

Suggested Format for Session Minutes
Reflecting the new Form of Government as of July 11, 2011
 For use with checklist version 1-1-2012

This format can be used as a template for most information included in session minutes. Items 1 and 28 should be included in **all minutes**, even for short special meetings. Item 3 can be used for most ordinary committee business. Items 4 through 18 should or must be included each year, so use them when needed. Items 19 through 27 may occur at any time, and some more than once in a year. The number in parentheses following the line number indicates the number on the session records check list corresponding to this item.

1. (3, 4, 6, 7, 9) Opening of all session meetings

The (*stated/special/adjourned*) (*monthly/quarterly*) meeting of the session of the (*name of church*) was held on (*day of week*), (*date*), at (*time*), in the (*room or place in church*), Moderator (*name*) [*or temporary moderator (name)*] presiding and Session Clerk (*name*) being present. A quorum was present, and elders in attendance were (*names*); excused were: (*names*); absent were (*names*), and visitors were (*names*). The meeting was opened with prayer by (*name*). The minutes of the meeting of (*date*) were read and (*approved/approved as corrected*). [*Any corrections to minutes are made in the text of the minutes being approved; the minutes of the meeting making the correction merely state that the minutes were approved "as corrected."*]

2. (11) Treasurer's reports when a report is given.

The treasurer presented the (*monthly/quarterly/etc.*) financial report. After discussion, the report was filed for the annual financial review.

3. (10) Session's actions on committee reports

If there is no action required: Reports were received from (*names*) Committees and placed on file. [*The reports do not need to be included in the minutes unless there is a special reason to do so. However, copies of the reports should be kept on file in the church office.*]

If action is required: A report was received from (*name*) on behalf of the (*name*) Committee, which contained the following motion: (*state the motion*). [*No second is needed for a motion presented from a committee*]. The motion was (*approved/defeated/amended and approved, etc.*) after discussion.

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The following items (4 through 18) need to be included every year as they occur:

4 (34) Election of church treasurer if the congregation's bylaws call for annual election – usually at the last session meeting in December or the first session meeting in January.

Per the *Book of Order*, G-3.0205, the session elected (*name*) as treasurer for 20xx.

5. (26) Election of clerk of session if the congregation's bylaws call for annual election – usually at the last meeting in December or the first session meeting in January. [or see No. 18 below]

Per the *Book of Order*, G-3.0104, the session elected (*name*) as clerk of session for 20xx.

6. (37). Annual statistical report to General Assembly (data comes from actual report form)

The clerk presented the (*year date*) *Session Annual Statistical Report* to General Assembly (see below) for session's review and approval. (*name*) moved, it was seconded and passed, that the report be approved, and that it be presented to the congregation for its information.

| | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|-------|
| A. Membership | Average Attendance | _____ |
| Beginning Active members | Affiliate members | _____ |
| on December 31, 20__: | | |
| [<i>end of previous reporting year</i>] | Christian Ed. enrollment by age group | |
| Membership Gains for 20__: | Birth-3 | _____ |
| Profession of Faith, Reaffirmation, Restoration: | Kindergarten | _____ |
| 17 and Under | 2 nd grade | _____ |
| 18 and Over | 4 th grade | _____ |
| Certificate Gains | 6 th grade | _____ |
| Other Gains | 8 th grade | _____ |
| Total Gains | 10 th grade | _____ |
| | 12 th grade | _____ |
| Membership Losses for 20__ | Young adults | _____ |
| Certificate Losses | Over 25 | _____ |
| Deaths | Teachers & church-school officers | _____ |
| Other Losses | | |

| | | | |
|--|---------------|---|----------|
| Total Losses | _____ | Total Christian Education Enrollment | _____ |
| Total Ending Active Membership on December 31, 20__ [end of last year] | _____ | Child Baptisms | _____ |
| Female Members | _____ | Adult Baptisms | _____ |
| Inactive Members | _____ | Active officers | |
| Baptized Members | _____ | Men | _____ |
| Total Adherents | _____ | Women | _____ |
| | | Totals | _____ |
| | | Elders | _____ |
| | | Deacons | _____ |
| | | The Session <i>does/does not</i> serve the Trustees function. | |
| Age distribution of Active Members | | People with Disabilities | |
| Ages 25 and Under | _____ | Hearing | _____ |
| Ages 26-45 | _____ | Sight | _____ |
| Ages 46-55 | _____ | Mobility | _____ |
| Ages 56-65 | _____ | Other | _____ |
| Over 65 | _____ | | |
| Racial Ethnic Data | | | |
| | Asian | Black | Hispanic |
| | Nat. American | White | Other |
| | Total | | |
| Active Membership | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Session | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| Deacons | _____ | _____ | _____ |

