

# **MNA Church Planters Training Navigating Particularization**

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## MNA Church Planters Training

### Navigating Particularization

"Particularization" is a word only a Presbyterian could love. It describes the process of a church plant becoming a particular church of the PCA, with its own local session. As a one-time process that few pastors have ever experienced, knowing when and how to organize can be confusing. This seminar will help you navigate particularization by explaining the requirements, offering guidance, and providing resources for this important milestone.

#### 1. Introduction

- a. My background
- b. Organization 2009
- c. Overture in 2010

#### 2. The Soft Stuff

- a. Exciting time in life of church
- b. You've had "success" in planting, watering, growing
- c. Now "success" in electing session. Join ranks of churches going back to Paul, setting up elders in every church.
- d. Not just hoops to jump through, but time to celebrate what God has done, see members take full responsibility for church.
- e. Old, and yet new: you should be already functioning as a church, members should feel not a big deal; yet, this marks big stage in life of church.
- f. Shepherd members through process
  - i. Teach what becoming a church means; possible sermon series in pre-organization phase.
  - ii. Explain purpose and process of organization, without too much detail. Introducing them to how to be self-governing.
  - iii. Introduce them to PCA, connection to Presbytery.
- g. Shepherd the process
  - i. You are the point person to make sure each step takes place, in orderly fashion. Ride herd. Over-communicate. Need to confirm with:
    - 1. Temporary government
    - 2. MNA Committee
    - 3. Stated Clerk of Presbytery
  - ii. Thus, you need to be confident about the process. Thus, the goal:

#### 3. Goal of seminar:

- a. Walk you through the necessary steps of organization, to know the what, when and how the BCO requires. BCO intended to be checklist, but not exhaustive. Intentionally left as much open as possible.
- b. Provide insights and tips to make process smoother, so you have a healthy session that will set tone and pace for future sessions.
- c. Provide specific materials to make process easier.

## Church Organizing Process

Beginning a church can be likened to building a house. Ultimately, the Lord is the one who does the building, through his laborers (Psalm 127). For a physical house, there is the tangible construction visible to all, and a less noticeable closing that involves a formal transfer of ownership. In the same way, the tangible work of building a church body includes bringing together people with a common vision, and developing relationships and ministries. But there is also a less visible, formal process called “particularization,” or organization, when our church plant forms its own Session. This schedule outlines the formal process that transfers oversight to our church, at the Organization Service (OS).

Prior to OS	Key Events
6+ months	Organization process begins. Temporary government determines some members are potential officers and approves nomination process.
6+ months	Nominations open for declared time period, e.g. for one month
5+ months	Nominations closed
16+ weeks	Officer training begins
8+ weeks	Temporary government examines officer candidates
7+ weeks	Petition to organize available to members, e.g. for two Sundays
6+ weeks	Announce date, time and location of meeting to elect officers and pastor (BCO 24: 30+ days before congregational meeting)
6+ weeks	Petition sent to MNA Committee and Stated Clerk of Presbytery
6+ weeks	MNA Committee meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recommend Presbytery accept petition</li> <li>• Recommend slate for Organizing Commission</li> </ul>
4+ weeks	Presbytery Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Approve petition</li> <li>• Appoint organizing commission</li> <li>• Approve date and time of organization service</li> </ul>
2+ weeks	Congregational Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Elect officers</li> <li>• Approve call to organizing pastor to serve as pastor</li> </ul>
0 weeks	Organization Service <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Install officers; install pastor</li> </ul>

## Key Events

### 1. Organization process begins

#### **BCO 5-9 A new church can be organized only by the authority of Presbytery**

**BCO 5-9.a A Presbytery should establish standing rules setting forth the prerequisites that qualify a mission church to begin the organization process, e.g., the minimum number of petitioners and the level of financial support to be provided by the congregation. The number of officers sufficient to constitute the quorum for a session shall be necessary to complete the organization process.**

- Some presbyteries have developed benchmarks as to when organization can begin, which have been helpful to mission churches during an ambiguous time. Presbyteries are simply encouraged to develop their own guidelines.
- May be formal rules or informal guidelines.
- Each plant will have its own context, but if you depart from the following, should have good reason:
  - Minimum number of petitioners:
    - 50 petitioners is a reasonable guideline, as you may not be viable with fewer.
    - Need to be members, so it's important you've already been receiving members into the mission church.
  - Finances:
    - Self-supporting: when your mission work particularizes, outside support starts to dry up.
    - Hopefully, cash reserves of 3 months expenses
  - Self-governing:
    - BCO Quorum = 1 TE and 1 RE
    - Technically, only need one RE in addition to yourself
    - Don't start with only one RE. If he leaves, you're back at mission status. Need multiple shepherds.

