

# INDEX

|                                                                            |    |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 24-A — F-1.0403 .....                                                      | 4  |
| 24-B — G-1.0104 .....                                                      | 7  |
| 24-C — G-2.0104b .....                                                     | 9  |
| 24-D — G-2.0504b .....                                                     | 13 |
| 24-E — G-2.0504b .....                                                     | 14 |
| 24-F — G-2.0610 .....                                                      | 17 |
| 24-G — G2.0901 .....                                                       | 20 |
| 24-H — G-3.0106 .....                                                      | 23 |
| 24-I — G-3.0302d .....                                                     | 25 |
| 24-J — G-3.0501 .....                                                      | 27 |
| 24-K — D-7.0501 .....                                                      | 29 |
| 24-L — D-7.0902b .....                                                     | 31 |
| 24-M Episcopal-Presbyterian Agreement on Local Sharing of Ministries ..... | 34 |

Copyright © 2024  
by the Office of the General Assembly  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

*PC(USA) presbyteries may print copies of this publication without prior permission from the publisher.*

## 24-A — F-1.0403

### OPENESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

#### F-1.0403 UNITY IN DIVERSITY (POL-01 1)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall F-1.0403 in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity be amended as follows?  
(Deleted text is in ~~striketrough~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **“F-1.0403 Unity in Diversity ...**

**The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, *gender identity, sexual orientation*, disability, geography, or theological conviction. There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership. No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.**

#### **Background and Rationale**

...While affirming the freedom of councils of the church to make ordination decisions as guided by the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge that the Church has been called upon historically to be ever more faithful to the most inclusive and affirming statements of Scripture and promptings of the Holy Spirit...

We feel that the Spirit is working in the churches concerning this matter. The 223rd General Assembly (2018) approved the following resolution.

1. *Celebrating the expansive embrace of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the breadth of our mission to serve a world in need, the 223rd General Assembly (2018) affirms the gifts of LGBTQIA+ people for ministry and celebrates their service in the church and in the world...*
5. *The assembly also gives thanks for those who continue to seek deeper understanding, and more authentic welcome, even amid discomfort or uncertainty about how best to show hospitality, in the spirit of continuing Reformation...*
10. *The assembly encourages all congregations and councils of the PC(USA) continually to seek to expand their welcome so that all might know the Good News of Jesus Christ and encourages all other communions to do the same.*

We follow this encouragement by urging that gender identity and sexual orientation be established as protected classes against which we must not discriminate.

#### **Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

We believe the witness of Scripture and the Constitution testifies to the full inclusion of persons as members of the Church (universal), as noted not only in F-1.0403 but also reiterated in G-1.0302 regarding the church particular: “No person shall be denied membership for any reason not related to profession of faith” (see also the “Confession of Belhar,” *The Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.): Part I The Book of Confession* (2016), 10.3). A positive affirmation of this principle through constitutional amendment is consistent with this witness.

#### **Comment – From the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force**

At the 223rd General Assembly (2018), the Assembly approved item 11-13 “On Celebrating the Gifts of People of Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities in the Life of the Church.” This statement affirmed the faithful presence and service of LGBTQIA+ folks in the PC(USA). This is one of many overtures passed at past General Assemblies (dating to at least the 221nd General Assembly in 2014) in support of LGBTQIA+ people in the church and around the world.

Thus the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Committee advises the Assembly to continue to embody this commitment by stating explicitly in our Foundations that, alongside “race, ethnicity, age, sex, [etc.],” sexual orientation and gender identity are similarly fundamental dimensions of personhood that shall not be used as barriers from membership in the Church universal or participation in the “worship, governance, and emerging life” of PC(USA) churches.

#### **Advice and Counsel – From the Advocacy Committee for Women and Gender Justice (ACWGJ)**

F-1.0403 outlines the principles of unity in diversity, citing Gal. 3:27-29 as the guiding scriptural basis for these principles. ACWGJ reads Gal. 3:27-29 alongside Col. 1:16-17. The diversity in which we are united is not only plentiful but also specifically flows from God. As a result, affirming these diverse identities with language that closer estimates the depths of human experience in the Foundations of Presbyterian Polity allows us to stand firmly in our Reformed Tradition. Only when we explicitly affirm the theological, ecclesial, and biblical foundations of openness and welcome to individuals with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities can we proclaim the “good news” Gospel truth.