B. Budget Figures

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|----------|----------------------------|----------|
| Potential Giving Units | _____ | | |
| Budgeted Income for last year | \$ _____ | | |
| Budgeted expenses for last year | \$ _____ | | |
| Receipts | | | |
| Regular Contributions | \$ _____ | Capital and Building Funds | \$ _____ |
| Investment Income | \$ _____ | Bequests | \$ _____ |
| Other Income | \$ _____ | Subsidy or Aid | \$ _____ |
| Expenditures | | | |
| Local Program | \$ _____ | Local Mission | \$ _____ |
| Capital Expenditures | \$ _____ | Investment Expenses | \$ _____ |
| Per Capita Apportionment | \$ _____ | Validated Mission | \$ _____ |
| G.A. Theological Ed. Fund | \$ _____ | Other Mission | \$ _____ |

7. (27) Election or appointment of Commissioners to presbytery meetings – usually at the last meeting of the year or the first meeting in January for the coming year.

(name) was nominated and elected as the congregation's commissioner to (all the presbytery meetings during the year of 20xx/the presbytery meeting on (date)). (name) was elected alternate commissioner.

8. (10) Reports of commissioners to presbytery meeting.

(name) presented his/her report of the presbytery meeting held on (date). [If necessary, the minutes can also include some or all of what the commissioner reported].

9. (32) Annual review of the compensation of the pastor

The session reviewed the compensation paid to the Rev. (name) during 20xx [the current year], and it was moved by (name), seconded and passed that the following terms of call for 20xx [next year] be presented to the congregation for approval at (the annual meeting/the congregational meeting on (date)).

10. (32) Housing Allowance

The Clerk of Session informed the meeting that under the tax law an ordained minister of the gospel is (1) not subject to Federal Income Tax with respect to the housing allowance paid to him or her "as part of his or her compensation to the extent used by him or her to rent or provide a home" and (2) an ordained minister is not subject to Federal Income Tax on the rental value of a home supplied to him or her rent-free.

The session on the _____ day of _____, 20__, after considering the statement of Rev. _____ setting forth the amount Rev. _____ estimates he/she will be re-

quired to spend to rent or provide a home for *himself/herself* and *his/her* family during the year 20____, on motion duly made and seconded, adopted the following resolution: (or – The session on the ____ day of _____, 20____, after discussing the amount to paid to Rev. _____ as a manse allowance, on motion duly made and seconded, adopted the following resolution:)

“Resolved that Rev. _____ receive compensation of \$_____ for the year 20____. Rev. _____ to receive a housing allowance of \$_____ for the year 20____ and all future years unless otherwise provided.” *(If the minister is to have rent-free use of the home, also state: “Rev. _____ shall also have the rent-free use of the home located at _____ for the year 20____ and for every year thereafter so long as he/she is minister of the _____ church unless otherwise provided.)* The housing allowance (and rent-free use of a home) shall be so designated in the official congregation records.

11. (33) Adoption of the annual budget by session

The session discussed the budget for 20xx [next year] as presented by *(the treasurer/stewardship committee/trustees/etc.)*. Following discussion, it was moved by *(name)*, seconded and passed to adopt the following budget for 20xx. This budget will be presented to the congregation for their information *(at its annual meeting set for (date)/at a meeting set for (date))*.

12. (35) Annual financial review

A full financial review for 20xx [last year] of all books and financial records of the church treasurer and of the treasurers of all groups within the congregation was completed on *(date)* by *(names)*, in accordance with G-3.0113. The review committee reports that *(state results of the review)*.

13. (36) Annual Review of membership rolls – usually at the last meeting of the year (sometimes a special meeting in the last week or so of December).

The 20xx annual review of the membership rolls of the congregation were conducted on *(date/or during the session meeting)* in accord with the *Book of Order*, G-3.0204a. The following individuals were removed from the Active Members Roll and are no longer members of the congregation: *(list the full name)*. The following individuals were removed from the Baptized Members Roll because their parents were also removed from all membership rolls: *(full names)*. The following individuals were *(retained on/removed from)* the Affiliate Members Roll: *(full names)*. This results in *(xx)* members on the Active Members Roll, *(xx)* members on the Baptized Members Roll, and *(xx)* persons on the Affiliate Members Roll.

14. (38) Session Records Review – as part of the clerk’s report

On *(date)* the clerk of session took the session minutes book and church register to an annual meeting held by the presbytery’s Session Records Review Committee. The records were approved *with/without* exceptions.

15. (28) Announcement of stated congregational meetings as provided in the congregation’s bylaws.

