

WORKBOOK
FOR
CLERKS OF SESSION

PRESBYTERY OF EASTERN VIRGINIA

2010

WORKBOOK FOR CLERKS OF SESSION
Presbytery of Eastern Virginia
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

PREAMBLE – This workbook is designed to assist clerks of sessions in the performance of their duties and highlights *Book of Order* requirements to ensure full and accurate records are kept and maintained. We trust this workbook will assist you in your preparation for the Presbytery review of your church’s Sessional Records. If you have any suggestions, please contact the Committee. Should you have any questions please contact your examiner or the Stated Clerk at the Presbytery Office.

..... *From the Sessional Records Committee of the Presbytery of Eastern Virginia.*

A. RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Presbytery’s Sessional Records Committee has the responsibility for reviewing Sessional Records of congregations. The Committee wishes to be of assistance to each Clerk of Session, in helping to keep good permanent records of the Church and having these records in proper condition for review by the Presbytery. With this in mind, this workbook was developed.

If you need additional materials or have questions, do not hesitate to contact the Committee through the Presbytery Office. Please address the **Sessional Records Committee** at:

Presbytery of Eastern Virginia
801 Loudoun Avenue
Portsmouth, VA 23707-3216
Phone: 757-397-7063 (South Hampton Roads and Peninsula)
1-800-989-2193 (All other areas)
FAX:(757) 397-7246

Enclosed in this Workbook are the following items:

A. Responsibilities	page 2
B. Instructions	pages 2-3
C. Commonly Noted Exceptions	page 3
D. Changes in 2009-2011 <i>Book of Order</i>	page 4
E. Electronic Meetings	page 4
F. Committee’s Process for Reviewing Sessional Records	pages 4-5
G. Clerk of Session Report Form	pages 6-7
H. Schedule for Review of Sessional Records	page 8
I. Suggested Form for <i>Minutes of Session Meetings</i> (Based on the <i>Book of Order</i> and <i>Robert’s Rules of Order, Newly Revised</i>.)	page 9
J. Except from Robert’s Rules of Order	pages 10-11
K. A Paper on the Role of the Clerk of Session	pages 11-13
L. Preparing for Review of Sessional Records...A Check List	page 14

B. INSTRUCTIONS.

Please note in matters relating to review of Sessional Records:

1. Each session is to submit its Sessional and Congregational records for annual review by the Church Order Ministry Team, as scheduled on page 8.
2. Each session is to prepare, record, and submit reports as requested by the Stated Clerk of Presbytery and/or other authorized persons of Presbytery. **The Annual Statistical Report to Presbytery is to be recorded in the Sessional Minutes and is to be suitably published to the**

congregation. A printed record of the on-line submitted statistical report should be included in the Sessional records.

3. The submitted pages of the Sessional Record are to be numbered consecutively, to insure against loss or disarrangement of the records.

4. The Committee urges you to submit certified photo copies rather than the original documents, to avoid possible loss of the "originals" and the fact that for up to two months, you would not have easy access to the documents while in the hands of the Committee's reviewer. These Certified photocopies, being exact duplicates of the original, would have all the proper signatures and related appended documents. When only computer run-offs or inexact copies are produced for review, sometimes signatures and documents noted as "listed in the *Minutes*" are mistakenly omitted.

5. The **Certificate of Review** indicating Presbytery's action on the previous records, is to be inserted in the permanent record at the proper place and submitted with the records for review.

6. Certified copies are to include a copy of the **last** Certificate of Review and **complete records** including *Minutes* of the most recently approved Session and Congregational Meetings.

The following statement is to be placed preceding the first page of the Records being reviewed:

"The attached copies are a true and accurate record of the proceedings of the session of the _____ Presbyterian Church of _____, Virginia between _____, 200_ and _____, 200_."

(signed by Clerk of Session)

(signed by Moderator)

Note: Statement to be signed by moderator in a permanent pastoral relationship with the church.

Please arrange to have your records picked up at the Presbytery meeting following your submission.

