommendation. The Minister will, in that case, evaluate the criteria of the session to determine if there is egregious sin involved on the part of the session, and may proceed as per Article IV.D.3 of the Constitution.

### 4. Previously Ordained Men Entering the CREC

- a. While we believe in the holy catholic Church and therefore accept the ordination of ministers outside of the CREC, it is both wise and proper for their credentials to be examined. It is recommended, though not obligatory, that CREC churches seek the wisdom of the broader church in assessing these credentials. Assessing the credentials and views of an ordained minister is not the same process as an ordination examination and is not to be as comprehensive. The aim in examining a transferring minister is to assist the local congregation in confirming orthodoxy and competence.
  - i. When the church desires to call a man to the office of pastor who was ordained outside of the CREC or who is not a minister in the CREC, the elders of the church shall inform the Minister.
  - ii. The Minister will facilitate the ministerial credentials examination by appointing a committee composed of three CREC presbyters. This may take place at a time determined by the Minister, in coordination with the local church elders.



iii. The Committee will provide a report of its decision and any other recommendations to the Minister of the Presbytery and to the elders of the local congregation. If the Committee recommends the call of the minister, the church may proceed with the call. At the next Presbytery, the minister will then be received into the CREC as an ordained minister with a report from the Committee and an opportunity for a brief examination on the floor of the Presbytery. If the session determines to proceed with the call against the recommendation of the Committee, then the session is to indicate in writing to the Minister their reasons for disregarding the recommendation. The Minister will, in that case, evaluate the criteria of the session to determine if there is egregious sin involved on the part of the session, and may proceed as per Article IV.D.3 of the Constitution. This process of assessing the credentials of a minister being called to a CRE church is described fully in the document Guidelines and Instructions for the Presbytery Ordination Exams and Related Matters of Ordination (Appendix B).

5. The Ordination of Elders Not Recognized in the CREC as Pastors (“Ruling Elders”)
- a. The presbytery is not involved in the process of a “ruling elder's” examination or ordination. Nevertheless, since all elders are required to perform the same primary function of ruling and overseeing the church as do pastors, a similar standard of Biblical and doctrinal knowledge should be encouraged.

## **Article XII**      Recognition of Ordained Ministers

1. Upon the request of a member church in the CREC, the Minister of Presbytery has the authority to register the ministerial credentials of a minister lawfully ordained. Holding a man’s ministerial credentials does not mean that the man is a member of presbytery or council, or a delegate to presbytery or council. The list shall be reviewed and approved by Presbytery annually. Removing a man’s credentials from such a register is not equivalent to defrocking, which can only be done in the CREC at the local church level.

2. Any CREC member church that wishes to have her minister(s) ordination formally recognized by the CREC shall submit such a request to the Minister in writing.
3. Ordained ministers who are members of a CREC church and duly installed as a minister of that church shall be added to the list of recognized ordained men under one of the following conditions:
  - a. A previously ordained man, upon entering the CREC along with his church, was received by the presbytery and thus had his ordination formally recognized by the presbytery.
  - b. Any man who sat for a CREC ordination exam and was recommended by the examination committee, ordained by his local CREC church, and installed as a minister.
  - c. Any previously ordained man, who was called by a CREC member church to be her minister, and is duly installed; subject to final approval at the next presbytery meeting.
4. The Minister shall establish and maintain a list of recognized ministers in the CREC. Upon request, the Minister may issue a letter to an inquiring body stating that the minister in question has been formally recognized by the CREC as a lawfully ordained minister of the gospel.
5. Upon receipt of a written request from the session of a CREC member church, the Minister shall add to the list of recognized ordained men a lawfully ordained minister who is a member of that local church, but who is not currently installed as an officer in that church. Such action by the Minister shall be subject to ratification at the next stated meeting of the presbytery.

### **Article XIII**      Formal, Non-binding Fraternal Relations

1. The CREC welcomes and encourages formal, non-binding, fraternal relations with likeminded churches, presbyteries and denominations. By "fraternal relations," we mean to declare our mutual respect and acceptance of one another as members of the body of Christ. We expect to be able to speak to, encourage, and admonish one another. Moreover, such fraternal relations would allow us to share pulpits, transfer members and commune with one another.
2. The following procedures should be followed to establish formal, fraternal relations between the CREC and other churches, presbyteries or denominations:
  - a. Any church, presbytery or denomination that desires formal, fraternal relations with the CREC may make such a request by submitting a letter to the Minister of the CREC Presbytery or Church Council.

- b. The Minister of the CREC Presbytery or Church Council will present the request to the member churches prior to the next presbytery or council meeting.
  - c. The member churches will vote to enter or not enter into formal, fraternal relations with the requesting church, presbytery or denomination. A two-thirds vote of presbytery or council shall be required.
  - d. Upon the vote, the Minister shall send a letter to the requesting church, presbytery or denomination, which shall state our formal acceptance or rejection of their request for formal, fraternal relations.
  - e. All such actions shall be recorded in the minutes.
3. CREC Presbyteries or Church Council may likewise submit requests for formal, fraternal relations to other churches, presbyteries or denominations.
- a. At the request of the Presbytery or Church Council (two-thirds vote required), the Minister of the Presbytery or Church Council will send a letter to the church, presbytery or denomination, requesting formal, fraternal relations and ask for a written affirmative or negative reply.
  - b. Upon receipt of the written reply, the Minister shall inform the CREC member churches of the response.
  - c. All such actions shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting of the presbytery or council.

**Article XIV**      Miscellaneous Provisions

1. The emblem below is the only one approved for use as graphic representation of the CREC. It can be presented in varying colors, as appropriate and tasteful for its intended use. No other emblem may be used in this regard.

**[By motion of Council on October 6, 2011, use of the CREC emblem was suspended, pending development of a new emblem. When a new emblem has been adopted, it shall be inserted here in the BOP.]**

2. Harmony of Books of Procedure  
 Presbytery Ministers shall submit to the Minister of Council, at least six months prior to the next regular Council meeting, a list of any changes to their Presbytery Book of Procedures to be presented for adoption and harmonization with the CREC Council Book of Procedures. These should include items that the presbyteries wish to see standardized for all presbyteries. Items

peculiar to a particular presbytery do not need to be presented but may be maintained by that presbytery in its Book of Procedures, provided that such procedures are not in conflict with the Council Book of Procedures or the CREC Constitution and By-laws. Once approved by the Minister of Council, the proposed changes shall be presented in the form of motions for adoption at the next regular meeting of the Council. If a motion does not pass, it may be presented again to the delegates of Council for approval to be retained in that presbytery's Book of Procedures.

3. Translation of documents

- a. CREC churches in non-English speaking countries may use dynamic equivalence in pastoral translations of CREC documents, materials and names.