**BCO 5-9.b The temporary government of the mission church shall oversee the steps necessary for organization.**

- The Temporary Government (TG), not Presbytery or plant, has oversight of the steps.
- In reality, the church planter is managing/shepherding the process. You need to know every step, what/when deadlines, prepare people, guide people to do what is needed.

## 2. Nominations open

**BCO 5-9.c** *When the temporary government determines that among the members of the mission congregation there are men who appear qualified as officers, the nomination process shall begin and the election conclude following the procedures of BCO 24 so far as they may be applicable.*

- The TG is looking to you to determine when men may be ready. You know the men rising up, what you're looking for.
- Q: what might you be looking for, so you know when qualified officers may exist?
  - Not just theological orthodoxy or Christian maturity, though important.
  - First session is key. Don't want elders who can't work together, competing views of vision, values. They will set tone for future sessions and church.
  - Can you lead these men, without being a dictator or doormat?
- Appendix 1 and 2 are sample documents explaining particularization and the nomination process. Feel free to use and adapt for your circumstances.

**BCO 24-1** *Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and deacon in the following manner: At such times as determined by the Session, communicant members of the congregation may submit names to the Session, keeping in mind that each prospective officer should be an active male member who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1.*

**After the close of the nomination period nominees for the office of ruling elder and/or deacon shall receive instruction in the qualifications and work of the office. Each nominee shall then be examined in:**

- a. his Christian experience, especially his personal character and family management (based on the qualifications set out in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:6-9),**
- b. his knowledge of Bible content,**
- c. his knowledge of the system of doctrine, government, discipline contained in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America (BCO Preface III, The Constitution Defined),**
- d. the duties of the office to which he has been nominated, and**
- e. his willingness to give assent to the questions required for ordination. (BCO 24-6)**

**If there are candidates eligible for the election, the Session shall report to the congregation those eligible, giving at least thirty (30) days prior notice of the time and place of a congregational meeting for elections.**

- Nomination and election follow BCO 24 as much as possible, to mirror the procedures of a particular church. Gives you a chance to model how Presbyterian government works.
- You have a shaping influence in who gets nominated.
  - E.g. we had "advisory team" of two possible elders: met with regularly, had them pray during service. Intentionally positioned them as elders.
  - Your community group leaders are already "eldering" and people are looking to them as spiritual leaders of the church. Thus, choose group leaders wisely.

- Tip: some churches have minimum number of nominations.
  - Helps confirm men are seen as officers by the congregation, not just a friend.
  - Helps you to put forward men you want to serve with
- Nominations
  - Written form or online survey
  - Sample nomination forms in Appendix 3 and 4
  - Sample announcement:

#### Elder and Deacon Nominations

Members of Emmanuel, the nomination process is now open for deacons and elders through 11/29. You may nominate deacons here (<http://bit.ly/1Hr2zP6>) and elders here (<http://bit.ly/1XPm4dG>). Please contact Scott Seaton ([sseaton@emmanuelarlington.org](mailto:sseaton@emmanuelarlington.org)) if you have any questions.

### 3. Nominations close

- You call them personally and let them know they've been nominated.
  - Ask them to pray, seek counsel, respond within a week.
  - Don't undersell or oversell responsibilities.
  - They don't have to feel called or ready yet; trust the process.
- Don't announce nominees. If they decide to step aside or don't "pass" exams, it won't raise questions by others.
- Some men may be disappointed they weren't nominated.
  - Can say didn't get requisite number
  - Encourage them to get more experience, equipping if feel called

### 4. Officer training begins

- Training
 

Note: there is nothing in BCO 5 about training, only about examination. This gives you flexibility; you may have men who are already elders, they've been with you throughout, and you know their philosophy; don't need formal training.
- Material
 

Wide variety of resources for training. You need to personally decide how thorough you want to be.
- Is the training open to anyone or only nominees?
 

Can open theological training up to whole church, or just nominees.