C. COMMONLY NOTED EXCEPTIONS.

One: No indication that the session instructed and examined elders and/or deacons nor that the elders and/or deacons were ordained and installed by the session nor that the session took part in the service.

Two: No indication that the treasurer is elected annually nor financial review conducted annually.

Three: No indication that the adequacy of compensation of the installed pastor(s) reviewed at the Annual Meeting.

Four: No indication that the session annually reviews the compensation of all employees including the pastor(s).

Five: No indication that commissioners to presbytery were elected and/or gave reports of meetings.

D. CHANGES IN 2009-2011 BOOK OF ORDER.

1. All new members regardless of how received shall be welcomed by the congregation during a service of worship and make a public profession of their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, as do the confirmands (G-5.0200).

2. Replaced the word “sympathy” with “compassion” for duties of deacons and ministers in the service of ministering with deacons (G-6.0202b and G-6.0401).

3. Lowered the minimum number of ministers and churches for a presbytery; allowed presbyteries to grant Certified Christian Educators voice and if and elder, voice and vote only while engaged in service under the jurisdiction of the presbytery; and requires presbytery (Committee on Preparation for Ministry) approval for inquirers and candidates to take ordination exams other than Bible Content.

4. Retained G-6.0106b regarding fidelity and chastity.

E. ELECTRONIC MEETINGS.

While Robert’s Rule does not like the use of electronic meetings because it does not provide for simultaneous communication and deliberate process, in this day and age it is becoming more and more prevalent.

The use of e-mail for meetings should be provided for in the by-laws, have established guidelines, and be used with care. It should be the exception and not the norm.

All members qualified to vote must be included. Those without e-mail and those that do not read e-mail on a daily basis must be notified. If one person objects to the matter being discussed or wants to discuss in detail the matter should be handled in a called meeting or wait until the next stated meeting.

Follow-up at the next meeting and report any action in the session minutes.

F. COMMITTEE’S PROCESS FOR REVIEWING SESSIONAL RECORDS

1. Presbytery Office will send out a letter and two copies of the form, “**Report of Clerk of Session**,” using the following schedule for 2009:

PRESBYTERY MEETINGS	LETTER/FORMS MAILED TO COS	DEADLINE FOR RECEIPT OF RECORDS	COMMITTEE REVIEW DATE
APRIL	JANUARY 6	FEBRUARY 11	MARCH 8
JULY	APRIL 7	MAY 12	JUNE 14
OCTOBER	JULY 7	AUGUST 11	SEPTEMBER 13
JANUARY	OCTOBER 6	NOVEMBER 10	DECEMBER 13

2. a. Each Clerk of Session is to complete two copies of the green form“**Report of Clerk of Session**” and submit them along with the records, to the Committee Examiner.

b. The Clerk will be notified as to the name and address of the Committee member reviewing the Church’s records and the Clerk, in consultation with the reviewer, may choose one of the following ways to deliver the records:

- Personal delivery of the records to the reviewer.
- Mail the records (If mailed, it is recommended that they **NOT be the original record**, but certified “photo copies” of the original.)
- If agreeable with reviewer, delivered to Presbytery’s Office. **Be sure your reviewer knows when the records will be in the office.**

3. Each reviewer upon receiving the records from the Clerk of Session shall:

- Read the *Minutes* to be reviewed. The reviewer shall use the forms, "Report of Clerk of Session" and the "Report of Examination of Sessional Records", as guidelines.
- Complete two copies of the Reviewer's form (retain one; submit one to the Committee).

Bring all reviewed records with completed forms (including two copies of "Report of Clerk of Session), to the Committee meeting, at which they are to be reported.

- Complete one copy of the appropriate **Certificate of Review**.

4. During the Committee Meeting the reviewer shall:

- Share with Committee, those records that are recommended to be approved **without exception**.
- Share with Committee, those that the reviewer judges be approved **with exception**, giving rationale. The Committee shall either confirm or change.
- Share with Committee, those recommended for **disapproval**, giving rationale. The Committee shall either confirm or change.