4. Electronic Communications

- a. The presiding Minister of Council will maintain a confidential "list serve" restricted to members of a session for CREC member and mission churches. Those who violate the confidentiality of the list may be removed from the list at the discretion of the presiding Minister of Council.

## **Appendix A**

### **A Guide to the Rules of Order for Presbytery and Council Meetings**

#### **Moderator**

The moderator guides the presbytery meeting. He is responsible for ensuring that the meeting runs smoothly and fairly. The moderator remains impartial during the debate and is not the final arbitrator of all decisions: the presbytery ultimately has the authority and the responsibility to decide how the meeting should run.

#### **Main Motion**

The basis for discussion is a formal motion. The motion is put forward by being "moved" by a voting delegate of the presbytery to focus discussion. Each motion must have a mover and a seconder to show that it has at least a minimum of support from the delegates. Once a motion has been put "on the floor" for discussion, debate must focus on the substance of the motion. All other discussion is out of order and not allowed. A main motion may not be introduced if there is any other motion on the floor. The mover must state the motion before speaking in favor of it and motions should (when possible) be written out and handed to the moderator so that everyone is clear on what is being discussed.

#### **Order**

Once a motion is introduced, the seconder of the motion is given the right to speak immediately after the mover. To ensure that all delegates of the presbytery have an equal opportunity to speak, the moderator will then recognize other speakers.

#### **Amendments**

At any time, a person who has the floor can introduce an amendment to the main motion being debated. An amendment is a motion that alters, adds to, subtracts from, or completely changes the main motion. Once an amendment has been moved and seconded, debate must be on the substance of the amendment. An amendment can only be amended once (that is to say, no amendment may be offered to an amendment of second rank; a motion or amendment may be amended continually as long as amendments are handled in turn or of first or second rank. Second rank amendments are amendments that explicitly modify a first rank amendment and not some other aspect of the main motion.). For an amendment to pass, it needs a simple majority. Once an amendment has either been passed, defeated, or withdrawn, discussion reverts back to the main motion, taking into account whether or not the amendment passed. Complex

or lengthy amendments should be written out for the moderator to be able to read back to the presbytery.

### **Point of Order**

If a delegate feels that the rules of order are being broken, he can immediately raise a "point of order," and state what rule has been broken or not enforced by the moderator. A point of order can interrupt a speaker. It can only be used to ask the moderator to enforce the rules. The moderator decides if the point is valid or not, and proceeds accordingly

### **Point of Privilege**

A point of privilege can interrupt a speaker. A delegate who feels his rights or privileges have been infringed may bring up this point by stating his problem. Privilege refers to anything regarding the comfort or accessibility of the delegate (i.e., too much noise, bad photo copies, etc.), or to the right of the delegate not to be insulted, misquoted, or deliberately misinterpreted. The moderator decides if the point is valid or not and proceeds accordingly.

### **Challenge the Moderator**

If a delegate feels his point of order or privilege has been ruled on unfairly by the moderator, he may challenge the moderator. The moderator then asks for a motion to uphold the moderator, and the vote is taken. The vote decides whether the action decided upon by the moderator is valid, or whether the delegate is correct. This is normally handled as an "Appeal". Its form is, "Mr. Chairman, I appeal from the decision of the chair." It requires a second, whereupon the chair states clearly the question at issue, and his reasons for the decision if he thinks it necessary, and then states the question thus: "The question is, 'shall the decision of the chair stand as the judgment of the presbytery?'" or "Shall the decision of the chair be sustained?"

### **Point of Information**

A point of information is a question. A delegate may interrupt the speaker to ask his question, but the speaker who has the floor has the privilege to refuse the question. The moderator will ask the speaker if he wishes to entertain a question at that time. A point of information is not an opportunity to bring forward information, or harass another speaker, or generally disrupt the proceedings. It can only be a question.

### **Table**

Debate may end in several ways. If a delegate feels that a decision on a motion needs to be postponed for some reason, then he can move to "table" the motion. A delegate may not move to table the

motion at the end of a speech, only at the time they are recognized by the moderator. A specified time may be put on the tabling, or the motion may be left indefinite. The only debate allowed is as to the length of tabling, or the timeline involved. The motion to table requires only a simple majority.

### **Previous Question**

If a delegate feels that further debate is unproductive he may make a motion for the "previous question," requesting the debate be ended and that the vote be taken on the main motion(s) before the presbytery. If there is no objection, the meeting proceeds to the main motion(s). If there is objection then there must be a second to the motion for the previous question and the meeting must vote on whether to end debate. This vote requires a two-thirds majority to pass, and is non-debatable. If the "call" passes, a vote on the main motion is immediately taken, without any further debate.

A motion such as "I call for [or "call"] the question" or "I move we vote now" is simply a motion for the Previous Question made in nonstandard term. Care should be taken that failure to understand this fact does not lead to violation of members' rights of debate. Sometimes the mere making of a motion for the Previous Question or "call for the question" may motivate unanimous consent to ending debate. Before or after such a motion has been seconded, the chair may ask if there is any objection to closing debate. If any member objects, he should ask if there is a second to the motion or call; or, if it has already been seconded, he must immediately take a vote on whether to order the Previous Question. But regardless of the wording a motion or "call" seeking to close debate, it always requires a second and a two-thirds vote, taken separately from and before the vote(s) on the motion(s) to which it is applied, to shut off debate against the will of even one member who wishes to speak and has not exhausted his right to debate.

Given the foregoing, the Moderator will not consider an unrecognized comment of "Question" or "Call the Question" from members of the Presbytery as the equivalent of a formal motion to call the Previous Question (form, after receiving recognition from the chairman: "I move the Previous Question."), particularly when other members of the Presbytery are obviously seeking to contribute to debate.

### **Rescind**

A motion to rescind another motion is in order if it refers to a motion passed at another meeting on another day. This cannot be applied to actions that cannot be reversed (i.e., things that have already been carried out). This requires a two-thirds majority to pass.

**Reconsider**

A motion to reconsider is applicable to a motion that was passed at the same meeting. Such a motion must be moved by someone who voted with the prevailing majority on the previous vote. It requires a majority to pass.

**Suspension of the Rules**

A motion to suspend the rules of order (so that the presbytery may do something not allowed in the rules) must receive a two-thirds majority vote, is not debatable, cannot be amended and cannot be reconsidered at the same meeting. This motion does not allow for the suspension of a provision of the constitution or by-laws.

**Adjourn**

This motion takes precedence over all others, except to "fix the time to adjourn," to which it yields. It must be seconded, it is not debatable, it cannot be amended, nor can a vote on it be reconsidered. A motion to adjourn cannot be made when another person has the floor, nor after a question has been put and the presbytery is engaged in voting. The motion to adjourn requires a majority vote.