#### **Advice and Counsel – From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

We acknowledge the historic role that the church has occupied, both as the oppressor and as advocate. We acknowledge that there is still much work to do in fostering healing with our siblings who have been harmed by the church. Echoing the 223rd General Assembly (2018), we celebrate the faithful, loving, and courageous Gospel witness of LGBTQIA+ persons. Our church is enriched, made vibrant and vital by the contributions of LGBTQIA+ people and they ought to be

afforded the same constitutional protections that have been extended to those on the basis of race, ethnicity, gender, age, ability, location, and theological conviction.

#### **Advice and Counsel – From the Racial Equity Advocacy Committee (REAC)**

REAC notes that the PC(USA) has already take the step in accepting “On Celebrating the Gifts of People of Diverse Sexual Orientations and Gender Identities in the Life of the Church.” At the 223rd General Assembly in St. Louis in June 2018, the PC(USA) voted unanimously to pass three significant overtures related to LGBTQ+ inclusion. Therefore, in approving POL-01, the PC(USA) cements and demonstrates the denomination’s commitment to inclusivity and its Matthew 25 platform, which sends a resounding message of acceptance across the denomination.

#### **Comment – From the General Assembly Committee on Representation (GACOR)**

GACOR will primarily direct its comments toward Part 1 (proposing changes to F-1.0403) from which section of the *Book of Order* GACOR receives its primary mandate and focus. GACOR has already been studying the impact of gender identity and sexual orientation on equity and representation within the structures, systems, and leadership of the PC(USA). Approval of this item, however, would greatly increase the capacity of GACOR to invite the wider church to include ways to collect data and understand the ways the diversity already among us impacts how we live and move together as the Church in terms of process and norms. This change also, foundationally, acknowledges the multiplicity of leaders and members led by the Spirit to serve and take part in the life of the Church (Joel 2:28-29/Acts 2:17-18).

---

The Assembly Committee on Polity approved Item POL-01 1, 35/3. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-01 1, 389/24.

For the full report on POL-01, go to  
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001122>

## 24-C — G-2.0104b

### ORDERED MINISTRIES OF THE CHURCH

#### G-2.0104b GIFTS AND QUALIFICATIONS (POL-01 2)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-2.0104b be amended as follows:**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike~~through; added text is in *italics*.)

**b. Standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry. The examination shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the candidate's ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.0404), *the Historic Principles of Church Order (F-3.01)*, and *in the principles of participation and representation found in F-1.0403*. Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.**

#### Background and Rationale

...While affirming the freedom of councils of the church to make ordination decisions as guided by the Holy Spirit, we acknowledge that the Church has been called upon historically to be ever more faithful to the most inclusive and affirming statements of Scripture and promptings of the Holy Spirit...

We feel that the Spirit is working in the churches concerning this matter. The 223rd General Assembly (2018) approved the following resolution:

1. *Celebrating the expansive embrace of the gospel of Jesus Christ and the breadth of our mission to serve a world in need, the 223rd General Assembly (2018) affirms the gifts of LGBTQIA+ people for ministry and celebrates their service in the church and in the world...*
5. *The assembly also gives thanks for those who continue to seek deeper understanding, and more authentic welcome, even amid discomfort or uncertainty about how best to show hospitality, in the spirit of continuing Reformation...*
10. *The assembly encourages all congregations and councils of the PC(USA) continually to seek to expand their welcome so that all might know the Good News of Jesus Christ and encourages all other communions to do the same.*

We follow this encouragement by urging that gender identity and sexual orientation be established as protected classes against which we must not discriminate.

## **Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

Inserting the wording “and in the principles of participation, representation, and non-discrimination found in F-1.0403” into G-2.0104b adds a requirement for acknowledgment of F-1.0403 in the examination of all candidates for ordered ministry before ordination and/or installation.