5. The Committee Chair will:

- Sign the Reviewer's Form indicating Committee action.
- Sign Certificate of Review, based on Committee action, and submit for signature by the Moderator of Presbytery.
- Provide one copy of completed Reviewer's Form, the Certificate of Review, and two copies of the Report of the Clerk of Session along with the Sessional records to the Stated Clerk.
- Prepare Report to Presbytery.

6. The Stated Clerk will:

- Make an additional copy of the Reviewer's Form for placement in the presbytery office.
- File Certificate of Review and Report of Examination of Sessional Records with Sessional records.
- File one copy of the Reviewer's Form, one copy of the Report of Clerk of Session Form and a copy of the Certificate of Review in the Presbytery Office.

7. At the Presbytery meeting, the Clerk of Session, (or his/her representative) shall secure:

- The reviewed Sessional Records with a copy of Reviewer's Report and the Certificate of Review.

8. Every effort should be made to submit Sessional records on time. Sessional Records not received on schedule will be reported to Presbytery and will be requested again for the next review period.

G. CLERK OF SESSION REPORT FORM

REPORT OF THE CLERK OF SESSION

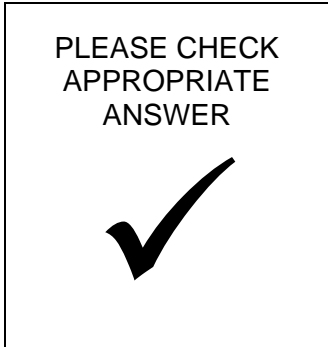
(This form is to be completed by the Clerk of Session and submitted with the Sessional Records)

Name of Church: _____

Address of Church: _____

Dates Covered by this Report: From _____ through _____

- | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|
| 1. The Church has: | Yes | No | |
| a. Board of Deacons..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | ← |
| b. Organization of Presbyterian Women..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| c. Organization of Men..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 2. The Church has "paid employees" other than the pastor..... | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 3. The Clerk of Session is elected regularly.....
<small>(Book of Order G-9.0203 b)</small> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| 4. The Church has Incorporated (Date: _____) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | |



When Was Clerk Elected? _____ Length of term? _____

<u>PLEASE PLACE A CIRCLE AROUND YOUR RESPONSE</u>	Y = Yes N = No N/A	Date of Action	Page in Minutes	Book of Order
1. Are <i>Minutes</i> (a) in proper form and (b) being submitted on time?	a. Y- N b. Y- N			G-10.0301
2. Are the <i>Minutes</i> preserved by the clerk?	Y - N			G-9.0203 G-10.0301
3. Is date, time and place for each Session & Congregational meeting recorded?	Y - N			G-10.0301 RRO § 48
4. Were names of those present, including the moderator, recorded?	Y - N			G-9-0302 G-9.0203
5. Was quorum present and so stated in each set of the <i>Minutes</i> ?	Y - N			G-10.0202
6. Were meetings opened and closed with prayer?	Y - N			G-9.0301b
7. Were Session meetings moderated according to the Constitution?	Y - N			G-9.0202b G-10.0103
8. Were <i>Minutes</i> of meetings approved by Session and signed by the Clerk?	Y - N			G-9.0302 RRO § 48
9. Were the records of the Board of Deacons submitted to the Session at least annually, if applicable?	Y - N N/A			G-6.0404 G-10.0301
10. Were Stated Meetings held at least quarterly?	Y - N			G-10.0201
11. Were Joint Session/Diaconate meetings held at least annually? <small>(N/A if no Board of Deacons)</small>	Y - N N/A			G-6.0405
12. Was an Annual Congregational Meeting held?	Y - N			G-7.0302a
13. Was adequacy of compensation of installed pastor(s) reviewed at Annual Meeting? <small>(N/A applies to newly called and supply pastors)</small>	Y - N N/A			G-7.0302
14. Were changes in each pastor's Call approved by the Cong. at the Annual Meeting?	Y - N			G-7.0304a(3)
15. Were Cong. meetings moderated in accordance with the Constitution?	Y - N			G-7.0306
16. (a) Are <i>Minutes</i> of Congregational Meetings approved according to Book of Order and entered in Sessional <i>Minute</i> Book? (b) Signed by Moderator and Secretary?	a. Y-N b. Y-N			G-7.0307