**Refer or Commit**

This motion is generally used to send a pending question to a committee so that the question can be carefully investigated. This motion must be seconded and is debatable, but the debate can only extend to the desirability of committing the main motion, not to the substance or the main motion itself. The motion to refer requires a majority vote.

**Minutes**

The numbering of motions always is by date, and then by when the motion arose in the meeting (YEAR/MONTH/DAY: NUMBER IN ORDER). So the fourteenth motion during the October 13, 2004 meeting would be numbered like: 04/10/13:14.

The three numbers after either "CARRIED," "DEFEATED," or "TIED" are arranged in a specific order. The first number indicates the number that voted in favor; the second is the number voting against; the third is the number who abstained. Thus, a decision which saw seven delegates in favor, four against, and two abstaining, would look like: 7-4-2.



## Appendix B

### **Guidelines and Instructions for the Presbytery Ordination Exams and Related Matters of Ordination**

The character and situation of one who is preparing for the Sacred Office, are interesting beyond the power of language to express. Such an one, like the Master whom he professes to love and serve, is "set for the fall and rising again of many in Israel." In all that he is, and in all that he does, the temporal and eternal welfare not only of himself, but of thousands, may be involved. On every side he is beset with perils. Whatever may be his talents and learning, if he have not genuine piety, he will probably be a curse instead of a blessing to the Church. But this is not the only danger to which he is exposed. He may have unfeigned piety, as well as talents and learning; and yet, from habitual indiscretion; from a defect in that sobriety of mind, which is so precious to all men, but especially to everyone who occupies a public station; from a fondness for novelty and innovation, or from that love of distinction which is so natural to men; after all, instead of edifying the "body of Christ," he may become a disturber of its peace, and a corrupter of its purity; so that we might almost say, whatever may be the result with respect to himself, "it had been good for the Church if he had never been born."

Hence it is, that every part of the character of him who is coming forward to the holy ministry; his opinions; his temper; his attainments; his infirmities; and above all, his character as a practical Christian; are of inestimable importance to the ecclesiastical community of which he is destined to be a minister. Nothing that pertains to him is uninteresting. If it were possible for him, strictly speaking, to "live to himself," or to "die to himself," the case would be different. But it is not possible. His defects as well as his excellencies; his gifts and graces, as well as the weak points of his character, must and will all have their appropriate effect on everything that he touches.

Samuel Miller. D. D., *The Utility and Importance of Creeds and Confessions*  
(Presbyterian Board of Publications, Philadelphia: 1839) [reprinted by A Press,  
Greenville, South Carolina: 1991.]

## **Section 1: The Nature of Ordination**

### **Ordination for those to be Recognized as Pastors in the CREC**

What is ordination? The ordination of a minister (pastor or teaching elder) is the act of conferring and confirming ministerial gifts (1 Tim. 4:14). It implies qualifications and competencies (1 Tim. 3:1-7, Eph. 4:11). The pattern established in the Scriptures (2 Tim. 2:1-2) is that Timothy was to commit the things he had learned to those faithful men who would be able to teach others. When elders were established in every city, they would perpetuate the process of succession (Titus 1). This task clearly requires that a determination be made as to whether a man is characterized by a faithful life and whether he is skilled in teaching others.

## **The Purpose of the Examination Process**

The examination process is designed to evaluate the ministerial competence of the candidate. Given the responsibilities an ordained man will assume for the flock of God and the authority that will be conferred upon him, it is essential for us to have substantial knowledge or assurance of these four things before he is ordained to the office:

1. Who the man is (character)
2. What the man knows (knowledge)
3. What the man believes (understanding)
4. What the man will do (wisdom)

The overseer of God's flock must possess the necessary character and skills along with the knowledge, understanding, and wisdom in the Scriptures in order to adequately fulfill his calling. He must be able to feed Christ's sheep (John 21:15-17; 1 Pet. 5:1-4); convict those who oppose the faith (2 Tim. 2:24-26); and make a good confession before men (1 Tim. 6:12).

The ordination examination process is designed to be demanding. It will take a considerable amount of time and effort on the part of the candidate. Nevertheless, when a candidate has passed the examination, the *value* of the ordination is increased for everyone involved. When a man is examined and approved by the broader church, several benefits flow from that process that will better equip him for his public life of service to Christ and His Church.

The ordination process seeks to protect the Church by holding back those who are not called or who are not yet ready for the important work of overseeing God's people. When the Presbytery approves a man, it inspires confidence in the candidate, in the local church, in the broader church, and in those outside the Church. It is prudent for the session of a local church to seek the accountability of the Presbytery as a protection to the flock, and it is a good testimony when they do so. Ultimately, the session is charged with faithfully considering the wisdom of the Presbytery and is responsible before God for the ordination of a candidate.

## **The Roles of the Presbytery and the Local Church Session**

The purposes in the ordination examination process are twofold: we must examine, first, a teaching elder candidate's manner of life and doctrine and, second, his ability to teach scripturally, along with his ability to provide wise pastoral care. The local session carries the primary burden of this critical determination, and the Presbytery's

role is to assist them in the process. The Presbytery works with the local church and session of the candidate to provide a comprehensive evaluation of the candidate's readiness for office. The Presbytery recommends that the local church session establish a process for the formal evaluation of the candidate in light of the biblical qualifications outlined in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. These areas should cover:

1. His knowledge of the Bible and theology;
2. His family life, including his marriage relationship, childrearing and personal finances;
3. His interpersonal relationships with those inside the church (not a brawler, ability to work with others, ability to resolve conflicts, etc.);
4. His reputation outside the local church, both with other churches and with those outside the church;
5. His maturity and wisdom (not a novice);
6. His ministerial gifts (i.e., pastoral and teaching).

### **The Candidate for Ordination**

The candidate should see the examination process as *the time* for him to put his best foot forward theologically. Both for the glory of God (whose truth he is privileged to represent) and for the assuring of the church (to which he promises to minister), anyone who wishes to undertake the consecrated office of elder-teacher should aim to display the best understanding of the system of biblical doctrine that he can.

The Presbytery will be interested in evaluating the candidate's effort in terms of:

1. Knowledge of the Bible
2. Theological understanding
3. Historical perception
4. Christian orthodoxy

## **Section 2: Pastoral Internship**

Prior to the candidate's oral examination, he must serve in a pastoral internship/mentorship. The internship/mentorship should be under the oversight of a pastor, who will serve as the candidate's mentor, and should last at least one year. The pastor should regularly meet with the candidate to discuss the various facets of a pastor's responsibilities and to pray. The pastor should include the candidate in as much of his pastoral work as is feasible. Specifically, the internship/mentorship should include:

1. Directed reading and study.

2. Preaching and teaching on a regular basis.
3. Involvement in regular pastoral work (e.g., assisting the pastor in counseling, hospital visitation, etc.). Ideally, the internship should include involvement in pre-marital and marital counseling.
4. Involvement in liturgical leadership (e.g., public reading of Scripture, public prayer, etc.).
5. Involvement in diaconal work, especially mercy ministry.
6. Attendance at both session and diaconal meetings. Attendance at presbytery and council is also desirable.
7. Assisting the pastor in preparing weekly liturgies, weddings and funerals.
8. Assisting the pastor in various administrative duties.
9. Regular feedback from the pastor on the candidate's progress, areas of needed growth, etc. It is vital for the candidate to receive honest feedback concerning his gifts, character and overall fitness for ministry.

