

2016-2017
BCO AMENDMENTS SENT DOWN TO PRESBYTERIES
BY THE 44th GENERAL ASSEMBLY
FOR VOTING, and for ADVICE AND CONSENT

(Underlining for new wording; ~~strike-through~~ for deletions)

ITEM 1. Amend BCO 5-3 by the addition of a final sentence as follows:

5-3. The mission church, because of its transitional condition, requires a temporary system of government. Depending on the circumstances and at its own discretion, Presbytery may provide for such government in one of several ways:

- a. Appoint an evangelist as prescribed in with *BCO* 8-6.
- b. Cooperate with the Session of a particular church in arranging a mother-daughter relationship with a mission church. The Session may then serve as the temporary governing body of the mission church.
- c. Appoint a *BCO* 15-1 commission to serve as a temporary Session of the mission church. When a minister of the Presbytery has been approved to serve as pastor of the mission church, he shall be included as a member of the commission and serve as its moderator.

The temporary system of government shall record and submit its records to Presbytery for annual review in the same manner as Sessions of particular churches.

Rationale

1. *BCO* 12-7 stipulates: “Every Session shall keep an accurate record of its proceedings, which record shall be submitted at least once in every year to the inspection of the Presbytery.” The temporary system of government is essentially the interim Session of a mission church.
2. This would standardize the practice in the PCA. This is done in some Presbyteries, but not in others. (*BCO* 12-6, 12-7, 12-8 and 13-9.b) Apparently, some mission church sessions operate for years without ever submitting minutes to their Presbytery.
3. This would apply regardless of whether the temporary government (interim Session) is a local church Session, a commission appointed by Presbytery to act as an interim Session, or a solo Evangelist.

ITEM 2: Amend BCO 13-2 by the addition of a final sentence as follows:

BCO 13-2. A minister shall be required to hold his membership in the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he resides, unless there are reasons which are satisfactory to his Presbytery why he should not do so. When a minister labors outside the geographical bounds of, or in a work not under the jurisdiction of his Presbytery, at home or abroad, it shall be only with the full concurrence of and under circumstances agreeable to his Presbytery, and to the Presbytery within whose geographical bounds he labors, if one exists. When a minister shall continue on the rolls of his Presbytery without a call to a particular work for a prolonged period, not exceeding three years, the procedure as set forth in *BCO 34-10* shall be followed. A minister without call shall make or file a report to his Presbytery at least once each year.

Rationale

1. Losing track of ministers who are without call is a problem in many presbyteries. It is likely many of our 84 Presbyteries have at least one minister without call living out of bounds with whom they've lost adequate contact.

2. This would also help inform with any future application of *BCO 34-10*.

34-10. Whenever a minister of the Gospel shall habitually fail to be engaged in the regular discharge of his official functions, it shall be the duty of the Presbytery, at a stated meeting, to inquire into the cause of such dereliction and, if necessary, to institute judicial proceedings against him for breach of his covenant engagement. If it shall appear that his neglect proceeds only from his lack of acceptance to the Church, Presbytery may, upon the same principle upon which it withdraws license from a licentiate for lack of evidence of the divine call, divest him of his office without censure, even against his will, a majority of two-thirds (2/3) being necessary for this purpose.

3. Ministers with calls who labor out of bounds are required to make an annual report to Presbytery (*BCO 8-4*). Interns are required to report at every meeting. (*BCO 19-12*) But the *BCO*, unexplainably, has no such reporting requirement for ministers without call – not even annually.

4. Each Presbytery can determine how these reports should be made, and in what detail.

[Editorial Correction For Information Only]

BCO 58-5. Correct the suggested wording for cup as follows: “. . .He gave it to the disciples, ~~saving~~ saying. . .”