### 5. Temporary government examines officer candidates

- First, give them written exam and questionnaire; you review, highlight issues for formal interview/exam with temporary government
- Talk with pastor or TG representative about any concerns, give your recommendations.

## **6. Petition to organize available to members**

**BCO 5.9.g *In order to proceed to organization as a particular church the members of the mission church shall sign a petition to Presbytery requesting the same***

This can happen after election, but logistically often needs to take place before, to meet deadlines of Presbytery, and give more time for election process.

- Use parchment; make special time in service(s) for people to sign.
- Don't put the date on the petition, in case of rescheduling.
- Sample petition in Appendix 5

## **7. Announce date, time and location of meeting to elect officers and pastor**

**BCO 24.1 *If there are candidates eligible for the election, the Session shall report to the congregation those eligible, giving at least thirty (30) days prior notice of the time and place of a congregational meeting for elections.***

BCO 24 doesn't require you to announce the candidates, only the details and purpose of the meeting. Realistically, examinations may be continuing until shortly before the congregational meeting, so withhold the candidates' names until they've all been approved.

## **8. Petition sent to MNA Committee and Stated Clerk of Presbytery**

- Submit the petition to Presbytery, to the Moderator, Stated Clerk and the MNA chair, with a request that Presbytery approve the request. There's no requirement the petition is sent via your temporary government, or that they formally approve it first, but since the TG is supposed to oversee the steps, they should at least be in the loop.

## **9. MNA Committee meeting**

- Talk with MNA Chair throughout process, keeping them posted. They may not know what to do, as particularization happens infrequently. Thus, plan to work closely with them as you help shepherd the process.
- Prior to Presbytery, you determine the date and time for the organization service.
- Prior to Presbytery, ask elders to serve on commission. Usually at least two REs and two TEs, with one or more alternates for each. Should be from at least two churches.
- The MNA committee will likely need to approve a recommendation similar to the wording in the next step.

## 10. Presbytery Meeting

**BCO 5.9.h Upon Presbytery's approval of the petition, Presbytery shall appoint an organizing commission and shall set the date and time of the organization service.**

- Sample wording of what Presbytery needs to approve:
  1. That per BCO 5-9.g, Potomac Presbytery approve the petition of Christ Community (Mission) Church requesting to become a particular church of the Presbyterian Church in America.
  2. That per BCO 5-9.h, Potomac Presbytery approve the following commission, to organize Christ Community Church on Sunday, May 31, 2015 at 5:00 pm at Shady Grove Presbyterian Church: [list names of ruling and teaching elders and designate them as either RE or TE.]

## 11. Congregational Meeting

**BCO 5.9.d The election of officers shall normally take place at least two weeks prior to the date of the organization service. However, the effective date of service for the newly elected officers shall be upon the completion of the organization service.**

In some cases, mission churches have held officer elections at the organization service. Spacing the election at least two weeks prior to the organization service avoids the appearance of a pre-determined or perfunctory election, and lessens the problems that would arise should a sufficient number of elders not be elected. However, the BCO does not require the two-week minimum should extraordinary circumstances dictate otherwise.

**BCO 5.9.e If deacons are not elected, the duties of the office shall devolve upon the session, until deacons can be secured.**

Mirrors the practice of the particular church.

**BCO 5.9.f If there is a minister approved by Presbytery to serve the mission church as its pastor, and members of the mission church have been received according to BCO 5-5, the temporary session shall call a congregational meeting at which the congregation may, by majority vote, call the organizing pastor to be their pastor without the steps of BCO 20. If no such minister has been appointed, or the minister or the congregation choose not to continue the pastoral relationship of the newly organized church, a pastor shall be called as follows:**

In most cases, the church planter will continue as the pastor, and members have joined the church with that expectation. However, the right of the congregation to call their pastor still needs to be exercised, which is done by a vote at a congregational meeting.

The ministerial call will need to be presented at the congregational meeting. Talk with your temporary government and/or Presbytery about acceptable forms of call.

A pulpit committee is formed only in the circumstance where the pastor will not continue in that role, and this section gives practical guidance how to proceed, as follows:



**1. The temporary government shall oversee the election of a pastor according the provisions of BCO 20 so far as they are applicable. If a candidate is to be proposed before the organization, the congregational meeting to elect a pastor shall take place early enough for Presbytery to consider and approve the pastor's call prior to the service of organization. This may be the same meeting called for the election of other officers.**

By conducting the election prior to the service, the pastor can be more orderly installed at organization.

