

Presbytery of San Fernando
SESSION RECORDS CHECKLIST

CHURCH NAME _____

Clerk of Session _____ Review Date _____

WHY DO WE REVIEW SESSION RECORDS?

In reviewing the proceedings of a lower governing body (the session), the higher governing body (the presbytery) shall determine, either from the records of those proceedings or from any other information as may come to its attention, whether:

1. *The proceedings have been correctly recorded;*
2. *The proceedings have been regular and in accordance with the Constitution;*
3. *The proceedings have been prudent and equitable;*
4. *The proceedings have been faithful to the mission of the whole church;*
5. *The lawful injunctions of a higher governing body have been obeyed. [G-9.0409a]*

HOW DOES THE REVIEW HELP THE PRESBYTERY, THE CLERK OF SESSION?

It can help the Polity and Records Committee identify those areas in which several or all churches may need information or assistance from the presbytery in order to comply with the guidelines.

Our presbytery uses a one-on-one review, in which two Clerks of Session exchange and check the other's records, which are then approved by a member of the Polity and Records Committee. This allows Clerks to exchange information, often to their mutual advantage.

HOW SHOULD A CLERK USE THE CHECKLIST?

- A. The checklist serves as a planning or agenda guide for
 1. Procedures at each session meeting (Page 2)
 2. Actions taken and recorded annually or periodically at session meetings (Page 3-4)
 3. Items to include in session minutes when applicable for your church (Page 5)
 4. Procedures for meetings of the congregation, particularly the annual and/or election meeting(s) (Page 6)
- B. The checklist is a reminder of actions that must be taken at some time during the year.
- C. The checklist is the format for the annual review of records.

HOW SHOULD A CLERK PREPARE FOR THE REVIEW OF RECORDS?

- A. Read your checklist early in the year, review it periodically, and double-check it in September to make sure your session will take all necessary actions before the end of December.
- B. **Leave space for the Presbytery stamp at the end of the last page of minutes for the year being reviewed.**
- C. Make every possible effort to present your records for review in March; save May for back-up.
- D. Bring your current minutes book and the completed checklist to the review.
- E. If you cannot be present on the review dates, send a prepared substitute.
- F. Attend the Clerk's Workshop when it is offered by the Polity and Records Committee.

ITEMS RECORDED AT EACH SESSION MEETING

The Clerk's page references are all for one month, _____.
The reviewer will check at least one additional month, chosen at random.

-1. The following information is included for each meeting: Pg _____
Stated or special (called) meeting [G-9.0302]; date, time, place, moderator;
meeting opened with prayer [G-9.031b]; quorum present; full names and title of
those present, absent or excused [G-10.0202].

*Example: "The stated meeting of the session of the Santa Anita Presbyterian
Church was convened on September 15, 1999, at 7:00 p.m. in the multi-
purpose room of the church. The Moderator, Pastor Richard Super, opened
with prayer. A quorum was present. Those attending were: Pastor Richard
Super, Associate Pastor Ann Able; Elders John Adams, Nancy Brown, George
Cole; guests Jack Davis (deacon representative), Brenda Egan (church
business manager). Excused: Elder Freda Free. Absent: Elder George Gee."*

-2. The minutes are continuous on numbered pages. Appendices for a particular Pg _____
meeting are identified by reference to the page in the Minutes. Reference(s) to
previous actions of session are referred to by page number(s). Corrections,
when unavoidable, are initialed by the Clerk of Session.

-3. The Clerk of Session's report: Minutes of the previous meeting are approved Pg _____
as read or as corrected. All communications received are referred. A
recommendation to receive or remove members is approved. A report of
baptisms and marriages performed is received.

-4. A financial report is received, at least quarterly. Pg _____

-5. Reports of standing committees and any special committees are properly made Pg _____
and received, with recommendations acted upon. The record contains only
actions taken and that which is vital to the transactions of the meeting. Motions
are recorded in simple fashion - "it was voted" or "the session voted" (to take
action). There is a clear distinction between recommendations (which are
adopted or approved) and reports (which are received). Minutes are
succinct, but include enough information to provide an accurate record for
future reference.