The requirement for this pastoral internship/mentorship or particular elements listed here may be set aside or modified at the discretion of the Ordination Examination Committee in consultation with the local session, or it may be satisfied by ministry experience that is considered its equivalent.

### **Section 3: The Ordination Examination Process**

The examination process is divided into three phases:

1. Preliminary interview by a Committee of Presbytery appointed by the Minister of Presbytery.
2. A written examination and two exegesis papers overseen by the Ordination Examination Committee.
3. An oral examination administered on the floor of Presbytery, led by the Ordination Examination Committee.

#### **Phase One: The Preliminary Interview**

1. After the local session of elders is confident of the proper qualifications of the candidate, they are to make a written request to the Minister of the Presbytery to begin the process of ordination. This will ordinarily take place no later than four months before a stated meeting of presbytery.
2. The Minister will appoint a five member Ordination Examination Committee for the candidate. Each member will ordinarily be from a separate session. The session putting

forth the teaching elder candidate is allowed only one seat on the Ordination Examination Committee. In extraordinary circumstances, Ordination Examination Committee members may be chosen from outside the candidate's presbytery. This Ordination Examination Committee will oversee the Presbytery examination process, and a chairman will be chosen by the Committee. In coordination with the local church, the Committee will set a date for the Preliminary Interview.

3. Preliminary interview: The Ordination Examination Committee will use this interview to evaluate the candidate's educational experience, including any college or seminary transcripts or other relevant training or expertise. The Committee will report back to the candidate and his local session with a formal recommendation of a candidate's readiness to proceed in the examination process. A candidate that receives a positive recommendation will also receive recommendations for preparation for the written and oral exams. The Preliminary Interview will ordinarily take place no later than three months before a stated meeting of Presbytery.

### **Phase Two: The Written Examination and Exegesis Papers Process and Guidelines**

1. Upon completion of the Preliminary Interview and positive recommendation to proceed in the examination process, the Written Ordination Examination is to be prepared and administered under the direction of the Chairman of the Ordination Examination Committee, in coordination with the local elders. The local session may add questions to the written examination but may not remove any of the standard, approved questions (see Section 5). The examination, with the exception of the Pastoral Case Studies, is to be completed within twelve hours, with as many breaks as needed and may be completed over the course of no more than three days. The exam is ordinarily to be proctored by a member of the candidate's local session, and the candidate may only use a Bible for this portion of the examination. The pastoral case studies do not require a proctor, are "open book," and are to be completed outside the twelve hour time limit. The chairman of the Ordination Examination Committee will give the candidate a reasonable due date for the completion of the entire examination.
2. The components of the Written Examination.
  - a. The candidate shall write a brief historical and theological summary of 10 books of the Bible (to be selected by the

- chairman of the Committee).
  - b. The candidate shall write brief answers to the Ordination Questions (see **Section 5**).
  - c. The candidate shall write brief but thorough answers (1-2 pages) to the five pastoral case studies
3. Guidelines for Exegesis Papers
- a. Demonstrate the candidate is "apt to teach" (1 Tim 3:2) and capable of "rightly dividing the word of truth" (2 Tim 2:15).
  - b. Demonstrate the candidate can present his knowledge of the texts in a coherent, rhetorically attractive fashion.
  - c. Demonstrate the candidate has an adequate ability to interpret and explain biblical texts by analyzing them grammatically, historically, canonically, theologically, Christocentrically, and literarily.
  - d. Demonstrate the candidate is capable of interacting with biblical texts in their original languages. The papers should include the candidate's own annotated translation of his chosen texts, including appropriate lexical and syntactical analysis. The candidate can use scholarly tools to assist in translation work, but must show proficiency with the languages. The Presbytery and/or Ordination Examination Committee may waive or modify the language requirement for a candidate in extenuating circumstances.
  - e. Demonstrate the candidate can interact with opposing theological viewpoints in a gracious but firm manner.
  - f. Demonstrate the candidate can integrate the fruits of his exegesis into biblical and systematic theology.
  - g. Demonstrate the candidate can apply the fruits of his exegesis to the life of the church in a wise, pastoral fashion.
  - h. Demonstrate the candidate has an adequate awareness of available resources by including full bibliographies and appropriate citations.

### **Phase 3: The Oral Examination Process and Guidelines**

1. The candidate shall provide the Ordination Examination Committee the following documents at least sixty days prior to the Oral Examination which will ordinarily take place during the days of Presbytery.
  - a. A written biographical statement explaining his Christian experience, including an explanation of his aspiration to the ministry, and confessional views (including exceptions

- to his confession);
  - b. The exegesis papers;
  - c. Two recorded sermons (in audio format) with written outlines if available: one from the Old Testament and one from the New Testament;
  - d. The completed Written Examination.
2. When the Ordination Examination Committee reaches a point of confidence that the candidate is well prepared for the Oral Examination, the Chairman of the Ordination Examination Committee will notify the Minister of Presbytery and request that the Oral Examination be placed on the agenda for the presbytery meeting. This will take place at least thirty days before presbytery and a public notice will be sent out to the CREC Elder Email List. The Oral Examination will be open to all in attendance at presbytery (including visiting and fraternal delegations).
  3. The Committee members will examine the candidate within the allotted time, at the discretion of the Committee chairman. The Committee will use the written work submitted as a foundation for questioning for clarification, assessing weaknesses and strengths, and probing the depths of the candidate's knowledge and ministerial competence. The Sample Questions for Oral Examination (see **Section 5**) are also offered as examples of the sorts of questions that may be helpful to the Committee and/or other Presbyters present. As part of the oral exam, the Committee will allow time after their examination for presbyters to ask questions of the candidate.
  4. At the end of the Oral Examination, the Presbytery moves into executive session, with the candidate present, for deliberation. Following deliberation, the Presbytery, by majority vote, will recommend or not recommend the candidate for ordination. Following the decision, the Committee will write a report of the decision of Presbytery along with any other recommendations for the candidate to be delivered to the candidate and his home session.
  5. If the Presbytery does not recommend ordination at this time, and the session determines to proceed with ordination against the recommendation of the Presbytery, then the session is to indicate in writing to the Minister the reasons for disregarding the recommendation. The Minister will, in that case, evaluate the criteria of the session to determine if there is egregious sin involved on the part of the session, and may proceed as per Article IV.D.3 of the Constitution.