Under the proposed amendment, a council is required to examine candidates to be ordained and/or installed, to

1. determine the candidate’s ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.0404), and
2. determine the candidate’s ability and attentiveness to fulfill the principles of participation, representation, and non-discrimination of church members found in F-1.0403 which pertains to
3. the foundational principles of unity in diversity of the Church (universal), and
4. the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), as a particular church, guaranteeing full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership, and no member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

The proposed amendment, in effect, would require the candidate to acknowledge, by some means, during the examination, what F-1.0403 states regarding the unity in diversity of the Church universal when it comes to non-discrimination, and church particular when it comes to participation and representation related to membership in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.).

The Authoritative Interpretation of the General Assembly (1987, 151, 15.252, Com. 17-87) states that the determination for church membership is different from the determination for ordination and/or installation to the ordered ministries of deacon, ruling elder, and minister of Word and Sacrament. Furthermore, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission in 1985 determined that the right to elect deacons, ruling elders, and ministers of Word and Sacrament is not absolute but is bound by the constitutional framework of the larger church (Minutes, 1985, Part I, pp. 118--23, Union Presbyterian Church of Blasdell, New York, et al. vs. The Presbytery of Western New York).

When a council is prayerfully discerning and examining candidates to be ordained and/or installed, the council is required to act with due diligence on behalf of the whole church in accordance with the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). As stated in G-2.0104b, standards for ordained service reflect the church's desire to submit joyfully to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in all aspects of life (F-1.02). The council responsible for ordination and/or installation (G-2.0402; G-2.0607; G-3.0306) shall examine each candidate's calling, gifts, preparation, and suitability for the responsibilities of ordered ministry.... Councils shall be guided by Scripture and the confessions in applying standards to individual candidates.

Where membership within the greater church is to be inclusive, demonstrating unity in diversity, ordination and/or installation into an ordered ministry of the church does require candidates to determine their ability to uphold the Constitution and principles of Presbyterian polity.

In *Book of Order* G-2.0105, “in entering the ordered ministries of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), one chooses to exercise freedom of conscience within certain bounds. His or her conscience is captive to the Word of God as interpreted in the standards of the church so long as he or she continues to seek, or serve in, ordered ministry. The decision as to whether a person has departed from essentials of Reformed faith and polity is made initially by the individual concerned but ultimately becomes the responsibility of the council in which he or she is a member” or to become a member (i.e. a session or a presbytery).

The current examination standards already require a candidate to affirm W-4.0404e, to be governed by our church’s polity and to abide by its discipline. Adding the proposed language to the examination requirements is redundant.

### **Comment – From the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Task Force**

The heart of this proposal intends for emerging teaching elders, ruling elders and deacons to make explicit their intention, as part of the preparation/examination process for ordination (prior to an ordination service), not to discriminate in the course of their service based on identity markers named in F-1.0403. The committee believes that every person in the church has a right to be treated with equality, fairness and dignity.

On one hand, this proposed measure may be seen as a redundancy since the constitutional questions for ordination already articulate a commitment “to be governed by our church’s polity,” which, obviously, includes the current version of F-1.0403. On the other hand, this commitment has not, in practice, preserved ordained individuals from discriminatory behavior in the course of their service based on race, age, sex, etc. Also, this overture refers to the examination process and therefore neither requests nor requires a change to the constitutional questions.

Thus the LGBTQIA+ Advocacy Committee calls upon the Assembly to continue to support ordained individuals in keeping their ordination vows by making explicit in the preparation/examination process a determination of the candidate’s “ability and commitment to fulfill all requirements as expressed in the constitutional questions for ordination and installation (W-4.0404)” – “the principles of participation, representation and non-discrimination,” [*Proposed addition to G-2.0104b*]. We also believe the changes to G-20104b are the action to the sentiments expressed in F-1.0403 and therefore they should not be separated into two amendments.

