

We will now begin the fourth lecture on Church Order. /Today we will begin with section six.

**/Section VI, Authority of the Session.**

/The session oversees all rituals of worship according to the Directory for Worship. /The session decides on the location and time for worship. /The session also manages church real estate.

**/Section VII, Assembly of the Session.**

/The session assembles at least once a year for a regular meeting. /Of course, each church will face different circumstances. The session generally gathers at least once a month.

/The session convenes when the senior pastor of the local church acknowledges the need for a meeting. /A session can also be assembled when half the number of elders demands a meeting. /A session also convenes when the presbytery or general assembly demands it.

**/Section VIII, Proceedings of the Session.**

/The minutes of the session must include a clear report of decisions made in the meeting. /The minutes of the session must be submitted to the presbytery once a year for examination.

**/Section IX, Various Registers of the Session.**

/The session must provide the following registers.

**/1. Register of Catechism.** /Believers who have attended the church for more than six months become catechumens. /This must include the year, month, and date.

**/2. Register of Baptisms.** /This is a register of baptized members of the church.

**/3. Register of Infliction of Censures and Removal of Censures.**

**/4. Reserved List.** /This is a list of members of the church who have been absent for more than a year.

**/5. Register of Deaths.** /This is a list of members of the church who have gone to heaven.

**/6. Register of Relocation.** /This is a register of those who have relocated. They are given letters of transfer when relocating to another church.

**/7. Register of Marriage.** /This is a register of those who have been married. /The names of newlyweds go on the list.

**/8. Register of Infant Baptisms.** /The names on this list must match the names on the birth certificates. /The age of when one is baptized must also be recorded.

**/Section X, Joint Session.**

/When there are more than two sessions in a city, a joint session can be held for the convenience of both churches. /Every member of the sessions convenes. However, there are no rights to govern, for they assemble for the purpose of union and support for each other.

## **/Chapter 10, The Presbytery.**

### **/Section I, Importance of the Presbytery.**

/The Church, the body of Christ, dispersed to form many local churches. /Acts 6:1, /Acts 9:31. /The union of these churches preserve soundness of doctrine, /preserve regularity of discipline, enter into common measures for promoting knowledge and religion, /and for preventing infidelity, error, and immorality.

/Hence arise the importance and usefulness of presbyterial and synodical assemblies.

/Churches of the apostolic age were under one presbyterial government.

/The church of Ephesus had more congregations than one, under a presbyterial government. /Acts 19:18; 1 Corinthians 16:8; 20:17.

### **/Section II, Organization of the Presbytery.**

/The presbytery consists of at least five pastors who each serve in a local church within a certain district. /The presbytery consists of pastors and elders. /There must be at least five pastors to form a presbytery.

/However, cases are a bit different for larger denominations. /There must be at least fifteen sessions to form a presbytery in one denomination in Korea. /There must be at least twenty sessions to form a presbytery in another denomination in Korea.

### **/Section III, Qualifications of Members of the Presbytery.**

/The members of a presbytery include pastors and ruling elders. /Pastors who have been dispatched by the general assembly or the presbytery have rights to membership.

/However, any other pastors do not have rights to vote. /For example, ministers without charge and pastors emeritus do not have rights to vote.

### **/Section IV, a Quorum of the Presbytery.**

/Any three ministers, and as many elders as may be present, belonging to the presbytery, being met at the time and place appointed, shall be a quorum competent to proceed to business.

### **/Section V, Duties of the Presbytery.**

/The presbytery oversees all sessions, local churches, pastors, licentiates, unlicensed preachers, pastoral candidates, and mission churches within the certain district.

/The presbytery receives and handles overtures, petitions, appeals, complaints, inquiries, and rulings based on reference that are submitted by sessions. /Concerning trial cases, the presbytery is mandated to hold court according to the Book of Discipline. /There are many responsibilities of the presbytery in large denominations. /Please refer to the duties of the general assembly for more on this.

### **/Section VI, Reports and Minutes of the Presbytery.**

/The presbytery records the installation of pastors, bynames, deaths, establishment of churches, separation of churches, and unions in the register. /The presbytery records the

circumstances of each church, as well as cases handled, and is examined by the general assembly when necessary.

**/Section VII, Various Registers of the Presbytery.**

/Registers for installed pastors, /ministers without charge, /pastors emeritus, /retired pastors, /unlicensed preachers, /pastoral candidates, /and licentiates /are necessary.