### **Overview: Schedule for an Ordination Process**

The schedule requirement for this process may be modified by the Minister. Ordinarily, churches should comply with the following:

1. Churches must request an examination for a candidate no later than four months prior to a Presbytery meeting.
2. Phase One of the examination process must be completed by the candidate no later than three months prior to the Presbytery meeting.
3. Phase Two of the examination process must be completed no later than two months prior to the Presbytery meeting.
4. A public notice of any candidate's examination should be posted to the CREC Elder Email list at least thirty days prior to his oral examination.
5. Under extenuating circumstances, exceptions to this schedule may be requested of the Minister of Presbytery.

## **Section 4: Ordination Transfer and "Ruling Elder" Ordination**

### **Previously Ordained Men Entering the CREC**

We live in days when irregularity in every aspect of church life is prevalent. The Presbytery seeks to bring regularity and order to the Church. While we believe in the holy catholic Church and therefore accept the ordination of ministers outside of the CREC, it is both wise and proper for their credentials to be examined. It is recommended, though not obligatory, that CREC churches seek the wisdom of the broader church in assessing these credentials. Therefore, the following process is recommended.

Assessing the credentials and views of an ordained minister is not the same process as an ordination examination and is not to be as comprehensive. The aim in examining a transferring minister is to assist the local congregation in confirming orthodoxy and competence.

1. When a CREC church desires to call as a pastor one who was ordained outside of the CREC or who is not a minister in the CREC, the session of the church shall inform the Minister of Presbytery.
2. The Minister will facilitate the ministerial credentials examination in the following manner: A Credentials Committee composed of three CREC presbyters will be appointed by the Minister to examine the ordained man's credentials and confirm his orthodoxy. This may take place at a time determined by the Minister, in coordination with the local church elders.



3. The Committee will inquire concerning the minister's experience, training, ordination, and doctrinal views. This may be accomplished through a variety of means, including correspondence, telephonically, and through electronic mail, etc. The Committee will, by majority vote, recommend or not recommend the calling of the minister to the local church.
4. The Committee will provide a report of its decision and any other recommendations to the Minister of Presbytery and to the elders of the local congregation. If the Committee recommends the call of the minister, the church may proceed with the call. At the next Presbytery, the minister will then be received into the CREC as an ordained minister with a report from the Committee and an opportunity for a brief examination on the floor of Presbytery. If the session determines to proceed with the call against the recommendation of the Committee, then the session is to indicate in writing to the Minister the reasons for disregarding the recommendation. The Minister will, in that case, evaluate the criteria of the session to determine if there is egregious sin involved on the part of the session, and may proceed as per Article IV.D.3 of the Constitution.

### **Ordination of Elders not Recognized in the CREC as Pastors**

The CREC, in a desire to assist local congregations, makes the following recommendations for their own examination of candidates for elder who are not recognized by the CREC as pastors or ministers. These are often called "ruling elders."

1. The Presbytery is not involved in the process of examination or ordination for a "ruling elder." Nevertheless, since all elders are required to perform the same primary function of ruling and overseeing the church as do pastors, a similar standard of Biblical and doctrinal knowledge should be encouraged.
2. The CREC guidelines and examinations contained in this appendix are useful tools to assist those seeking to become elders.
3. These may be used in an "open book" examination.
4. It is not expected that elders who are not pastors will have the same competence in Biblical languages.

## **Section 5: Examination Questions**

### **Phase 2 Written Examination**

The local session may add questions to the written examination but may not remove any of the standard, approved questions set forth below. The examination, with the exception of the Pastoral Case

Studies, is to be completed within twelve hours, with as many breaks as needed and may be completed over the course of no more than three days. The exam is ordinarily to be proctored by a member of the candidate's local session, and the candidate may only use a Bible for this portion of the examination. The Pastoral Case Studies do not require a proctor, are "open book," and are to be completed outside the twelve hour time limit. The chairman of the Ordination Examination Committee will give the candidate a reasonable due date for the completion of the entire examination.

### **Personal**

1. Do you love the Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Do you live in a manner consistent with this profession?
3. Is there anything in the pattern of your life which this body needs to know in order to prevent scandal in the Church?
4. Do you believe that you meet the biblical qualifications with regard to the personal character and ability of a pastor (1 Tim 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Pet 5:1-4)?
5. Do you love people?
6. According to the Bible, service comes before authority. What are some ways in which you are already demonstrating a commitment to service?
7. What is the condition of your marriage?
8. Does your wife support you in your desire to serve as a pastor?
9. What is the condition of your household? Are your children faithful?
10. What is your understanding of the covenant household and the varying roles of husband, wife, and children?
11. What is your approach to the training and education of our children in the Lord?
12. What do you believe concerning Christian education for your children and why?
13. What is your educational background?
14. Describe your relationship with your parents, and particularly with your father.
15. Describe and explain your practices with regard to personal and family worship.

### **Bible**

16. What translation of the Bible do you use? Why?
17. Which text or text tradition do you follow? Why?
18. Do you hold to the doctrine of *sola Scriptura*? How do you understand that doctrine? Explain and defend a Protestant doctrine of church tradition which is consistent with *sola*

*Scriptura.*

19. What is the difference between infallibility and inerrancy?
20. What is the canon of Scripture?
21. Which books do you believe are canonical? What is it that makes these books canonical and gives them their authority?
22. How would you refute a denial of scriptural authority?
23. Explain and defend your basic hermeneutical approach to the text?
24. Briefly describe your exegetical methodology.

The candidate shall write brief summaries of ten books of the Bible, to be chosen by the chairman of the Ordination Committee, focusing on structure, history, theology, and major themes/typology/symbolism. The books will include at least one from each of the following: Pentateuch, Historical Books, Wisdom Literature, Major Prophets, Minor Prophets, Gospels & Acts, and Epistles.

**Theology**

25. What is apologetics? What is its importance to a minister of the Word?
26. What is the difference between presuppositionalism and evidentialism in apologetics?
27. Define and defend the doctrine of the Trinity from Scripture. Include a defense of the full deity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.
28. What is the difference between God's communicable and incommunicable attributes? Provide examples of each.
29. What is meant by the economical Trinity and the ontological Trinity?
30. What is the difference between the *opera ad extra* and the *opera ad intra*?
31. What is the nature and importance of the Creator/creature distinction?
32. What is your view of the historicity, chronology, and length of the six days of creation in Genesis 1? What is the importance of the view you are presenting?
33. What does it mean that man was created "in the image and likeness of God"?
34. Compare and contrast the covenant of creation before the Fall and the covenant of grace afterwards.
35. Discuss the history of God's covenant(s) as it is revealed in Scripture.

