

PREFACE

The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as defined in F-3.04, consists of the *Book of Confessions* (Part I) and the *Book of Order* (Part II).

The *Book of Confessions* contains the Nicene Creed, the Apostles' Creed, the Scots Confession, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Second Helvetic Confession, the Westminster Confession of Faith, the Shorter Catechism, the Larger Catechism, the Theological Declaration of Barmen, the Confession of 1967, the Confession of Belhar, and A Brief Statement of Faith—Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The *Book of Order* contains the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, the Form of Government, the Directory for Worship, and the Rules of Discipline.

In this *Book of Order*

- (1) SHALL and IS TO BE/ARE TO BE signify practice that is mandated,
- (2) SHOULD signifies practice that is strongly recommended,
- (3) IS APPROPRIATE signifies practice that is commended as suitable,
- (4) MAY signifies practice that is permissible but not required.
- (5) ADVISORY HANDBOOK signifies a handbook produced by agencies of the General Assembly to guide synods and presbyteries in procedures related to the oversight of ministry. Such handbooks suggest procedures that are commended, but not required.

The 222nd General Assembly (2016) approved and the presbyteries took action to replace the Directory for Worship with a new Directory for Worship. The assembly also approved and the presbyteries took action to replace the following terms as follows: “teaching elder” with “minister” or “minister of the Word and Sacrament”; “ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service” with “commissioned pastor (also known as commissioned ruling elder)”.

The amendments to the Form of Government, Directory for Worship, and Rules of Discipline, proposed to the presbyteries by the 222nd General Assembly (2016) and approved by a majority of the presbyteries, are included in this volume. Words that have been stricken are omitted from the text. New wording appears in boldface within the appropriate paragraph. These amendments take effect on June 25, 2017. Amendments have been made in the following places:

<i>Book of Order</i>	<i>Minutes, 2016</i>	<i>Book of Order</i>	<i>Minutes, 2016</i>
F-3.0202	49, 51, 359	G-3.0109	49, 50, 354
G-1.0304	62, 65, 556	G-3.0307	49, 51, 360
G-2.0102	49, 51, 359		
G-2.0301	49, 51, 359		
G-2.05 & G-2.0501	49, 51, 359–60	Directory for Worship	15, 17–19, 978ff
G-2.0509	49, 50, 51, 365	D-10.0401	49, 50, 51, 365
G-2.0701	49, 51, 360	Ordered Ministry Titles	49, 51, 360
G-2.1101	49, 52, 376		
G-3.0106	32, 34, 290–91		

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**EXPLANATION OF THE
REFERENCE NUMBER SYSTEM
OF THE
*BOOK OF ORDER***

The four parts of the *Book of Order* are abbreviated by the use of capital letters:

F — The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity

G — Form of Government

W — Directory for Worship

D — Rules of Discipline

Each reference in the text begins with the appropriate letter. The numeral appearing after the letter, and to the left of the decimal, indicates the chapter number. There are four numerals to the right of the decimal. The first two indicate the number of a section. The second two indicate the number of the subsection.

Each page is noted in numerals preceded by the proper letter to identify the material that appears on it. For example, in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity, the first page of Chapter One bears the notation:

**F-1.01–F-1.02
F-1.0201–1.0202**

This indicates that Chapter One of the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity begins here and the page includes sections 1.01 and 1.02 with two titled subsections: 1.0201 and 1.0202.

The chapters and sections of the *Book of Order* are so notated that it is possible for chapters and sections to be added by amendment without changing any of the present notations.

This notation makes it possible for citations to the *Book of Order* in minutes, reports, and correspondence to remain the same from year to year in English, Korean, Spanish, and Braille editions.