

**44-27** (to the Ministerial Vocation Standing Committee)  
**From the Ministerial Vocation Committee**

The MVC recommends that the 44<sup>th</sup> General Assembly **APPROVE** amending the *Book of Government* sections 9-5E and 9-11 concerning Chaplain’s endorsements.

Current <b>G. 9-5E</b>	Proposed Changes for <b>G. 9-5E</b> Changes in <i>bold italics</i>
<p><b>G.9.5E</b></p> <p>Chaplain</p> <p>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.</p>	<p><b>G.9.5E</b></p> <p>Chaplain</p> <p>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>All Teaching Elders serving as Chaplains for institutions requiring Ecclesiastical Endorsement shall be endorsed through the Chaplains Work and Care Committee. Chaplains serving Institutions that do not require Endorsement should normally be endorsed to certify being fully qualified to serve in this specialized ministry.</i></p> <p>(See Rules for Assembly X.10-1 I)</p>

**Rationale:** This recommendation would place the process for EPC endorsement of Military Chaplains (currently found only in *Rules for Assembly X. 10-1 I.3*) within **G. 9-5E** and applies the process to non-military chaplaincy positions that require Ecclesiastical Endorsement. The addition of section C to **G.9-11** provides a means of Ecclesiastical Endorsement for Commissioned Pastors as well.



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Current G. 9-11	Proposed Changes for G. 9-11 Changes in <i>bold italics</i>
<p><b>G.9-11</b></p> <p><b>The Ruling Elder as a Commissioned Pastor</b></p> <p>A Ruling Elder may be temporarily authorized by Presbytery as a Commissioned Pastor for a congregation without a Pastor to preach the Word, evangelize, moderate a Session, administer the sacraments, perform marriages (if civil law allows), preside at funerals, and provide pastoral care. Presbyteries may also approve and give appropriate powers to a Ruling Elder to serve as a Commissioned Pastor in mission churches, church planting and church revitalization works, or in chaplaincy positions in hospitals, hospices, prisons, or other institutions.</p> <p><b>A.</b> Authorization shall be for a term up to three years and may be renewed. Such authorization shall specify those powers granted and shall stipulate in which church(es) or ministry contexts those powers are authorized. Such powers shall be exercised only in those contexts.</p> <p><b>B.</b> Potential Commissioned Pastors shall be examined by Presbytery and found to have sufficient knowledge in the areas in which they will be serving.</p>	<p><b>G.9-11</b></p> <p><b>The Ruling Elder as a Commissioned Pastor</b></p> <p>A Ruling Elder may be temporarily authorized by Presbytery as a Commissioned Pastor for a congregation without a Pastor to preach the Word, evangelize, moderate a Session, administer the sacraments, perform marriages (if civil law allows), preside at funerals, and provide pastoral care. Presbyteries may also approve and give appropriate powers to a Ruling Elder to serve as a Commissioned Pastor in mission churches, church planting and church revitalization works, or in chaplaincy positions in hospitals, hospices, prisons, or other institutions.</p> <p><b>A.</b> Authorization shall be for a term up to three years and may be renewed. Such authorization shall specify those powers granted and shall stipulate in which church(es) or ministry contexts those powers are authorized. Such powers shall be exercised only in those contexts.</p> <p><b>B.</b> Potential Commissioned Pastors shall be examined by Presbytery and found to have sufficient knowledge in the areas in which they will be serving.</p> <p><b>C.</b> <i>Commissioned Pastors approved by their Presbytery to serve as a Chaplain for institutions requiring Ecclesiastical Endorsement shall be endorsed through the Chaplains Work and Care Committee. Chaplains serving Institutions that do not require Endorsement should normally be endorsed to certify being fully qualified to serve in this specialized ministry.</i> (see Rules for Assembly X.10-1 I) [subsequent paragraphs are to be renumbered accordingly]</p>



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