

Committee on Theology

Standing Committee Report 41st General Assembly

The Standing Committee on Theology convened at 3:30 p.m. on Thursday, June 24, 2021, and met once. *TE Paul Bammel* opened the meeting with prayer.

A. Business Referred to Committee:

1. Recommendation GA41-10
2. Recommendation GA41-11
3. Recommendation GA41-12
4. Recommendation GA41-13
5. Recommendation GA41-14
6. Recommendation GA41-15
7. Recommendation GA41-16
8. Recommendation GA41-31
9. Minutes of the Permanent Committee

B. Recommendations:

1. **Recommendation GA41-10**, from the Theology Committee, that the 41st General Assembly approve withdrawing approval from Bethany Christian Services as an approved agency of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church **be adopted**.
2. **Recommendation GA41-11**, from the Theology Committee, that the 41st General Assembly approve the amendment to *Book of Government* 19-4.C.1 **be adopted**.

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 19-4.C.1	Proposed <i>Book of Government</i> 19-4.C.1 <i>Amendments in bold italics</i>
1. To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to create agencies for education, the orphaned, the aged, and other suitable activities.	1. To work with other Presbyteries and the General Assembly to create agencies for education, <i>identify resources for ministry to and inclusion of</i> the orphaned, the aged, and <i>the disabled.</i> other suitable activities.

3. **Recommendation GA41-12**, from the Theology Committee, that the 41st General Assembly approve the amendment to *Book of Government* 20-4A.3 **be adopted**.

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 20-4.A.3	Current <i>Book of Government</i> 20-4.A.3 <i>Amendment in bold italics</i>
3. To create separately or in conjunction	3. To create <i>identify</i> separately or in

with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole church.	Conjunction with the Presbyteries those agencies or institutions needed for education or other purposes that would enhance the life and ministry of the whole church.
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4. Recommendation GA41-13, from the Theology Committee, that the 41st General Assembly approve the amendment to *Book of Worship 7-5* **be adopted**.

Current <i>Book of Worship 7-5</i>	Current <i>Book of Worship 7-5</i> <i>Amendments in bold italics</i>
The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor. The Session shall be responsible for establishing these ministries within the congregation, and into the community. The service of compassion to those in adversity shall include such places as hospitals, retirement homes, convalescent homes, children’s homes, prisons and other public institutions. The higher courts of the Church shall seek to show compassion in these areas, including the establishment of institutions, both at home and abroad, for the care of various needs.	The New Testament describes the concern and compassion of Christ for the conditions of people. The Church shall emulate its Head by showing special concern for the sick, the sorrowing, the hungry, and the poor. The Session shall be responsible for establishing these ministries within the congregation, and into the community. The service of compassion to those in adversity shall include such places as hospitals, retirement homes, convalescent homes, children’s homes, prisons and other public institutions. The higher courts of the <i>Church shall seek to show compassion in these areas, including the establishment of institutions, both at home and abroad, for the care of various needs.</i>

5. Recommendation GA41-14, from the Theology Committee, that the 41st General Assembly receive the report of the committee concerning the terms “connectional” and “connectionalism” as understood by the EPC **be adopted**.

[See Connectional Definition](#)

6. **Recommendation GA41-15**, from the Chaplains Work and Care Committee, that the 41st General Assembly approve the amendments to *Book of Government* 9-5E and *Book of Worship* 3-1A **be adopted**

Current <i>Book of Government</i> 9-5E	Proposed <i>Book of Government</i> 9-5E Amendments in bold italics.
E. Chaplain A court of the church, a hospital, the military, institutions, universities, or other appropriate fields of service may call a Teaching Elder as Chaplain if the Presbytery deems it appropriate. In such cases, the Chaplain shall always have as a primary responsibility the sharing of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ. The Presbytery may authorize the Chaplain to administer the sacraments in that role.	E. Chaplain A court of the church, a hospital, the military, institutions, universities, or other appropriate fields of service may call a Teaching Elder as Chaplain if the Presbytery deems it appropriate. In such cases, the Chaplain shall always have as a primary responsibility the sharing of the Good News of God in Jesus Christ. <i>The Presbytery may authorize the Chaplain to administer the sacraments in that role.</i>

Current <i>Book of Worship</i> 3-1A	Proposed <i>Book of Worship</i> 3-1A Amendment in bold italics.
3-1 A A. Administration of sacraments Ordinarily, only a lawfully ordained Minister ²⁸² may administer the sacraments...	3-1 A A. Administration of sacraments Ordinarily, only a lawfully ordained Minister ²⁸² may administer the sacraments...

282 A 'lawfully ordained minister' includes EPC Chaplains who are called to serve in a military or civilian organization, have been approved by their Presbytery, and have been endorsed by the General Assembly. Also, a lawfully ordained minister in good standing of a non-EPC church may be authorized to serve communion in an EPC Church, with the concurrence of the Presbytery (Acts of Assembly 94-22 and 14-06) See also Westminster Confession of Faith 27-4.

7. **Recommendation GA41-16: (withdrawn from the Chaplains Work and Care Committee).**
8. **Recommendation GA41-31**, that the General Assembly refer the Permanent Theology Committee for study and exploration the matter of virtual communion in the EPC with regard to our constitution and practice and to report to the 42nd General Assembly with any possible recommendations **be adopted**.

9. The **Minutes** of the Permanent Committee dated September 11-12, 2019, October 30, 2019, November 3, 2020, December 10, 2020, and January 14, 2021 have been reviewed and approved.

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.]

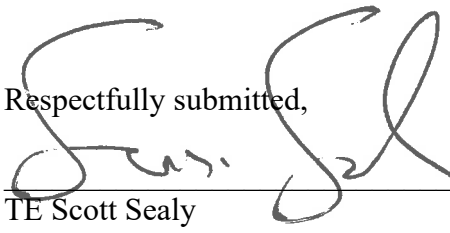
Recommendation GA41-31

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

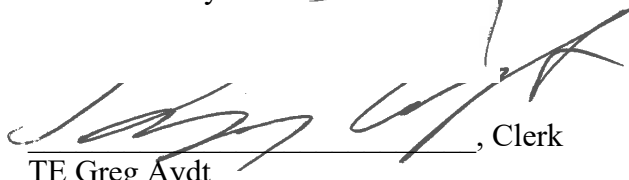
TE Scott Sealy closed the meeting with prayer.

Signature Page for Standing Committee on Theology Report

Respectfully submitted,


TE Scott Sealy

Chairman


TE Greg Aydt

Clerk