**2. The ordination and/or installation shall be according to the provisions of BCO 21 so far as they are applicable. The service may take place at the service of organization.**

## **12. Organization Service**

Time to celebrate. Procedural items to take care of, but don't lose sight of what God has accomplished, through you and your congregation.

Invite:

- Members of church
- Mother church and session
- Presbytery
- Family members
- Ministry partners
- Local leaders

**BCO 5.9.i At the service of organization the following elements shall be included in the order deemed by the organizing commission to be appropriate:**

**1. The organizing commission shall ordain and/or install ruling elders and/or deacons according to the provisions of BCO 24-6 so far as they may be applicable.**

Ordain those who have not served as elders before. All are installed regardless.

**2. If a pastor is being ordained and/or installed at the service, the organizing commission shall act according to the provisions of BCO 21 so far as they may be applicable.**

**3. A member of the organizing commission shall require communicant members of the mission church present to enter into covenant, by answering the following question affirmatively, with uplifted hand:**

**Do you, in reliance on God for strength, solemnly promise and covenant that you will walk together as a particular church, on the principles of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in America, and that you will be zealous and faithful in maintaining the purity and peace of the whole body?**

**4. A member of the organizing commission shall then say:**

***I now pronounce and declare that you are constituted a church according to the Word of God and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in America. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.***

The BCO clarifies all the required elements of the organization service and who is to conduct these elements. However, it is a worship service, so plan songs, testimonies, and a homily in addition to the required elements.

The required elements follow a logical order, but flexibility is also allowed in the arrangement of the service. For example, some commissions have declared the church as organized following the installation of ruling elders (i.e. a session has formed) and prior to the installation of the pastor. Other commissions have preferred to declare the church as organized following the installation of ruling and teaching elders, making the declaration the climactic note of the organizing service

The organizing commission has the authority to oversee the service, so work with the chair of the commission. Realistically, they're looking to you to develop the service and determine who does what. This is a great time to honor those who have been important to plant, e.g.

- The pastor of mother church is often invited to preach.
- People who have been impacted by the plant can share testimonies.
- Key people, e.g. launch team and core group, should be recognized.

Example of service in Appendix 6.

**QUESTIONS?**

## APPENDIX 1: ON BECOMING AN ORGANIZED CHURCH

### EMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

The leaders of Emmanuel Presbyterian Church are making plans for us to become an organized church. It's also called "particularization" (no kidding), but you'll be fined a nickel if you use a word outside the common lexicon.

#### **What is organization? Aren't we organized enough?**

Sure, we'll always promote a little healthy disorganization. But "organization" here is a term used in church circles to describe the process of becoming a self-governing church, a distinct entity from other churches. In the PCA, this means having our own elders, or session, who collectively would have the authority to lead and shepherd our church. Currently, Emmanuel is considered a "mission church" and is under the authority of the session of McLean Presbyterian Church.

#### **Why should we organize?**

The primary reason is that as long as elders from another church oversee us, we are in somewhat of an artificial shepherding and authority structure. That is by design and is necessary, but it is only intended to be temporary. McLean has been a wonderful support to Emmanuel, but we all recognize certain limitations until we organize, including:

1. Prospective members are not interviewed by elders of Emmanuel, making the process far less relational or pastoral. Ideally, the elders admitting people to membership should be their ongoing shepherds.
2. Major decisions needing sessional approval will either be made by non-members without a long-term commitment to Emmanuel or delayed.
3. Our pastor prefers to operate in the context of a session. Although he's intentionally surrounded himself with advisors and a launch team to process decisions, there are pastoral and oversight decisions that are best handled with other elders who are part of the same congregation.

#### **So when's the best time to organize?**

We want to organize somewhere between "too soon" and "too late." The former would be before certain objective benchmarks have been met. But once past those, we'll start to feel the impediments of not being organized; in fact, we're starting to see some of those now. For example, we're starting to get a backlog of people wanting to join the church, due to challenges in scheduling a new member interview and being formally approved by the oversight commission. Or signing contracts for worship sites involves extra coordination. Additionally, there are pastoral issues in our growing congregation that need attention by elders, especially those in relationship with the members.