17. (a) Does the Session prepare those that would become members of the Church? (b) Did all new members make a public profession of faith?	a. Y - N b. Y - N			G-5.0500 G-5.0200
18. Does a process exist for education and growth of session members?	Y - N			G-10.0102k
19. Do <i>Minutes</i> show the Session has (a) instructed and (b) examined elders, and where applicable, deacons?	a. Y - N b. Y - N			G-10.0102l
20. Do <i>Minutes</i> (a.) indicate elders and, where applicable, deacons were ordained and/or installed by the Session and (b.) the Session was present and took part in the ordination and installation service?	a. Y - N b. Y - N			G-10.0102l G-14.0120
21. Do <i>Minutes</i> show that Session approved all Baptisms in advance?	Y - N			W-2.3011a
22. Do <i>Minutes</i> show that the Session authorized the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at least quarterly? Please give DATE of action.	Y - N			W-2.4012a
23. Are Church Rolls maintained in accordance with the Book of Order?	Y - N			G-10.0102s G-10.0302
24. Are accurate registers of Marriages, Baptisms and Officers maintained?	Y - N			G-10.0302c
25. (a.) Do all committees, boards and organizations report at least annually to the Session? (regular committee reports to the Session will suffice) (b.) Do organizations with a separate budget submit a financial report at least annually?	a. Y - N b. Y - N			G-9.0407a G-10.0401
26. a. Do <i>Minutes</i> show the approval of the Church budget by the Session? b. Is a copy of the adopted budget included in this set of <i>Minutes</i> ?	a. Y - N b. Y - N			G-10.0102i
27. Do <i>Minutes</i> show Session annually reviews adequacy of compensation of all employees including pastor(s)? (Note: May be reflected in annual budget)	Y - N			G-10.0102n
28. Does the Session:(a.) elect a treasurer annually, (b.) obtain an independent financial review of all books and records annually, (c.) obtain property & liability insurance to protect facilities, programs & officers, etc.,	a. Y - N b. Y - N c. Y - N	xxxxxxxxxx	xxxxxxxxxx	G-10.0401 G-10.0401d G-10.0102o
29. Do <i>Minutes</i> show the date that the Annual Statistical Report was approved and directed published to the Congregation?	Y - N			Workbook for Clerks of Session
30. Is the latest copy of the Annual Statistical Report, showing the composition of Session as to racial ethnic groups, men and women, and composition of Church membership, included in the minutes being reviewed?	Y - N			G-10.0301
31. Are both men and women elected to serve as Church officers?	Y - N			G-14.0221
32. Is a rotary system for Church officers?	Y - N			G-14.0222
33. If both men and women are not elected or there is no rotary system, were proper exemptions obtained? List date of exemption(s) by the presbytery _____	Y - N N/A			G-14.0226
34. Do <i>Minutes</i> record (a) election of representatives to Presbytery meetings and (b) their report to Session?	a. Y - N b. Y - N			G-10.0102p (1)
Election Dates				
Report Dates				
35. Do you feel your Sessional Records reveal any action contrary to the constitution of the Church? If yes, indicate nature of the action giving date & page in <i>Minutes</i> and section of the constitution being violated.	Y - N			G-10.0102p (4) G-10.0102r

Date: _____ Signed by the Clerk of Session _____

Please print name, address and telephone number of the

Clerk: _____

(Name)

(Address)

(Telephone Number)

Note: If form is copied, please use green paper

.Revised 07/22/2009

H. SCHEDULE FOR REVIEW OF SESSIONAL RECORDS

Sessional Records to be reviewed in February (Due in hands of Reviewer by February 11 and reported at the April Meeting of Presbytery.)