-6. The meeting is closed with prayer [G-9.0301b]. The time of adjournment. Pg _____
may be noted.

-7. Minutes are signed by the Clerk of Session or the Moderator, attesting to the Pg _____
Session's approval of the minutes.

ITEMS TO BE RECORDED ANNUALLY OR PERIODICALLY IN SESSION MINUTES

-8. There is a period of study and preparation for newly elected elders and deacons, and an examination as to their personal faith, knowledge of the doctrine, government and discipline contained in the constitution of the Church, and of the duties of the office. For those approved, session appoints a day for ordination and installation. [G-10.0301] Pg _____
-9. There is a process of education and mutual growth of members of the session - devotionals prayer at session meetings, training classes, retreats. [G-10.0102j] There is training of the laity to serve communion to shut-ins. [W-2.4010] The session provides for the study of the Directory for Worship in this education process. [W-1.4007] Pg _____
-10. The minutes shall state the composition of the session with regard to racial ethnic members, women, men, age groups and persons with disabilities, and how this corresponds to the composition of the congregation. [G-10.0301, G-9.0104 and G-4.0403] Pg _____
-11. Clerk of Session is an elder elected by the session. [G-9.0203b] Pg _____
-12. The Treasurer is elected annually by the session. [G-10.0401] Pg _____
-13. The full text of a financial committee's (or auditor's) report of the previous year's financial review is recorded annually in the minutes. [G-10.401d] Pg _____
-14. Session reviews in person the adequacy of the pastor(s)' compensation with the pastor(s) BEFORE DECEMBER 31 and prior to the adoption of the church budget. [G-14.0506, G-7.0302, G-10.0102m] Pg _____
-15. The complete annual budget is established and adopted by the session, and reported to the congregation. [G-10.0102i] Pg _____
-16. Study leave is part of a pastor's compensation. Study leave plans for the pastor(s) are approved by the session and reported to the session after they are taken [G-14.0506, PSF Guidelines 01/27/81] Pg _____
-17. A schedule of dates and times for observance of the Lord's Supper, is approved by session. Public notice (if not observed weekly) is given for each observance. Pg _____
The date of each observance (not less than quarterly) is reported. [W-3.3609] Pg _____
Persons serving communion, if not ordained officers, are approved by session. [W-3.3616d] Pg _____
Dates of communion served to shut-ins, with name of persons who served, are reported separately. [W-2.4010] Pg _____
-18. A joint meeting of the session and board of deacons is held annually. [G-6.0405] Pg _____

ITEMS TO BE RECORDED ANNUALLY OR PERIODICALLY IN SESSION MINUTES

-19. Commissioners (and alternates) to meetings of presbytery for a specified time are recorded; reports from these representatives are made to session after each presbytery meeting. [G-10.0102o(1)] Pg _____
Pg _____
Pg _____
-20. The following rolls and registers are maintained [G-5.0200, G-10-0302]
- Baptized Members Roll, Active Members Roll, Inactive Members Roll and Affiliate Members Roll _____
- Pastors Register, Marriages Register, Children's Baptisms Register, Adult Baptisms Register, Elders Register, Deacons Register, Trustees (if any) Register _____
-21 All additions or deletions from the rolls and registers are approved by session, recorded in session minutes and entered in the rolls and registers. [G-10.0302a] Pg _____
- The minutes reflect that the roll of members has been reviewed at least annually and that information in the minutes for the register has been placed in the session register to this date. Pg _____
-22. The record indicates that the Annual Statistical Report has been completed and submitted electronically to General Assembly, and a summary was recorded in session minutes. Pg _____
-23. The session has designated responsibility for observing Cal OSHA standards to the _____ committee. [California law] Pg _____
-24. The session has designated responsibility for personnel to the _____ committee. [GA recommendation] Pg _____

ITEMS INCLUDED IN SESSION MINUTES WHEN APPLICABLE

If these items are not applicable to your congregation this year, mark N/A in space for page number.

