

**Committee on Ministerial Vocation**

**Standing Committee Report  
39<sup>th</sup> General Assembly**

The Standing Committee on Ministerial Vocation convened at 3:25 p.m. on Thursday, June 20, 2019 and met once. Chairman RE Joe Slesinski opened the meeting with prayer.

**A. Business Referred to Committee:**

1. **Recommendation GA39-09**
2. **Recommendation GA39-10**
3. **Minutes** of the MVC Permanent Committee
4. **Minutes** of the Chaplains Work and Care Committee

**B. Recommendations:**

1. **Recommendation GA39-09:** The Presbytery of the Pacific Northwest **overtures** the 39<sup>th</sup> General Assembly to amend **G. 11-2C**, which addresses the examination of candidates for ordination.

<b>Current G. 11-2C</b>	<b>Proposed G. 11-2C Amendment</b> Additions in <i>bold italics</i>
The Presbytery shall make public examination of the Candidate as to Christian experience and growth, the motive for seeking ordination, and a statement regarding the person’s call to the Ministry.	The Presbytery shall make public examination of the Candidate as to Christian experience and growth, the motive for seeking ordination <i>by a Presbytery of the EPC</i> , and a statement regarding the person’s call to the Ministry.

*Rationale:*

**Whereas** a Candidate for ordination is expected to experience both an “inward call” to the ministry per se as well as an external call to a specific church or agency [BoG 10-1], and

**Whereas** there are many Christian churches and agencies with a wide range of theology and polity who offer such calls, and

**Whereas** some who come seeking ordination in the EPC have been previously ordained in non-reformed bodies or unaffiliated churches, and

**Whereas** even within the bodies of churches and agencies that call themselves Presbyterian and reformed there are significant differences of belief and practice;

**Therefore**, it is necessary that the presbytery, when considering a candidate to come under its care to prepare for ministry in a church or agency of the Evangelical

Presbyterian Church, carefully consider the candidate’s motivation to not only be an ordained Teaching Elder, but also to be a part of the EPC.

The Standing Committee on Ministerial Vocation Committee recommends that Recommendation 39-09 **be approved as submitted.**

- 2. Recommendation GA39-10:** The National Leadership Team recommends that the 39<sup>th</sup> General Assembly approve an amendment to *Book of Government* 9-5 that would make explicit that the office of “co-pastor” is not constitutional.

<b>Current G. 9-5 A. 1.</b>	<b>Proposed G. 9-5 A. 1. Amendment</b> Additions in <b><i>bold italics</i></b>
<p>Within the office of Teaching Elder there are a variety of callings that require ordination. God distributes to each gifts according to the common needs of the Church. These include:</p> <p>A. Pastor</p> <p>1. Titles</p> <p>A Teaching Elder may be called by a congregation to be a Pastor or Associate Pastor. Sessions may call a Teaching Elder as Assistant Pastor, Transitional Pastor, or invite a Teaching Elder as Stated Supply Pastor, or Occasional Supply Pastor. Presbytery must approve all such positions. These are the only recognized callings for Teaching Elders in a congregational setting.</p>	<p>Within the office of Teaching Elder there are a variety of callings that require ordination. God distributes to each gifts according to the common needs of the Church. These include:</p> <p>A. Pastor</p> <p>1. Titles</p> <p>A Teaching Elder may be called by a congregation to be a Pastor or Associate Pastor. Sessions may call a Teaching Elder as Assistant Pastor, Transitional Pastor, or invite a Teaching Elder as Stated Supply Pastor, or Occasional Supply Pastor. Presbytery must approve all such positions. These are the only recognized callings for Teaching Elders in a congregational setting. <b><i>The office of the “Co-pastor” is not a constitutionally recognized calling in a local church. Except as otherwise provided in the Book of Government, the Pastor of the church shall be the Moderator of Session.</i></b></p>

**Rationale:**

Background / Justification for NLT-proposed amendment

The Fifth General Assembly (1985) “sustained the Permanent Judicial Commission’s opinion regarding the office of co-pastor as being non-existent. Relationships between

Teaching Elders and EPC congregations sanctioned by the *Book of Government* are those of Pastor, Associate Pastor and Assistant Pastor” (**Minutes, 5-40**).

The position of the EPC since this 1985 action has remained unchanged.

The reason for the proposed amendment to the *Book of Government* is that churches that have come to the EPC recently have questioned the constitutionality of the prohibition. It has been argued that its “not explicit in the *Book of Government* that co-pastor is prohibited.” This amendment would explicitly declare in the *Book of Government* the position of the EPC since 1985.

The Standing Committee on Ministerial Vocation Committee recommends that Recommendation 39-10 **be adopted as amended above**.

3. That the **Minutes** of the MVC Permanent Committee dated September 11-13, 2018, November 01, 2018, January 16, 2019, March 12-13, 2019, March 28, 2019, April 24, 2019, and May 8, 2019 **be approved with minor notations**.
4. That the **Minutes** of the Chaplains Work and Care Committee dated July 23, 2018, August 24, 2018, October 22-23, 2018, February 4, 2019, March 4-5, 2019, May 2, 2019, and May 10, 2019 **be approved with minor notations**.

**C. Additional Recommendations from the Standing Committee:**

1. Per *Rules for Assembly* 9-6, the Committee voted to place the following eligible recommendation(s) on an omnibus consent motion:

*[NOTE: a recommendation amended by the Standing Committee, substitute recommendation or additional recommendation in C.2 are not eligible for the omnibus consent motion.]*

**Minutes** of the MVC Permanent Committee

**Minutes** of the CWCC Permanent Committee

2. *(Enter any other recommendations here.)*

The Standing Committee commends the members of the Permanent Committee on Ministerial Vocation for their good work during the past year.

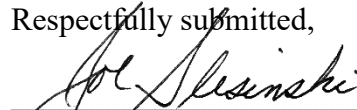
RE Joe Slesinski closed the meeting with prayer.


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*Signature Page for Standing Committee Ministerial Vocation Report*

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Respectfully submitted,

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Chairman  
RE Joe Slesinski

  
\_\_\_\_\_, Clerk  
TE Suzanne Zampella