#### **What, then, are these objective benchmarks?**

Assuming the presence of an organizing pastor or church planter, the Potomac Presbytery typically looks for the following criteria:

1. Committed core group of at least 50 people
2. Two or more men qualified to become ruling elders
3. Sufficient funds from within to support the church's expenses

### **Have we reached those benchmarks?**

As objectively as can be measured, yes.

1. Church membership is well over 50 people and continues to grow, with attendance averaging about 100 each week.
2. There are potentially two or more men who have demonstrated they are qualified to be PCA ruling elders, and support the vision and philosophy of Emmanuel.
3. Over the last few months, internal giving has been sufficient to support basic expenses. Continuing to receive outside support for another year, though, will greatly help the transition to self-support.

### **Are there other benchmarks?**

There are a also number of indicators that are more subjective, such as shared vision and values among our members, an authentic gospel-centered worship, newcomers who feel welcomed, people exploring the Christian faith, core ministries that are helping members connect and serve, and a positive spirit. And good coffee. Those criteria are harder to measure, but feedback suggests we're on pace.

### **Isn't this soon? How fast do mission churches organize?**

Every church has its own timeline, but the common answer is "when they're ready." Some churches in our presbytery have organized within a year of their opening service, even on the very first day. Another church organized nine months after launch. Others wait two years or more. The circumstances in every case are different, and so a calendar date has no bearing on when to organize.

### **What is the process of organization?**

Again, no two churches have done it exactly the same way, but steps include:

1. Instruction offered in the qualifications and work of ruling elders and deacons.
2. Nomination of officers by Emmanuel members.
3. Nominees are examined for character, doctrine, and knowledge of the Bible.
4. People committed to Emmanuel send a petition to the presbytery.
5. Election of officers.
6. Organization service that includes installation of officers and pastor.

### **What's the exact timeline?**

A separate schedule of events is available. Assuming confirmation by the necessary congregational, presbytery, and commission meetings, we're planning on an organization service on Palm Sunday, April 5th, 2009.

### **Who supports Emmanuel organizing now?**

Emmanuel's leadership team, the session of McLean Presbyterian Church, and the Potomac Presbytery's committee on church planting all recommend Emmanuel moving forward on this timetable.

## **APPENDIX 2: EXPLANATION OF ELDER ELECTION**

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF ELECTING QUALIFIED ELDERS**

The Apostle Paul teaches us that the desire to serve as an elder in the church is a worthy ambition. He heartily endorses it. He then goes on in I Timothy 3 to explain the demanding requirements needed to be an elder in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. While the ambition to spiritual leadership is a worthy one, it is also not for everyone who desires it. Those who aspire to office in the church must meet high standards, and must be first examined and tested (I Timothy 3:15).

The reason for this, Paul says, is that the church is the very “household of God...the church of the Living God, the pillar and support of the truth” (I Timothy 3:15). Paul had (and so should we) an exalted view and vision for the church as the people of God (I Peter 2:10), the new Israel of God (Galatians 6:16, I Peter 2:9), the temple of God (I Corinthians 3:16), and the pillar and foundation of the great truths of the Gospel (I Timothy 3:15). Therefore, it is imperative that those men who lead the people of God meet the high qualifications listed by Paul in I Timothy and Titus. Furthermore, Paul warned of “savage wolves” that “will come in among you, not sparing the flock, and from among your own selves men will arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them” (Acts 20:29, 31). Strong spiritual men are needed to protect the “flock” of God against such attacks.

Finally, Jesus entrusted the church with the “keys of the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 16:19), meaning that by the preaching of the Word and the exercise of church discipline, the church leadership has the authority to receive people into the visible kingdom of God, as well as put people outside the visible kingdom, if necessary. Hence, spiritually wise, discerning men are needed for this important responsibility. Elder election is not to be taken lightly.

### **THE ROLE OF ELDERS IN THE CHURCH**

Elders and deacons are responsible to lead Christ’s church, and as such, both are called to high standards. The character qualifications and doctrinal affirmations for both offices are identical. Further, they should all support the vision and values of the church. However, there are distinctions in their respective roles, which must be understood as one prayerfully considers nominating a qualified man to the appropriate office.

Generally, the elders are called to serve the spiritual needs of the church. As shepherds and pastors of the flock, they must demonstrate mercy and compassion. In their discipling roles, they must exhibit abilities to explain and apply God’s Word. In their policy-making functions, they must show wisdom, discernment and faith.

## THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR ELDERS IN THE CHURCH

The qualifications for elder are listed by Paul in I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. It is important to remember that these characteristics should be visibly evident in the life of a potential nominee. That is, a man should already be demonstrating the traits of an elder before he is nominated. One should not nominate a man merely on the hope that he will develop these characteristics following his election or that he would “grow into the office.” Generally, and briefly, the qualifications are as follows:

1. **Above reproach.** Is the candidate living in such a way that no one can point a finger at him for ungodly habits or actions? This is first and foremost, and the following characteristics simply amplify this quality.
2. **Husband of one wife.** Literally, this means a “one-womaned” man. Is the candidate, if married, a loving and faithful husband; or, if single, is he above reproach in his relationships with members of the opposite sex? The issue here is how many women have his attention, either in thought, word, or deed.
3. **Temperate.** Is the candidate self-controlled in all areas of his life? Does he over-indulge himself in any area?
4. **Prudent.** Is the candidate a good thinker, reasonable, and wise?
5. **Respectable.** Is the candidate respected by his peers, and is he a good model of a Christian for others?
6. **Hospitable.** Literally means “loving strangers.” Does he meet people well, and is his home open to minister to Christians, as well as non-Christians?
7. **Able to teach.** This is not the gift of teaching, per se, but an ability to communicate biblical truth to small groups, large groups, or individuals.
8. **Not addicted to wine.** Does he have any habits he cannot control, particularly in the area of food and drink?
9. **Not pugnacious.** Is he prone to fighting and arguing with family or friends?
10. **Gentle, not contentious.** The antithesis of pugnacious, having to do with an evenness of temper, and a reasonable, teachable spirit.
11. **Free from the love of money.** Is the accumulation of material wealth a primary motivation and object of concern for this candidate?
12. **Manages his household well.** Much could be said here, but basically it deals with the man’s ability to lead his wife, to teach his children the truths of Scripture, and to have the respect of both his wife and children.
13. **Not a new convert.** Paul says new believers in leadership are especially prone to Satanic attacks and resultant harm or scandal.
14. **A good reputation with those outside the church.** Does the candidate have a good reputation at his place of employment, in his neighborhood, and at his place of recreation?

Note: The Presbyterian Church in America believes the office of elder is limited to men, based on our understanding of I Timothy 3 and Titus 1. This position does not disqualify women from significant positions of church leadership, as is demonstrated in many areas of church life. We greatly appreciate and value the contributions that women make to the ministry.

## APPENDIX 3: ELDER NOMINATION FORM

Nominated by (full name) *required*

**1)** The nominee conducts their life in a respected fashion with those inside and outside the church. (1 Tim. 3:1-2) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**2)** The nominee is self-controlled and gentle when responding to people. (1 Tim 3:2,3) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**3)** The nominee is moderate in their lifestyle; is not currently struggling with addiction of any type. (1 Tim. 3:3) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**4)** The nominee manages their finances with the utmost integrity. (1 Tim. 3:4) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**5)** The nominee is faithful in their marriage. If single, they maintain integrity in relationships. (1 Tim. 3:2) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**6)** The nominee faithfully cares for their family and loved ones, for both their physical and spiritual vitality. (1 Tim. 3:4-5) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**7)** The nominee demonstrates an ability to teach and care for people. (1 Tim. 3:2) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**8)** Comment on specific ways you have seen the nominee lead people in teaching situations or during difficult circumstances. *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples



## APPENDIX 4: DEACON NOMINATION FORM

Nominated by (full name) *required*

**1)** The nominee conducts their life in a respected fashion with those inside and outside the church. (1 Tim. 3:1-8) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**2)** The nominee avoids gossip in conversation. (1 Tim. 3:8) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**3)** The nominee manages their finances with the utmost integrity. (1 Tim. 3:8) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**4)** The nominee is faithful in their marriage. If single, they maintain integrity in relationships. (1 Tim. 3:12) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**5)** The nominee faithfully cares for their family and loved ones, for both their physical and spiritual vitality. (1 Tim. 3:12) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**6)** The nominee demonstrates a compassionate heart for those in physical and/or financial need. (Acts 6:1-6) *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

**7)** Comment on specific ways you have seen the nominee lead people in service or during difficult circumstances. *required*

- ☐ Almost Always
- ☐ Frequently
- ☐ Occasionally
- ☐ Seldom
- ☐ Have not Observed