36. What are some practical implications of covenant theology?
37. Discuss the effects of man's fall into sin upon man himself and upon the rest of creation, with particular attention to original sin and to the extent of man's corruption.
38. What does Scripture teach concerning God's election? How is election good news?
39. How would you defend the doctrine of the full deity and humanity of Christ from Scripture? What is the hypostatic union?
40. Discuss and explain the offices of priest, king, and prophet, particularly with reference to Christ.
41. What does Scripture teach concerning the value, sufficiency, efficacy, and extent of application of the atonement?
42. What does Scripture teach concerning the efficacy of God's work in calling and drawing sinners to Christ for salvation?
43. What is justification and why is it a comfort? Discuss the doctrine of justification by faith alone.
44. What is sanctification? Discuss and distinguish definitive sanctification and progressive sanctification.
45. What is glorification? Discuss and distinguish present glorification and future glorification.
46. What does Scripture teach concerning the preservation and perseverance of the saints?
47. Discuss the nature and purpose of the church. What does it mean to confess "one holy, catholic, and apostolic church"?
48. What is your view of church government? Include both your view of local church government and your view of broader/higher assemblies, councils, etc. Provide Scriptural support for your view.
49. How many offices are there in the church? Do you hold to an official distinction between the offices of minister and of ruling elder? Why or why not?
50. Are women qualified to hold office in the church? Why or why not?
51. How should the worship of the church be regulated?
52. Describe the sort of liturgy that you think fits best with scriptural teaching and provide some scriptural warrant for its various elements.
53. What is a sacrament? How many sacraments are there? What are they?
54. What happens to a person who is baptized?
55. Explain and defend your position on the baptism of infants.
56. Explain and defend your position on the mode of baptism.
57. What happens when the church partakes of the Lord's Supper?

58. Explain and defend your positions on admission to, frequency of, and elements in the Lord's Supper.
59. Discuss the nature, purpose, and practice of church discipline. For what sin(s) should a church put someone under discipline?
60. What does Scripture teach concerning prayer?
61. What is your understanding of the function of spiritual gifts in the church? Do the revelatory or sign gifts given by the Spirit in the first century church continue in the church today? Explain your view.
62. Briefly summarize what Scripture teaches concerning heaven and hell.
63. What happens to a believer when he dies?
64. What is your view of eschatology? Briefly describe your expectations for the future of the gospel and the church in the world.
65. Do you believe in a literal return of Jesus in the future, together with a literal physical resurrection of the body, and that at that time He will judge the living and the dead?

### **Ethics**

66. What is the foundation of Christian ethics?
67. What is the relationship between Christian ethics and the Mosaic Law? How do you use the Old Testament in ethics?
68. What are some ways in which Scripture functions in ethics?
69. What is the relationship between law and grace?
70. Briefly discuss each of the Ten Commandments with some indication of their application for Christian ethics.
71. Discuss abortion in the light of Scripture.
72. Discuss capital punishment in the light of Scripture.
73. What is your understanding of Scripture's teaching concerning divorce and remarriage?
74. Discuss homosexuality in the light of Scripture.
75. Discuss war in the light of Scripture.
76. What is the Christian's calling with regard to cultural involvement?
77. What is the Christian's calling with regard to the poor and oppressed?
78. What is your understanding of Christian liberty?

### **Church History**

The candidate shall write brief treatments of ten particularly significant persons/events (to be chosen by the chairman of the Ordination Committee) from the whole range of church history,

including two from each of these periods: Early, Medieval, Reformation, and Modern. Include some indication of their importance for the church's life and doctrine.

### **Creeds/Confessions/Memorials/Polity**

79. What is the importance and value of creeds and confessions?
80. Do you affirm the Apostles' Creed without any reservations? Any exceptions?
81. Do you affirm the Nicene Creed without any reservations? Any exceptions?
82. Do you affirm the Definition of Chalcedon without any reservations? Any exceptions?
83. To which Reformation confession(s) do you subscribe? Any exceptions?
84. What is your position on the various CREC memorials?
85. Are you willing to abide by the CREC Constitution?

### **Pastoral**

86. What are the pastor's primary calling and duties? Describe your philosophy of or intended approach to pastoral ministry.
87. What is the pastor's calling with regard to the liturgy?
88. Discuss the nature and importance of preaching. What are your primary goals in preaching?
89. What is your approach to pastoral counseling?
90. What is your understanding of pastoral confidentiality?
91. What safeguards do you believe should be in place when counseling women?
92. What is your understanding of the pastor's role with regard to church music? What kind of music do you think is appropriate for the liturgy? What is your level of musical competence?
93. What is your view of the working relationship between a minister and the elders?
94. How do you plan to make time for the demands of the office as well as for your household?
95. How much time do you plan to reserve for study?
96. Do you plan to wear clerical garb (e.g., a collar during the week; a robe in the liturgy)? Why or why not?

### **Pastoral Case Studies**

The candidate shall write brief but thorough responses (1-2 pages) to five case studies dealing with practical pastoral theory/skills (to be prepared by the Chairman of the Ordination Committee).

## Sample Questions for the Oral Examination

There are several purposes for ordination exams, including testing to see the orthodoxy of the candidate and testing to see the limits of the candidate's knowledge. But one important goal is to see how the candidate works with his knowledge, and for that a series of questions that lead to pat answers or quotations from catechisms or confessions is not sufficient. Nor is it sufficient to ask the candidate about Bible trivia or to limit theological questions to requests for definitions of terms.

One suggestion would be to use questions similar to those in the Heidelberg Catechism, which focus not on definitions but on comfort: "What is your only comfort in life and death?" "What benefit do you receive from the holy conception and birth of Christ?" and so forth. The following questions are not intended to be assigned as a whole to the candidate, as if they could function as a comprehensive examination. Rather, they are intended as examples of the kinds of questions that could move a candidate to deeper thought about the teachings of Scripture and about his theological views, as well as enable him to show his pastoral aptitudes and abilities as he formulates his answers.

Because these questions are intended to be more challenging, they might be most useful if they were given to the candidate in advance, with the candidate free to discuss them with others and research his answers — in short, they would work best with a fully *open book* format.

### Bible

1. What are at least three major themes in the Bible?
2. Trace the theme of \_\_\_\_\_ in the Bible (e.g., water, mountains, seed/fruit, trees, the number 7, music, marriage, sheep and shepherds, etc.).
3. Trace the theme of priests, kings, prophets in Scripture.
4. Discuss the terms "Old Testament" and "New Testament." How are these terms useful and how are they problematic?
5. A friend tells you that there's a page in your Bible that is not inspired. It's the Table of Contents. He says that means the church made the Bible and decided which books would be authoritative. How would you respond?
6. A visitor to your church hears you talking in your sermon about how something in the Old Testament points forward to Christ. Afterward, he speaks to you about it: "You can't say that's a

type of Christ. The only things we can identify as types are the ones the apostles identify as types, and they don't say anything like what you said." How would you respond?