This assessment does not require uniformity of thought or conviction – only a commitment not to disrupt or block other individuals from living into their callings based on the identity markers named in F-1.0403. We not only support this regarding LGBTQIA+ identities, but also in regard to the other identities listed in F-1.0403 (all of which can and do intersect with LGBTQIA+ identities). People with a variety of identities and convictions exist in the church, are baptized in the name of the Lord, and are called to lay and ordained ministry, and all should be able to exist and serve in the church without discrimination or disruption.

### **Advice and Counsel – From the Advocacy Committee for Women and Gender Justice (ACWGJ)**

The Advocacy Committee for Women and Gender Justice advises that the 226th General Assembly (2024) **approve** POL-01 2.

Since the original overture addresses changes to two parts of the Book of Order, ACWGJ looks at the two parts separately, in light of advice from the Advisory Committee on the Constitution. Ordination already calls us to uphold our commitment “to be governed by our denomination’s polity.” G-2.0104b explicitly names our baptismal call to include welcome and openness as named in 1 Cor. 12: 12-13. As a community of disciples who seek to embody the Gospel of Jesus Christ, asking those preparing for ordination to name their baptismal call with specific detail allows us to work towards the Great Ends of the Church together. Only by being explicit in this way can we stand for justice, rising up against the wicked and standing for God against evildoers (Psalm 94:16). Vague affirmation, like silence, only perpetuates the pain inflicted on our siblings in Christ when their experiences are not recognized as part of the Body of Christ. Naming our belief in participation, representation, and non-discrimination is not only important, it is precedent.

Finally, ACWGJ affirms the work of our siblings on the LGBTQIA+ Equity Advocacy Committee to specifically advocate for individuals with diverse sexual orientations and gender identities before the Assembly.

---

The Assembly Committee on Polity approved Item POL-01 2, 28/10. The 226th General Assembly (2024) amended and approved Item POL-01 2, 297/130.

For the full report on POL-01 02, go to <https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001122>

For the video of the GA Plenary 10 discussion on POL 01 2 go to <https://ga-pcusa.org/videos/>

## 24-H — G-3.0106

### GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF COUNCILS

#### G-3.0106 ADMINISTRATION OF MISSION (POL-11)

**The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

**Shall the fourth paragraph of G-3.0106 be amended as follows:**

**All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child, *and youth, and adults with vulnerabilities* protection policy, and an antiracism policy. Each council's policy shall include requirements for boundary training which includes the topic of sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training for its members at least every thirty-six months.**

#### **Background and Rationale**

This amendment builds upon the important work carried out by previous assemblies to provide for institutional protections for at-risk populations within our congregations and councils. Specifically, this amendment would create a constitutional mandate for all councils of the church to include vulnerable adults in our protection policies. The amended language fosters a deeper sense of accountability. By explicitly mentioning "vulnerable adults," we acknowledge our responsibility to protect those who may be at risk due to various factors. This enhancement to the policy framework demonstrates our dedication to a comprehensive approach in upholding the highest standards of ethical conduct. Inclusion is a key value of our faith community. By extending the protection of policies to vulnerable adults, we reaffirm our commitment to inclusivity, compassion, and justice. This addition reflects our core values and emphasizes our mission to create a community that embraces and protects every member.

#### **Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises the 226th General Assembly (2024) to approve item POL-11.

Item POL-11 seeks to amend G-3.0106 by expanding the list of required protection policies to include protection for vulnerable adults. The Advisory Committee on the Constitution advises that the Constitution is not intended to serve as a Manual of Operations. Generally, the Advisory Committee on the Constitution would advocate against the creation or expansion of lists. However, because a list is deemed exhaustive unless it states otherwise, an omission is regarded as

exclusionary, not permissive. Therefore, adding “vulnerable adults” to the list of those to be protected furthers the goal of G-3.0106 to provide protection to those in need.

The Advisory Committee on the Constitution notes, however, that the definition of “vulnerable adult” varies by legal jurisdiction. It will be necessary for councils to consult their local legal requirements in developing their policies.