Comments or Specific Examples

## APPENDIX 5: PETITION

### **Petition to Organize [Name of Church] as a congregation of the Presbyterian Church in America**

*Believing that God is leading us to serve Christ, His people and His world through **the development and extension of the Church, we the undersigned** petition the [Name of Presbytery] to organize [Name of Mission Church] into a particular church of the Presbyterian Church in America.*

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1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

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18. \_\_\_\_\_

19. \_\_\_\_\_

20. \_\_\_\_\_

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:19-22

<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Song of Praise: *Jesus With Thy Church Abide*

Homily (TE Charlie Baile)

Ordination and Installation of Deacons and Elders

Statement of the warrant and nature of the office of Deacon and Elder *BCO 24-5*  
(TE Walt Nilsson)

Candidates come forward

Introduction of Deacons: Joshua Blizzard, Eric Hein, Robert Johnson, and Jason Shannon

Introduction of Elders: Daniel Hurtado, Jerry McKamy, and Matthew Pickens

Questions to the Candidates *BCO 24-6.1-6* (TE Walt Nilsson)

1. Do you believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments, as originally given, to be the inerrant Word of God, the only infallible rule of faith and practice?
2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?
4. Do you accept the office of ruling elder or deacon in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the Church of which God has made you an officer?
5. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
6. Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity and edification of the Church?

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 2:19-22

<sup>19</sup> So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, <sup>20</sup> built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, <sup>21</sup> in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. <sup>22</sup> In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

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2. Do you sincerely receive and adopt the Confession of Faith and the Catechisms of this Church, as containing the system of doctrine taught in the Holy Scriptures; and do you further promise that if at any time you find yourself out of accord with any of the fundamentals of this system of doctrine, you will, on your own initiative, make known to your Session the change which has taken place in your views since the assumption of this ordination vow?
3. Do you approve of the form of government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church in America, in conformity with the general principles of biblical polity?
4. Do you accept the office of ruling elder or deacon in this church, and promise faithfully to perform all the duties thereof, and to endeavor by the grace of God to adorn the profession of the Gospel in your life, and to set a worthy example before the Church of which God has made you an officer?
5. Do you promise subjection to your brethren in the Lord?
6. Do you promise to strive for the purity, peace, unity and edification of the Church?

Question to the Congregation; the congregation shall hold up their right hands to answer *BCO 24-6* (TE Walt Nilsson)

Do you, the members of this church, acknowledge and receive these brothers as officers, and do you promise to yield them all that honor, encouragement and obedience in the Lord to which his office, according to the Word of God and the Constitution of this Church, entitles him?

Laying on of hands and prayer

We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us.

Pronouncement (TE Tom Holiday)

I now pronounce and declare that Joshua Blizzard, Eric Hein, Robert Johnson, and Jason Shannon have been regularly elected, ordained and installed deacons in this church, and that Daniel Hurtado, Jerry McKamy, and Matthew Pickens have been regularly elected, ordained and installed as elders in this church, agreeable to the Word of God, and according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America; and that as such they are entitled to all encouragement, honor and obedience in the Lord: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Charge to the Officers, *BCO 24-6* last paragraph (TE Tom Holiday)

Charge to the Church, *BCO 24-6* last paragraph (TE Tom Holiday)

Installation of the Pastor

Statement of the warrant and nature of the office of Pastor (TE Alan Dayhoff)

Introduction of Matthew Roberts

Questions to the Minister *BCO 21-9.1-3* (TE Alan Dayhoff)

1. Are you now willing to take charge of this congregation as their pastor, agreeable to your declaration in accepting its call?
2. Do you conscientiously believe and declare, as far as you know your own heart, that, in taking upon you this charge, you are influenced by a sincere desire to promote the glory of God and the good of the Church?
3. Do you solemnly promise that, by the assistance of the grace of God, you will endeavor faithfully to discharge all the duties of a pastor to this congregation, and will be careful to maintain a deportment in all respects becoming a minister of the Gospel of Christ, agreeable to your ordination engagements?

Questions to the Congregation BCO 21-10 (TE Ben Wikner)

1. Do you, the people of this congregation, continue to profess your readiness to receive Matthew Roberts, whom you have called to be your pastor?
2. Do you promise to receive the word of truth from his mouth with meekness and love, and to submit to him in the due exercise of discipline?
3. Do you promise to encourage him in his labors, and to assist his endeavors for your instruction and spiritual edification?
4. Do you engage to continue to him while he is your pastor that competent worldly maintenance which you have promised, and to furnish him with whatever you may see needful for the honor of religion and for his comfort among you?