7. A biblical scholar claims that we cannot follow the exegetical and hermeneutical approach of the authors of the New Testament (e.g., typology). How would you respond?
8. A biblical scholar claims that the Bible is the product of people living at a particular time with a particular worldview and thinking in particular categories that are very different from ours. He says that we need to distinguish between the kernel and the husk in Scripture, keeping the ideas while discarding the things that were simply a product of the authors' culture or setting. How would you respond?

### **Theology**

9. An atheist friend confronts you with the classical problem of evil: "If God is good and all powerful, why do bad things happen? If He's all-powerful, He could stop them from happening. If He's good, He wouldn't want them to happen. So either He's good but not all-powerful, or He's all-powerful but not good, or He's neither all-powerful nor good." How would you respond?
10. After a Sunday School class discussion of the Trinity, one of your members comes up to you and says, "I've always found that stuff about the Trinity so confusing. I guess that's what the Bible teaches. But what does that have to do with my life? What practical relevance does the doctrine of the Trinity have?" How would you respond?
11. Compare and contrast Unitarian systems (e.g., Unitarianism, Islam) with Trinitarianism.
12. A theological book that you are reading speaks of the Tree of Life as if it was off limits to Adam until Adam passed a probation in the Garden. Evaluate this idea.
13. Why did God put the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil in the Garden of Eden? Discuss with reference to the significance of that tree for us today.
14. A member of your church wonders why you never pray specifically for God to bless Israel. After all, he says, God told Abraham that whoever blessed Israel would be blessed. "You don't hold to Replacement Theology, do you?" he asks. How would you respond?
15. A member of your church approaches you about the possibility of you leading a trip to the Holy Land. "Just imagine," he says, "We could walk where Jesus walked. It would make our faith



- come to life." How would you respond?
16. Why couldn't God the Son have been incarnated as, say, a Chinese boy living in the sixth century AD or as an American boy living this year? Why did He have to be a Jew living in the first century?
  17. If it is through Jesus' death and resurrection that we are saved, why did Jesus have to live for over thirty years first? What was the importance of his teaching, healings, exorcisms?
  18. You get into a discussion with a fellow pastor in your community. He's surprised to hear that you believe in a substitutionary atonement. "God doesn't demand that Jesus die under His wrath in our place," he says, "That's cosmic child abuse. Besides, if God wants to forgive us, He can just forgive us. He doesn't need to kill Jesus to do that." How would you respond?
  19. You are speaking about Jesus' suffering and death to a man you met while street witnessing. After listening for a while, he says, "Here's my problem: I don't understand how the death of some Jewish guy a long time ago could make me right with God." How would you help him?
  20. A theologian explains the relationship between Jesus' two natures this way: "When Jesus was on the cross, His human nature suffered, but His divine nature looked on, unperturbed, like the peaceful moon above a troubled sea." How would you respond?
  21. A friend attends one of your services and then complains, "Your church mustn't even believe in the Holy Spirit. It doesn't look anything like the early church in Acts 2!" How would you respond?
  22. You are trying to rent a building for your church plant. The building owner is a Christian, but he says to you, "Are you a Calvinist? Calvinists don't believe in free will; they think people are just like robots." How would you respond?
  23. After you preach a sermon in which you talk about God's sovereign election, a member of your church comes up to you, visibly troubled. "Every time I hear about election, it scares me. If God chose me, He chose me. If He didn't, He didn't. There's nothing I can do about it. But I don't know if I'm elect or not. How can I tell?" she asks. How would you comfort her?
  24. A pastor says to you, "We don't know who in the congregation is elect and who isn't. So we can't simply call everyone 'brothers' or tell them indiscriminately that Jesus died for them. We need discriminatory preaching. We need to preach to the various categories in the church: to the elect who have come to

- faith, to the elect who haven't come to faith yet, to those who have just been awakened to a sense of their guilt, to the hardened unbeliever, and so on." How would you evaluate this view of the relationship between election and your pastoral approach to the congregation?
25. After a sermon in which you spoke about the danger of apostasy, a visitor approaches you, visibly troubled. "Are you saying that we can lose our salvation?" he asks. "I thought you held to the perseverance of the saints?" How would you respond?
  26. You finally track down a member of your congregation who has left his wife to move in with another woman. When you warn him that if he continues in his sin and refuses to repent he will end up in hell, he looks at you in amazement. "But, Pastor," he says, "I thought you believed in the perseverance of the saints!" How would you respond?
  27. "The problem with the doctrine of justification by faith alone," says a friend of yours, "is that it makes things too easy. People say they believe in Jesus and then they go off and live as sinfully as they please." How would you respond?
  28. You are reading a book on sanctification. An author in the book says that sanctification is simply getting used to being justified by faith alone. If you talk about good works or about our own efforts in connection with sanctification, you're back to works salvation again. How would you respond?
  29. Some members of your church come from a Quaker background. They are now convinced from Scripture that baptism and the Lord's Supper are required. But they want to understand why the church has sacraments. How would you answer them?
  30. A member of your church approaches you on Sunday about the status of his baptism. "I think I need to be baptized again," he says. "I'm quite sure that when I was baptized as an infant, my parents were unbelievers." After asking some more questions, you learn that he was baptized in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in a Lutheran church of which his parents were members. Your parishioner insists that his parents' subsequent departure from the church and their present-day confession of unbelief is evidence that his baptism was invalid. What will you say and do?
  31. After hearing a Sunday School lesson on baptism taught by you, a couple approaches you for advice. "Before joining your church," they say, "we were members of a Methodist church. Our children were all baptized by a woman minister. Do they

- need to be re-baptized? "What would you say to them?"
32. After observing a baptism in your church, a new couple approaches you. They used to be members of a liberal United Church of Christ and their children were baptized with a different baptismal formula. They were baptized in the name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier and not Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Do they need to be (re)baptized now? What would you say to them?
  33. A new couple in your church asks about the possibility of "dedicating" their new baby instead of baptizing him with water. What would you say or do?
  34. A visitor who has recently trusted in Christ wants to join the church, and he wants you to baptize him by immersion. He argues that the Greek word for *baptize* means "immerse," and he has even heard you teach that those who have been baptized by immersion are truly baptized. "If the validity of baptism doesn't depend on the mode, why can't I be baptized by immersion?" he asks. "What harm would it do?" What will you say and do?
  35. When the bread and wine are being distributed, some ministers hold out the bread and say, "The body of Christ given for you. Take and eat." They speak similarly with the wine. But others say, "The body of Christ *has been* given for you. Take and eat." They speak similarly with the wine. Which do you think is correct or best? What difference does it make?
  36. One of the elders on your Session suggests that, as a change of pace, the church should celebrate the Lord's Supper at the beginning of the service instead of at the end. How would you respond? How might you use the historic Reformed liturgies in your response?
  37. A visitor notices that after the service some of the children find the leftover Lord's Supper bread in the kitchen and eat it. She is very uncomfortable with this. How would you respond? In your answer, explain some different views of the real presence.
  38. An elder on your Session suggests that it would be nice for everyone to come forward to receive the Lord's Supper. To facilitate the distribution, he recommends that four people stand behind the Table and give the bread and wine to four lines of people who come forward. Each time a communicant approaches the Table, he would be given the bread and wine with the words, "The body and blood of Christ given to you. Take, eat, and drink." One of the elders thinks that at least one of the people distributing the elements ought to be a woman. What direction will you give the Session on this? What do you