**/Section VIII, Assembly of the Presbytery.**

/The presbytery must assemble at the scheduled date and place, /and when there is a special case, a temporary meeting can be held by petition consisting of three pastors of local churches and three elders of other local churches. /When calling a temporary meeting, the president must notify each member one week before the date of assembly.

**/Chapter 11, The General Assembly.**

**/Section I, Definition of the General Assembly.**

/The general assembly is the highest judicatory of all local churches and church courts in the Presbyterian Church. /Please refer to the translated syllabus.

**/Section II, Organization of the General Assembly.**

/The general assembly consists of dispatched pastors and elders of each presbytery. The presbytery must send an equal number of pastors and elders as commissioners. /The commissioners are one pastor and one elder per five sessions in a presbytery.

/The list of the names of commissioners must be delivered to the secretary of the general assembly two months before the meeting is held.

/If there are not five sessions but three, the presbytery can send one pastor and one elder.

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**/Section III, a Quorum of the General Assembly.**

/When more than half the presbytery and half of commissioners, which consist of pastors and elders, attend, the quorum is met to hold the meeting of which general affairs are dealt with.

**/Section IV, Duties of the General Assembly.**

/What does the general assembly do? /There are several duties of the general assembly. / However, in larger denominations, the presbytery handles the following duties. /In smaller denominations, the general assembly handles the following duties.

/The general assembly oversees all office duties and relationships among its affiliated churches and church courts. /The general assembly receives and handles all overtures, petitions, appeals, complaints, plaints, inquiries, and rulings based on reference that are submitted by the lower courts.

/1. The general assembly examines pastoral candidates, their education, transfer and discipline. It also licenses licentiates. /The general assembly approves and gives

notifications of elections for elders in local churches. /It examines and gives approval for unlicensed preachers, /and examines, appoints, and disciplines pastoral applicants.

/2. The general assembly prevents behavior that disturbs the peace and divinity of the church. /It also inspects the presbyteries and local churches.

/3. The general assembly establishes, separates, and merges presbyteries and local churches. /It also governs over the calling of pastors, evangelism and financial affairs.

/4. The general assembly receives petitions and overtures.

/5. The general assembly handles cases concerning debates over church real estate.

/6. The general assembly appoints a committee of inspection in order to oversee and inspect local churches.

#### **/Section V, Authority of the General Assembly.**

/1. The general assembly has the full authority to interpret the laws of the Church, /and receive and issue all appeals, complaints and references that shall affect the doctrine or constitution of the Church.

/2. The general assembly establishes, separates, and merges presbyteries.

/3. The general assembly suppresses schismatical contentions and disputations in churches.

/4. The general assembly receives all appeals made that concern church property that are brought before it.

/5. The general assembly can install members who will oversee domestic and international missionary work, and can establish seminaries and universities.

/6. Any property of the general assembly belongs to the general assembly.

#### **/Section VI, Assembly of the General Assembly.**

/The general assembly regularly assembles once a year. /Once the secretary receives and calls the names of the commissioners, the commissioners are then given rights to membership.

#### **/Section VII, Opening and Closing Rituals.**

/Each gathering of the general assembly opens and closes with prayer. /When the vote is taken to close the assembly, the president gives a benediction and declares that the meeting has come to a close.

#### **/Chapter 12, Electing and Ordaining Ruling Elders and Deacons.**

##### **/Section I, Method of Election.**

/Ruling elders and deacons are elected by the rules of congregational meetings. /The congregation, consisting of baptized and registered members of the church, hold a meeting in the church.

/Ruling elders and deacons must receive more than two-thirds of the vote to be appointed.

/More than half of baptized and registered members of the church must assemble at the

congregational meetings. /Candidates must receive two-thirds of the vote of those present. /Deacons refer to ordained deacons.

### **/Section II, Approval of Ordination.**

/When ruling elders and ordained deacons are elected, the presbytery approves of the examination, and once the elected consents to this he is installed by the session.

### **/Section III, Order of Ordination.**

/The church gathers at the scheduled date and location chosen by the session, /the pastor preaches and teaches about the root and nature of the offices, /and briefly explains the character proper to be sustained and the duties to be fulfilled by the officer elect.

/Candidates for elders and deacons stand and make vows. /When both ruling elders and ordained deacons are ordained, candidates for elders first make their vows, /and then candidates for ordained deacons make their vows.