Laying on of hands and prayer, 21-7

We give you the right hand of fellowship, to take part in this office with us.

Pronouncement (TE Scott Seaton) Declaration of Installation of the Minister BCO 21-7

I now pronounce and declare that Matthew Roberts has been regularly elected and installed pastor of this congregation, agreeable to the Word of God, and according to the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America; and that as such he is entitled to all support, encouragement, honor, and obedience in the Lord: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Charge to the Pastor BCO 21-7 last paragraph (TE Scott Seaton)

Charge to the Church BCO 21-7 last paragraph (TE Scott Seaton)

Organization of the Church (TE Joel St. Clair)

Question to the Congregation BCO 5-8.3, the congregation shall hold up their right hands to answer

Do you, in reliance on God for strength, solemnly promise and covenant that you will walk together as an organized church, on the principles of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in America, and that you will be zealous and faithful in maintaining the purity and peace of the whole body?

Declaration of Organization, BCO 5-8.4 (TE Joel St. Clair)

I now pronounce and declare that you are constituted a church according to the Word of God and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in America. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Song of Commitment: *Jesus I My Cross Have Taken*

Benediction (TE Charlie Baile)

7:30 Commission adjourned with prayer (TE Charlie Baile)

## APPENDIX 7: BCO 5

### **5-9.** A new church can be organized only by the authority of Presbytery

- a. A Presbytery should establish standing rules setting forth the prerequisites that qualify a mission church to begin the organization process, e.g., the minimum number of petitioners and the level of financial support to be provided by the congregation. The number of officers sufficient to constitute the quorum for a session shall be necessary to complete the organization process.
- b. The temporary government of the mission church shall oversee the steps necessary for organization.
- c. When the temporary government determines that among the members of the mission congregation there are men who appear qualified as officers, the nomination process shall begin and the election conclude following the procedures of BCO 24 so far as they may be applicable.
- d. The election of officers shall normally take place at least two weeks prior to the date of the organization service. However, the effective date of service for the newly elected officers shall be upon the completion of the organization service.
- e. If deacons are not elected, the duties of the office shall devolve upon the session, until deacons can be secured.
- f. If there is a minister approved by Presbytery to serve the mission church as its pastor, and members of the mission church have been received according to BCO 5-5, the temporary session shall call a congregational meeting at which the congregation may, by majority vote, call the organizing pastor to be their pastor without the steps of BCO 20. If no such minister has been appointed, or the minister or the congregation choose not to continue the pastoral relationship of the newly organized church, a pastor shall be called as follows:
  - (1) The temporary government shall oversee the election of a pastor according the provisions of BCO 20 so far as they are applicable. If a candidate is to be proposed before the organization, the congregational meeting to elect a pastor shall take place early enough for Presbytery to consider and approve the pastor's call prior to the service of organization. This may be the same meeting called for the election of other officers.
  - (2) The ordination and/or installation shall be according to the provisions of BCO 21 so far as they are applicable. The service may take place at the service of organization.
- g. In order to proceed to organization as a particular church the members of the mission church shall sign a petition to Presbytery requesting the same.
- h. Upon Presbytery's approval of the petition, Presbytery shall appoint an organizing commission and shall set the date and time of the organization service.
- i. At the service of organization the following elements shall be included in the order deemed by the organizing commission to be appropriate:
  - (1) The organizing commission shall ordain and/or install ruling elders and/or deacons according to the provisions of BCO 24-6 so far as they may be applicable.
  - (2) If a pastor is being ordained and/or installed at the service, the organizing commission shall act according to the provisions of BCO 21 so far as they may be applicable.



(3) A member of the organizing commission shall require communicant members of the mission church present to enter into covenant, by answering the following question affirmatively, with uplifted hand:

**Do you, in reliance on God for strength, solemnly promise and covenant that you will walk together as a particular church, on the principles of the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in America, and that you will be zealous and faithful in maintaining the purity and peace of the whole body?**

(4) A member of the organizing commission shall then say:

**I now pronounce and declare that you are constituted a church according to the Word of God and the faith and order of the Presbyterian Church in America. In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**