Bayside	Glenwood Park	Messiah
Belle Haven	Greenbrier	Newport News, Second
Calvin	Groves Memorial	Norview
Carver Memorial	Hidenwood	Oakdale
Community, Portsmouth	Hilton	Portsmouth, First
First United	Lynnhaven	

Sessional Records to be reviewed in April (Due in hands of Reviewer by May 12 and reported at the July Meeting of Presbytery.)

Clark	Holmes	Providence
Coleman Place	Jamestown	Thalia Trinity
Cradock	Knox	Westminster
Gloucester, First	Lafayette	Wycliffe
Great Bridge	LaCrosse Memorial	Yorkminster
Hampton, First	Makemie	

Sessional Records to be reviewed in August (Due in hands of Reviewer by August 11 and reported at the October Meeting of Presbytery.)

Community, Hampton	Norfolk, Second	South Norfolk, First
Covenant	Ocean View	Squires Memorial
Grace Covenant	Powelton	Virginia Beach, First
Green Acres	Royster Memorial	Williamsburg
KirkWood	Simonsdale	Willowwood

Sessional Records to be reviewed in November (Due in hands of Reviewer by November 10 and reported at the January Meeting of Presbytery.)

Bethany	Franklin	Suffolk
Bow Creek	King's Grant	St. Andrew
Christ	Naomi Makemie	Stone House
Denbigh	Norfolk, First	Wythe
Faith	Norfolk, Third	

TO CLERK OF SESSION: You will receive two copies of **Report of the Clerk of Session** (Green Form) when the letter requesting submission of your Records is mailed to you. These forms are to be completed and returned with the Records that are to be reviewed. A copy of the form is included in this Work Book and can serve as a reminder of actions the Session is to take each year. Please study this form. It will assist you in scheduling items needed to be acted upon by the Session.

I. Suggested Form For *Minutes Of Session Meeting*

_____ Presbyterian Church
_____, Virginia
_____, 200__

The Stated (Called or Adjourned) Meeting of the Session of the _____ Presbyterian Church of _____, Virginia, was held in the _____ at _____ p.m. (a.m.) (day), (month) (date) 200__ with the following members, constituting a quorum, present: _____ (full name or initials and last name), Moderator, _____, and (any visitors).

The Moderator (or other) opened the meeting with prayer, after which the *Minutes* of the meeting(s) of the Session of _____, 200__ (and _____, 200__) were read and approved (or corrected as follows _____).

Communications:

- A. From Higher Governing Bodies (give brief content, and record disposition)
- B. Requests for Dismissal: (e.g. "Having received a request for a Certificate of Dismissal, on the motion of _____, seconded and carried, Mr. and Mrs. John T. Smith, their son David A., their daughter Susan B., and their baptized children Karen F. and Lori G. were dismissed to the care and fellowship of the First Presbyterian Church of Alton, Illinois.")
- C. Other (give brief content and record of disposition)

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS:

(e.g. "Mr. and Mrs. John T. Smith (Betty Ann), their son David A., their daughter Susan B., and their baptized children Karen F. and Lori G. were received by Certificate from the First Presbyterian Church of Alton, Illinois" OR "Mr. John T. Smith was received on Profession of Faith having been previously baptized." OR "Mrs. John T. Smith (Betty Ann) was received on Profession of Faith and the Sacrament of Baptism is to be administered on (date)." OR "Mr. and Mrs. John T. Smith (Betty Ann) were received on their Reaffirmation of Faith having been previously members of the Zion Baptist Church of Clifton, Texas.")

PASTOR'S REPORT: (Monthly, if possible)

- A. Names of all persons related to the Church who have been married, and date.
- B. Names of all Persons related to the Church who have died, and date.
- C. Other concerns (sickness, etc.)

ELECTION OF REPRESENTATIVES TO PRESBYTERY:

(e.g. "On motion of _____, seconded, and carried _____ was/were elected principal representative(s) and _____ was/were elected alternate representative(s) to the Stated (Called, etc.) Meeting of Presbytery (date), 200__ at _____ Church, _____, Virginia.")