/There are five vows that candidates must make. /First, they are asked, “Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?” /The candidates then answer with a “yes.” /The five vows are part of the installment service.

/Next, the members of the church are asked to stand. /The members of the church are asked, “Do you, the members of the church, acknowledge and receive this brother as a ruling elder (or deacon)?” /When the members of the church raise their hands as an expression of approval, the pastor then prays.

/One who has been elected kneels on the pulpit, and the pastor and elders place their hands on him and pray. /When electing ruling elders and ordained deacons, the senior pastor places his hand on them and prays a representative prayer.

/The right hand of fellowship is given, and the senior pastor declares before the congregation that he has become an elder (or a deacon).

### **/Section IV, Tenure.**

/The age of retirement for ruling elders and ordained deacons is seventy. /Each denomination is different. /The church can schedule a vote of confidence once every three years, and one must receive more than half the vote.

/The church can schedule a vote of confidence once every three years, but this refers to a possibility. The church does not necessarily have to vote.

### **/Section V, Personal Leave of Absence and Resignation.**

/An elder or deacon petitions to take a leave of absence or resigns /when he is incapable of performing the duties of his office because of age or sickness, /or when the majority of the congregation does not want him to continue his duties. /He can take a leave of absence or resign by the decision made by the session.

/A “leave of absence” requires that he does not perform the duties of his office for a certain period of time. /“Resignation” indicates a permanent departure from the duties of his office.

### **/Section VI, Suggested Leave of Absence and Resignation.**

/Another member advises an elder or a deacon to resign. /A personal leave of absence and resignation indicates one’s own decision to leave his office. /However, a suggested leave of absence and resignation refers to the session’s recommendation in telling one “to take a break.”

/When an elder or a deacon has not been virtuous in the church, the session can decide to terminate him from his office. /When he has not been virtuous in the church, the session can decide to give him a leave of absence or make him resign.

/Cases like this must be recorded in the minutes of the session. /When the individual does not want to be terminated, he can appeal to the presbytery.

### **/Chapter 13, Pastoral Candidates and Licentiates.**

#### **/Section I, Importance of Training Pastoral Candidates.**

/The duties of a pastor are extremely important. /Therefore, weak or unsuitable individuals will hinder the works of God.

/Pastoral applicants must first take an exam. /When the general assembly has given the seminary graduate an ordination exam, he can work as a licentiate upon passing the exam.

/A licentiate is required to improve himself under the guidance of the general assembly for at least one month after graduating from seminary, and then he can be ordained as a pastor. /Strictly speaking, it is best for a licentiate to be ordained not right after graduating from seminary, but after he has been a licentiate for at least one year.

#### **/Section II, Jurisdiction Over Pastoral Candidates.**

/The pastoral candidate applicant can petition to the general assembly and receive training under the supervision of the general assembly. /In larger denomination, the pastoral candidate receives training under the presbytery. /The ordination examination is taken under the general assembly.

#### **/Section III, Subjects on the Ordination Examination.**

/There is a written exam. /Biblical studies, /systematic theology, /church order, /church history. /These four subjects are written exams.

/Next, there is an essay exam. /This is another form of a written exam.

/A thesis, /exegesis, /preaching. One writes about these subjects and submits it. /In writing a “thesis,” the general assembly board of education chooses a “topic,” and one would write a thesis on it. /This is similar to writing a graduation thesis at a seminary.

/When the board of education chooses a certain “biblical passage” for “exegesis,” one would interpret the passage. /He refers to books and and interprets each verse in the given biblical passage.

/Next, “preaching.” /When the board of education chooses a certain “biblical passage,” one would write out a sermon with the passage. /He will not give the sermon before anyone, but will write out his sermon and submit it.

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**/Section IV, License and Vows.**

/When the licentiate is licensed by the general assembly, he makes the following vows. /There are four vows that a candidate must make. /Those who have passed the ordination exam are called to stand, and are asked four questions. /When the candidates for licentiates answer “yes,” they become licentiates. /After the vows are made, the moderator of the presbytery or the moderator of the assembly prays and declares that a candidate has been made a licentiate.

**/Section V, Cancellation of License.**

/This is the cancellation of license of a licentiate. /When a licentiate has preached for a considerable time and yet has not been virtuous, /his license can be revoked upon the decision of the general assembly (presbytery). /When his license is taken away, he is no longer a licentiate.

/Here we will conclude the fourth lecture on Church Order. /Thank you.