- think about the overall proposal and the specific recommendation about a female distributor?
39. A regular visitor to your church comes to you before the service and asks if it is appropriate for her to take communion. She says that she believes in Jesus but has never been baptized. What will you say to her? Defend your position.
  40. A member of your congregation visits another congregation on vacation and comes back excited about how that congregation practices the Lord's Supper. "They dip the bread into the wine and then eat the wine-soaked bread," he says. He suggests that your church adopt that practice, too. "It would even allow us to use a common cup," he says. "We wouldn't be drinking from the cup. No one's lips would touch the cup. But we'd all get wine from the same cup." How would you respond?
  41. You are discussing the wedding ceremony with a couple in your premarital counseling class. They say to you, "We were at a wedding where the couple had the Lord's Supper together right after they took their vows and exchanged their rings. It was such a beautiful picture of their unity. We'd like to do that at our wedding, too." How would you respond?
  42. When Paul writes to the congregation, he says things like, "We are bound to give thanks to God always for you, brethren beloved by the Lord, because God from the beginning chose you for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth, to which He called you by our gospel, for the obtaining of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ" (2 Thess 2:13-14). While the nouns and verbs in this passage could enable you to preach about thanksgiving, the Lord's love, God's election, the Spirit's work of sanctification, and so forth, how would you handle the *pronouns* Paul uses in your sermon?
  43. Your church excommunicates Bob, an unrepentant member. Afterwards, you notice that another family is no longer attending. When you visit them, they let you know their reason: "Excommunication is too harsh. You act as if Bob is going to hell now! You don't know that, and your whole behavior is so unloving. We can't attend a church like that." How would you respond?
  44. After a Sunday School class on eschatology, a member approaches you, chuckling. "Well," he says, "you've got your view and other people have theirs, but I don't see that it really matters. Me? I'm a pan-millennialist. I think it's all going to pan out in the end." How might you respond? What difference does it make what you believe about eschatology?
  45. Someone says to you, "If God already knows what you need

and if all things work out according to His plan (Eph 1:14), then why pray?" How would you respond?

### **Ethics/Pastoral**

46. A member of your church approaches you. He tells you that he's deeply bothered by the way that another member's wife dresses. "Pastor," he says, "you've got to talk to her about her immodesty. Or at least talk to her husband. She's causing people to stumble." How would you respond?
47. You receive a phone call from a member of your church. He sounds very disturbed as he tells you that he has just discovered somehow that another member is involved in some sexual sin. "Pastor," he says, "you need to go and talk to him about it." How would you respond?
48. An elder's 19 year old daughter turns out to be pregnant, to the shock of everyone, especially her father. She confesses to a sexual relationship with her clandestine boyfriend, an unbeliever that nobody else knows. She is ashamed and confesses her sin. What should happen next?
49. A church member wants to set out pro-life pamphlets on the back table at church and wants the elders to encourage members to take them in bulk and pass them around. The pamphlets have graphic pictures of fetuses being dismembered. What do you recommend?
50. A church member approaches you before a service. He would like to place a politically-related petition at the back of the church so that all the church members can sign it. How would you respond to his request?

## **Appendix C**

### **A "Golden Rule" for Cooperation among Churches**

#### **I. Scriptural Basis**

"Being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all" (Ephesians 4;3-6).

"For just as we have many members in one body and all members do not have the same function, so we who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another" (Romans 12;4,5).

Also see John 17:21; I Cor. 1:10-13, 12:1ff; Matt. 5:9; Rom. 14:19.

#### **II. Principal Concerns**

A. That we promote the unity, peace and purity of churches in the matter of their mutual involvement in the movement of members.

B. That we develop greater knowledge of, respect for and communication with these congregations and denominations in the area of their ecclesiastical discipline.

C. That we, while promoting goodwill between the churches, seek also to promote the growth and maturity of the persons involved through the positive application of church discipline.

D. That we signify our desire to discipline members by not ignoring another church's discipline, and that we believe that the judgment of officers in Christ's church may not be disregarded as though they were not acting for God in His church.

E. That we demonstrate to all that the church of Christ is one, and that He has one law for all its parts.

F. That churches have occasionally, while perhaps unintentionally, received members and/or ordained officers who were under various stages of discipline in other churches, thus creating misunderstanding and tension between the churches.

G. That we recognize the need for mutual freedom and openness on the part of the churches.

### **III. The "Golden Rule" for Church Cooperation**

THEREFORE, out of concern to build the Church of Jesus Christ we recommend that each local church respect the other's procedures of discipline and pastoral concerns by affirming and applying the following courteous code of behavior as a guide for our churches in receiving members from other churches:

1. We will be sensitive to the presence of existing churches and missions ministries of other churches and will take great care in receiving members of those existing ministries.
2. We will refrain from receiving into membership a member of another local church until we have made a good faith effort to contact the officers of the former church.
3. We shall inform churches that are being attended by those under our discipline of the nature and extent of the disciplinary procedure, thus enabling informal consultation between the pastors and/or elders of both churches.
4. We shall refrain from receiving into membership a person under disciplinary action from his former church until we have taken into serious account the discipline of and the information supplied by the former church.
5. We shall refrain from receiving into membership a person under discipline until the officers of his former church have been contacted to determine if any needed and proper restitution has been made or committed to and/or reconciliation has been seriously attempted. We shall make a good faith effort in such cases to satisfy the officers of the former church.
6. We shall refrain from receiving into membership a person under discipline until after he has made a good faith effort to comply with the requirements of the form of government of the church from which he is separating, and we shall be responsible to see that this is done.
7. We agree that when communication and/or action regarding the movement of a member or ordained officer from one church to another does not satisfy either his former or present church officers, other local pastors or elders may be contacted, with a view to mediation of the problem.

*This document is based upon the "Golden Rule Comity Agreement" drafted and adopted by the National Association of Presbyterian and Reformed Churches (NAPARC), as well as recommendations based upon NAPARC's agreement that were adopted by the Orthodox Presbyterian Church (OPC) at its 53rd General Assembly, held in 1986. We are deeply grateful to both NAPARC and the OPC for their fine work, and pray that our adaptation of their work meets with their approval and the approval of Christ's church.*