REPORT OF REPRESENTATIVE(S) TO PRESBYTERY:

(Record that (name of representative(s)) reported on his/her/their attendance at Presbytery and what information was given about the Presbytery Meeting.)

REPORTS AND ACTIONS:

(Record something of the nature of all reports and other business put before the Session, **but not** the discussion. Actions should be recorded as follows: " On motion of _____, seconded, and carried, the Session (record the motion) _____.")

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned with prayer by _____ at (time).

/s/Clerk of Session

Printed Name

Date approved: _____

COS Initials: _____

J. Excerpt from *ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER, NEWLY REVISED*

§ 48 MINUTES AND REPORTS

The record of the proceedings of a deliberative assembly is usually called the *Minutes*... In an ordinary society ... they should contain mainly a record of what was *done* at the meeting, not what was *said* by the members. The *Minutes* should never reflect the secretary's opinion, favorable or otherwise, on anything said or done.

CONTENT OF *MINUTES*:

The *first paragraph* of the *Minutes* should contain the following information (which need not, however, be divided into numbered or separated items directly corresponding to those below):

1. the kind of meeting: (i.e. Stated, Called, etc.)
2. the name of the assembly
3. the date and time of meeting, and the place
4. the fact that the regular (Moderator) and (Clerk) were present or, in their absence, the names of the persons who substituted for them;
5. and whether the *minutes* of the previous meeting were read and approved (as read or as corrected), the date of that meeting being given if it was other than a regular business meeting. Any corrections are made in the text of the minutes being approved; the minutes of the meeting making the corrections merely state that the minutes were approved "as corrected".

The body of the *minutes* should contain a *separate paragraph for each subject matter*, and in such a format should show:

6. all main motions ... or motions to bring a main question again before the assembly ... except any that were withdrawn .. giving:
 - a) The wording in which each motion was adopted or otherwise disposed of (with the facts as to how the motion may have been debated or amended before disposition being mentioned only parenthetically)
 - b) The disposition of the motion, including .. if it was *temporarily* disposed of ... any primary and secondary motions that were then pending,
 - c) usually, in the case of all important motions, the name of the mover and ...
7. all points of order and appeals, whether sustained or lost, together with the reasons given by the chair for his/her ruling.

The *last paragraph* should state:

8. the hour of adjournment.

Additional rules and practices relating to the content of the *minutes* are the following:

--- The name of the person seconding a motion should not be entered in the *minutes* unless ordered by the assembly.

--- When a count has been ordered or the vote is by ballot, the number of votes on each side should be entered; and when the voting is by roll call, the names of those voting on each side and those answering "Present" should be entered. If members fail to respond on a roll call vote, enough of their names should be recorded as present to reflect that a quorum was present at the time of the vote.

--- The proceedings of a committee of the whole, or a quasi committee of the whole, should not be entered in the *Minutes*, but the fact that the assembly went into committee of the whole (or into quasi committee) and the committee report should be recorded.

--- When a question is considered informally, the same information should be recorded as under the regular rules, since the only informality in the proceedings is in the debate.

--- When a committee report is of great importance or should be recorded to show the legislative history of a measure, the assembly can order it “to be entered in the *Minutes*,” in which case the secretary copies it in full in the *Minutes*.

--- The name and subject of a guest speaker can be given, but no effort should be made to summarize his/her remarks.

THE SIGNATURE: (Paragraph modified for *Book of Order* requirements.)

Minutes of session meetings should be signed by the clerk and can also be signed, if the assembly wishes, by the moderator but signature of the moderator is not required. **The secretary and the moderator will sign minutes of congregational meetings.** The words respectfully submitted, although occasionally used, represent an older practice that is not essential in signing the *Minutes*.

When the *Minutes* are approved, the word **APPROVED**, with the secretary’s initials and the date, should be written below them.