In accordance with the congregation’s bylaws, the session called a congregational meeting for *(date and time)* in order to *(state reason for meeting, such as election of officers or whatever the bylaws require/hold the Annual Meeting of the Congregation and Corporation)*.

16. (31) Election, training, and examination of new officers.

At the congregational meeting on *(date)*, *(names)* were elected as elders in the class of 20xx. They attended elder training classes on *(dates)* [Note: *persons elected as elders for the first time are required by the Book of Order, G-2.0402, to receive training. Elders elected for subsequent terms may be required to attend training classes per the congregation’s bylaws*]. The newly-elected and trained persons were examined by the session on *(date)* and approved for *(ordination and installation) (installation)* [or *were not approved for (ordination and installation) (installation) and this action will be reported to the congregation at (its next meeting) (at a special meeting scheduled for (date))*].

17. (17) Communion schedule – annual [or see No. 19 below]

This action can usually be taken at the last session meeting of the year or the first session meeting of the new year. In any case the session can set all the dates for communion for the next 12 months. Also, see No. 19 below.

It was moved by *(name)*, seconded and passed, that the session set the following dates for celebration of the Lord’s Supper during the year 20xx: *(list the dates for the Sundays, special services, etc.)*

18. (29) Approval of minutes of congregational meetings.

The minutes of the *(annual/special/called)* congregational meeting of *(date)* were read and *(approved/approved as corrected)*. [Any corrections to minutes are made in the text of the minutes being approved; the minutes of the meeting making the correction merely state that the minutes were approved “as corrected.”]

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The following items (18 through 26) are to be included in the minutes when they occur:

18. (26) Election of clerk of session – if the congregation’s bylaws call for the clerk to be elected for more than one year at a time. [or see No. 5 above]

Per the *Book of Order*, G-3.0104, the session elected (*name*) as clerk of session for a term of xxx years beginning on (*date*).

19. (17) Communion schedule – periodic [or see No. 17 above]

It was moved by (*name*), seconded and passed to celebrate the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper on (*date*) at the (*type of service*).

20. (18, 19) Baptism of children

Pastor (*name*) presented (*full names*), parents of (*full names of children and dates and places of birth*). (*names of parents*) have met with Pastor (*name*) about their desire to have their *child/children* baptized. (*Name*) moved, it was seconded and passed, that (*names of children*) be baptized on (*date of baptism*).

21. (20, 21, 22) Admission of new members

On (*date*) the session met with the following individuals and approved them for (*baptism and membership/membership upon profession/reaffirmation of faith*). They *were/will* be formally welcomed into the congregation during worship (*on date*) (*at the service immediately following the session meeting*). Their names are: (*give first, middle and last names for all individuals. Give maiden names for women if they were or are married. Indicate when and/or where baptized if it happened at another church. Include the names of the baptized children of members, and include them on the Baptized Members Roll*)

22. (23) Dismissal of members

The clerk reported that *he/she* has received a request from (*name of church*) for transfer of membership for (*full names*). It was moved by (*name*), seconded and passed, that the request be granted. [*If the person has been removed from the Active Members Roll, the clerk of session can simply reply to such a request that the person was removed on a certain date, and the matter does not have to be presented to the session at all.*]

23. (24) Marriages conducted by the congregation’s pastor or another pastor at the church. Also, marriages conducted by the pastor at other locations.

On (*date*) the Rev. (*name*) conducted a wedding (*at the church/at xx location*) for (*full maiden name of bride and full name of groom*). (*indicate if one or both are members of the congregation, or their church of membership*).

24. (25) Funerals conducted by the pastor

On (*date*) the Rev. (*name*) conducted a *funeral/memorial service* (*at the church/at xx location or mortuary*) for (*full name of the deceased*). Burial was at (*name and location of cemetery*) (*indicate if individual was a member of the congregation, or their church of membership*).

25. (28) Call for special congregational meeting

It was moved by (*name*), seconded and passed, to hold a special congregational meeting on (*day of the week and date*) at (*time*) at (*location*) in order to consider (*name the business of the meeting*). No other business will be considered at this meeting.

26. (28) Call for a special congregational meeting to consider calling a pastor or changing or dissolving the terms of call

It was moved by (*name*), seconded and passed, to hold a special congregational meeting on (*day of the week and date*) at (*time*) in order to (*hear the report of the Pastoral Nominating Committee and vote on the election of a pastor*) (or) (*hear the report of the session to terminate the call of the Rev. (name) effective (date) so that he/she can (accept a new call at (name of new congregation) (retire) (other))*).

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All meetings end with the following:

27. (8) Closing of session meetings

The meeting adjourned at (*time*) with a closing prayer by (*name*). The next session meeting is scheduled for (*date, time, place*).