-25. The record indicates that written concurrence by the Presbytery was secured before any sale, acquisition with loan, or leasing of real property. [G-8.0500] Pg _____

-26. Administrative Commissions of session are made up of at least two elders and the moderator of session or an installed minister of the Word and Sacrament. [G-9.0503a(5), G-9.0504] Pg _____

-27. Any disciplinary action(s) taken by the session is (are) properly recorded. Pg _____

-28. The session received concurrence of presbytery in securing an interim pastor, interim associate pastor, or temporary supply. [G-14.513b,c,d] Pg _____

-29. The procedure for calling a new pastor in accordance with the Book of Order included conferring with the presbytery Committee on Ministry. [G-14.0502] Pg _____

-30. The position description for a new pastor, and for any other new employee approved by the session, is included in full in the session minutes or is made an appendix to the minutes, and/or is contained in the manual of administrative operations. The minutes show that equal opportunity guidelines are observed. Pg _____

-31. The session received presbytery approval for appointment of a parish associate. [G-14.0515b] Pg _____

-32. The session consults with prospective inquirers and then makes recommendations to the presbytery. [G-14.0301, G-14.0302, G-14.0303b] Pg _____
Pg _____

-33. The session consults with inquirers and then makes recommendations to the presbytery. [G-14-1315b] Pg _____
Pg _____

-34. The session appoints a liaison person between the inquirer or candidate and presbytery. [G-14-0306b] Pg _____
Pg _____

-35. The session receives and reviews reports of consultations with inquirers and candidates. Pg _____
Pg _____

MEETINGS OF THE CONGREGATION

Minutes for the Annual Meeting of the Congregation begin on Page _____.
Minutes for the Election Meeting of the Congregation begin on Page _____.

-36. Pastor is moderator, or an alternate is selected in accordance with G-7.0306 Pg _____
-37. The annual and all special (called) meetings are properly called (public notice on two successive Sundays). The exact purpose of any special (called) congregational meeting is stated, and no other business may be transacted at that special meeting. [G-7.0302, G-7.0303] Pg _____
-38. A quorum of those eligible to vote is present (at least one-tenth of the membership), and the meeting is opened with prayer. [G-7.0305, G-9-0301b] Pg _____
-39. If there is a ballot vote on a particular issue, the number for and against is recorded. Pg _____
-40. Annually, session receives reports from all organizations, including financial reports. All organizations reporting are listed, together with a summary of their reports. The Clerk of Session may be asked to prepare this summary report, and it may be distributed or made available at the annual meeting of the congregation. [G-6.0404, D-3.0100a] Pg _____
-41. The budget (as previously approved by session) is presented at the annual meeting for information. The compensation for each pastor (as previously approved by session is individually approved by the congregation. [G-7.0302, G-7.0304, G-10.0102n, G-14.0506] Pg _____
-42. The nominating committee is properly constituted giving fair representation to persons of all age groups and of all racial ethnic members and persons with disabilities who are members of that congregations [G-14.0200 2b] and elected annually and presents candidates for the office of elder, deacon, and nominating committee according to constitutional requirements. Nominations from the floor are requested for offices of elder, deacon, and nominating committee. [G-14.0201b, G-14.0204b, G-9.0104] Pg _____
-43. The minutes show the names of elders, deacons, trustees and/or members of the nominating committee elected, indicating those officers who are to be ordained and/or installed. [G-14.0201, G-14.0204b, G-9.0104] Pg _____
-44. Minutes are attested by the moderator and the secretary of the meeting (usually the Clerk of Session), approved by session, and entered into the Minute book of the session. [G-7.0307, G-10.0301] Pg _____
-45. The meeting is closed with prayer. [G-9.0301b] Pg _____