K. A PAPER ON THE ROLE OF THE CLERK OF SESSION

1. The *Book of Order* makes the following provisions:

- **G-9.0203a** - The clerk shall record the transactions of the governing body, keep its rolls of membership and attendance, preserve its records carefully, and furnish extracts from them when required by another governing body of the church. Such extracts, verified by the clerk, shall be evidence in any governing body of the church.

- **G-9.0203b** - The clerk of session shall be an elder elected by the session for such term as it may determine.

(NOTE) It is in order for any elder, whether or not an active member of the session, to serve as clerk of session as long as the elder is elected by the session for a definite term and, of course, could be re-elected. If the clerk of session is not an active member of the session, then he/she cannot vote and should have voice only in matters related to the function of the clerk unless voice is given to the clerk by action of the session.

- **G-10.0300** - This portion on **Minutes and Records** is an important section to read as it gives an outline of the responsibilities of the clerk of session regarding *minutes*, rolls and records.

- **G-7.0307** - Clerks need to be aware of the proper procedure in the *Book of Order*, concerning approval for minutes of a congregational meeting.

The clerk of session shall be secretary of meetings of the congregation. **If the congregation does not approve the minutes of a congregational meeting before adjournment, the session shall read, correct, and approve the minutes of that congregational meeting at its next scheduled meeting and shall enter them into the**

permanent record. At the next meeting of the congregation, the clerk shall have the minutes available and shall report the session's action. The congregation may ask to have them read and may make additions or corrections by vote. If the clerk is unable to serve, the congregation shall elect a secretary. The minutes of each meeting of the congregation shall be attested by the moderator and the secretary and shall be entered in the minute book of the session.

2. The clerk of session should work with the moderator of the session, which is the pastor or a minister appointed by the Presbytery for that purpose. **It is very important for the clerk of session to work very closely with the moderator** in developing agendas for the meetings and for them to keep each other informed concerning issues that will be coming before the session.

3. It is recommended that the clerk of session keep a list of the important items that should be coming before the session during the year to be sure they are included at the proper time on the agenda. It is helpful to have these in chronological order and should include such items as: election of officers, authorization of communion services during the year, submission of minutes of the Board of Deacons, and review of other groups in the church, etc.

4. The clerk will also receive important correspondence and reports during the year, such as the information for presbytery meetings, annual statistical reports, annual review of compensation for pastors, etc. A system for getting these packets to the right people as quickly as possible is important.

5. When the church is without a pastor, the clerk becomes the chief point of communication from the Presbytery and the larger church. The clerk must be careful that all correspondence and materials reach the persons who are to receive them including the session as a whole.

6. It is important that the minutes and other records be kept in a permanent binding so that valuable records will not be lost.

7. **THE CHURCH ROLL BOOK** is an important responsibility for the clerk of session. The clerk is to see that all new members are properly entered including the full name of the member and the record of their children, baptized or not. When married women join, it is important that their maiden name be used as at least one of their middle names. The same kind of detail should be practiced when members transfer and when there are Baptisms, Marriages, or Deaths in the congregation.

8. The **BAPTIZED MEMBERS ROLL** is important to keep and should include careful detail as to names, etc.; and is to include not only those baptized in the congregation, but the baptized children of new members that join. When a person on the Baptized Members Roll is received by Profession of Faith, then they are transferred to the Active Members Roll.

9. The **INACTIVE MEMBERS ROLL** is to be kept with careful detail of all persons transferred to that roll by the session. Be sure to note carefully *Book of Order*, G-10.0302a-b for the conditions under which a member may be placed on the inactive roll and how a member is to be removed from the inactive roll, so that the inactive roll does not grow indefinitely.

10. **ANNUAL STATISTICAL REPORTS** are required by both the Presbytery and the General Assembly. *Book of Order*, G-10.0102p states that one of the responsibilities of the Session is "to maintain regular and continuing relationship to the higher governing bodies of the Church, including ... (7) sending annually to the stated clerk of the presbytery statistical and other

information according to the requirements of the presbytery.” As Clerk of Session you should help shepherd the process of statistics gathering and ensure that these reports are provided to Presbytery in a timely fashion, normally due in mid-February. Once the established date passes, churches can no longer input on-line and must submit reports to the Presbytery Office.