#### **Advice and Counsel – From the Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP)**

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) advises that the 226th General Assembly (2024) approve POL-11 with amendment. On this overture, ACSWP recommends the following amendment:

... “All councils shall adopt and implement the following policies: a sexual misconduct policy, a harassment policy, a child[,] [and] youth[, and adults lacking mental capacity vulnerable adult] protection policy, and an antiracism policy...”

This language is consistent with other references in the *Book of Order*.

---

The Assembly Committee on Polity amended the original recommendation then approved Item POL-11, 37/1. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item POL-11, 403/1.

For the full report on POL 11, go to  
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001131>

## 24-I — G-3.0302d

### THE PRESBYTERY

#### G-3.0302d RELATIONSHIPS WITH SYNOD AND GENERAL ASSEMBLY (GAP-05)

The 226th General Assembly (2024) directed the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

**Shall G-3.0302 in the Form of Government be amended as follows?**

(Deleted text is in ~~strike through~~; added text is in *italics*.)

#### **G-3.0302 Relations with Synod and General Assembly**

**d. proposing to synod such measures as may be of common concern to the mission of the church, and/or proposing to General Assembly overtures that have received a concurrence from at least one other presbytery, and/or concurring with proposed overtures, and**

#### **Background and Rationale**

The requirement for every overture from a presbytery to have at least one concurrence was designed to ensure that the business coming before the General Assembly was supported by at least two presbyteries. In practice, this requirement has created confusion within the deadlines for the submission of business, a flurry of activity among presbyteries seeking to have at least one concurrence, and the rise of at least one presbytery consistently voting to concur with all of the overtures. In short, this requirement has created more difficulties while not solving the stated problem.

In addition, we seek in our polity and in our constitution to honor voices from the margins of the church and society, recognizing that the call to justice and faithfulness is often a difficult call to hear from within the center. The requirement for a concurrence can create a barrier that further marginalizes the very voices we need to hear. By eliminating the need for a concurrence, while allowing for that practice to continue as a way of showing broad support, we seek to remove an unnecessary barrier to the work of the General Assembly.

#### **Advice – From the Advisory Committee on the Constitution (ACC)**

The request seeks to amend section G-3.0302d regarding the delineated responsibilities of a presbytery in maintaining regular and continuing relationships with the General Assembly as it relates to proposing overtures to the General Assembly. The proposed amendment would overturn the 2012 amendment to the Constitution which requires proposed overtures to the General Assembly to receive concurrence from at least one other presbytery (see 220th General Assembly Minutes, 2012, 72-72, 241, Item 04-01, Rec. 3). The 2012 amendment on concurrences, as proposed by the Committee to Review Biennial Assemblies and stated in its report, was to

“improve collaboration among presbyteries, assure that the business before it is both of common concern to the mission of the church (G-3.0302(d)) and about key issues facing the church and society, and to encourage well-considered, significant overtures and resolutions of church-wide significance.”

The rationale for this proposed amendment from the General Assembly’s Standing Committee on Standing Rules states that the concurrence requirement:

has created confusion within the deadlines for the submission of business, a flurry of activity among presbyteries seeking to have at least one concurrence, and the rise of at least one presbytery consistently voting to concur with all of the overtures. In short, this requirement has created more difficulties while not solving the stated problem. . . . The requirement for a concurrence can create a barrier that further marginalizes the very voices we need to hear. By eliminating the need for a concurrence, while allowing for that practice to continue as a way of showing broad support, we seek to remove an unnecessary barrier to the work of the General Assembly.

Amendments to the Constitution are intended to be part of the process of “the church reformed, always to be reforming.” (G-6.01). As such, a process for amendment that is not serving its intended purpose, is creating undue burdens on presbyters and mid council staff, and, indeed, may be presenting barriers to such reformation should be eliminated. While the amendment would remove the requirement for a concurrence, it still permits concurrences to show support.

---

The Assembly Committee on General Assembly Procedures approved Item GAP-05, 36/0. The 226th General Assembly (2024) approved Item GAP-05, 390/14.

For the full report on GAP-05, go to  
<https://www.pc-biz.org/search/3001247>