It is important to realize that the information contained in the Annual Statistical Reports to the General Assembly must be summarized by Presbytery Staff for transmittal to the Office of the General Assembly in Louisville. They, in turn, must then summarize reports received from the whole Church and have them published before the next meeting of the General Assembly. This means that the General Assembly Office imposes a very early deadline on the presbyteries, usually early-March.

11. The Presbytery of Eastern Virginia sends out a packet each November/December, containing:
 - a. The instructions for reporting statistical information – **all churches will submit their reports on-line**; if the church lacks on-line capability, arrangements can be made with the Stated Clerk
 - b. Clerk of Session Form,
 - c. Annual Report to Presbytery Form for listing Elders & Deacons and other key persons to the Presbytery, and
 - d. Annual Terms of Call Forms, as applicable.

12. Names of the Clerks of Session are to be reported to the Presbyterian Center as they change throughout the calendar year.

13. **Annual Terms of Call.** Each church with an installed pastor/associate pastor will submit an Annual Terms of Call Form reflecting any changes. The forms are sent to Clerks of Session in November and are due to be returned as soon as possible after the Annual Meeting or by the end of February. Housing allowance amounts for the coming year are to be approved by the session prior to December 31.

L. PREPARING FOR REVIEW OF SESSIONAL RECORDS...A CHECK LIST

BE PREPARED

1. All pages of submitted *Minutes* should be properly numbered for continuity.
2. Certificate of Review from previous review is included and submitted with *Minutes*.
3. Each of the *Minutes* is signed by the Clerk of Session.
4. All Congregational Meeting *Minutes* are properly approved & entered into Records.
5. All Congregational Meeting *Minutes* are signed by the Secretary and the Moderator.
6. All Congregational Meetings are moderated in accordance with the Constitution.
7. All "lists" & "attachments" mentioned in *Minutes* are enclosed with the Records.
8. The Session has approved Communion Schedule for the year.
9. Date Session approved Communion Schedule, can be noted for the Review.
10. Date of Annual Congregational Meeting can be noted for the Review.
11. Date of Church Budget approval, by session, can be noted for the Review.
12. A copy of the Church Budget is enclosed in the Sessional Records.
13. The session has reviewed adequacy of compensation for all employees, to include pastor.
14. Date Session elected the Church treasurer, can be noted for the Review.
15. Session has conducted an independent financial review of all books and records.
16. Date Session ordered Annual Statistics published to congregation, can be noted.
17. Copy of Statistical Report included in the *Minutes*.
18. Date Session elected representatives to Presbytery meetings, can be noted.
19. Representatives to Presbytery meetings report to Session can be noted.
20. The *Minutes* show that Session took part in all ordination/installation of officers.
21. The *Minutes* show that Session approved all Baptisms in advance.
22. Changes in pastor's Call were approved by the Congregation and can be noted.
23. Housing allowance for pastor(s) was approved by session prior to end of calendar year.
24. The *Minutes* show Session prepared those who would become Church members and that the new members made a public profession of faith.
25. The *Minutes* show Session instructed & examined officers-elect and the date can be noted for Review.
26. The *Minutes* are checked for typing errors, etc. & are ready for permanent binding.
27. The *Minutes* are ready to be submitted for review to Presbytery on time.
28. Moderator in a permanent pastoral relationship with the church should sign the "true and accurate" forwarding statement, along with the clerk, to ensure that the moderator is cognizant of what is being submitted.

"REVIEW" means...Review by Presbytery Committee on Sessional Records.

"NOTED FOR REVIEW" and

"CAN BE NOTED" mean.....date & page from *Minutes* are available for recording in Report of Clerk of Session.

"RECORDS" mean.. Sessional *Minutes* and all attachments noted in minutes.