

City & Church Name _____ Clerk of Session _____

GENERAL CONTENT OF SESSION RECORDS

Yes/No (1)

1. All pages are numbered consecutively. (2) _____
2. Minutes are free from extensive corrections. (3) _____
3. Minutes printed on both sides; blank pages and areas indicated “left intentionally blank, or lined out” _____
4. At least one stated session meeting was held per quarter (G-3.0203). (4) _____
 Record date of one meeting in each quarter and the page number:
 1st Qrt: Date: _____ Page: _____ 2nd Qrt: Date: _____ Page: _____
 3rd Qrt: Date: _____ Page: _____ 4th Qrt: Date: _____ Page: _____
5. The annual congregational meeting was held for the year (G-1.0501). (5) _____
 Record date and page number of the congregational meeting: Date _____ Page _____

SESSION MINUTES CHECKLIST

Page # in Minutes to be filled in by the Clerk of Session BEFORE the Review

Recorded item	Reference	Page Number(s): List ALL applicable pages
6. The first paragraph includes: name of council, date, time, place of meeting, indicate stated or special, name and clerk, meeting opened with prayer, quorum indicated, agenda approved, and minutes of previous meeting approved.	G-3.0203 G-0105 <i>Robert's Rules of Order</i>	
7. Names of ruling elders present	Required by presbytery	
8. Closed meeting with prayer	G-3.0105	
9. Financial reports of all congregational funds, at least annually	G-3.0205	
10. Prior approval of the Lord's Supper	G-3.0201b W-3.0410	
11. Report celebration of the Lord's Supper	G-3.0201b	

12. Lord's Supper celebrated at least quarterly	G-3.0102b W-3.0409	1 st QRT: Date _____ Page # _____ 2 nd QRT: Date _____ Page # _____ 3 rd QRT: Date _____ Page # _____ 4 th QRT: Date _____ Page # _____
13. Lord's Supper taken to sick/ shut-ins, names of members accompanying the pastor	W-3.0414	
14. Approval of Baptism	G-3.0201b W-3.0403	
15. Report administration of Baptism	G-3.0201	
16. Election of Commissioners to presbytery	G-3.0202	
17. Report of Presbytery Commissioner(s)	G-3.0202	
18. Signature of Clerk	G-3.0107	

Items to be Recorded Annually in Session Minutes

19. Report of Presbytery review of Minutes	G-3.0108a	
20. Training of newly elected elders and deacons	G-2.0402	
21. Examining newly elected elders & deacons	G-2.0402	
22. Scheduling and approving ordination and installation of officers & report after the ordination and/or installation	G-2.0402	
23. Report of annual review of pastor's compensation	G-2.0804	
24. Session approval of annual statistical report & attached to minutes.	G-3.0202f	
25. Election of Church treasurer	G-3.0205	Page number _____ Date of election _____ Length of term _____

26. Election of Clerk of Session	G-3.0104	Page number _____ Date of election _____ Length of term _____
27. Session approval of budget	G-3.0205	
28. Annual financial review/audit	G-3.0113	
29. Insurance Review	G-3.0112	
30. Annual review of membership roll	G-3.0201c	
31. If members were deleted from roll, did session seek to restore them to active participation, and did session provide written notice to member before deleting	G-3.0204a	
32. Session composition with regard to racial ethnic, women, men, age groups, and how this corresponds to composition of the congregation.	F-1.0403 G-3.0103	

CONGREGATIONAL MINUTES CHECKLIST

33. The first paragraph should include: name of council, date, time, place of meeting, indicate stated or special, name of moderator, name of clerk, meeting opened with prayer, quorum indicated, agenda approved, and minutes of previous meeting approved.	G-3.0203 RONR	
34. Closed each meeting with prayer	G-3.0105	
35. Election of elders, deacons, trustees	G-1.0503	
36. Presentation of budget to congregation.	G-3.0205	

37. Review of Pastor(s) Terms of Call and any changes in the terms of call approved by the congregation	G-1.0503	
38. Congregational meeting minutes signed by clerk and moderator.	G-1.0505	

Church Rolls and Registers (Complete this page only if the Rolls and Registers will be reviewed.)

Recorded Item	Reference	Included Yes or No
39. Roll of Active Members	G-3.0204a	
40. Roll of Baptized Members	G-3.0204a	
41. Roll of Affiliate Members, if any,	G-3.0204a	
42. List of Ruling Elders and Deacons, with ordination date	G-3.0204b	
43. List of Pastors, Associates, with dates of service	G-3.0204b	
44. Record baptisms with date of birth and name of parents	G-3.0204b	

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CHECKLIST

Each clerk is to review their own minutes prior to the review, using the Session Records Review Checklist. The numbers refer to the “Records Review Checklist-Tips” document.

Please note that some items should be included in each and every meeting. Others are to be recorded when done, and others recorded annually. Enter the page number for each item where it is found in your minutes.

You must list a page number for every instance the item is recorded in your minutes. For example, if you had twelve meetings during the year, you should have twelve page numbers for the first item, “First Paragraph.” If the checklist is not fully completed and included, the minutes will not be reviewed. Send all of your minutes in one document. Do not send a separate document for each meeting. If we receive more than one document for your minutes, they will not be read. Of course, the checklist can and should come as a separate document.

Please do not be anxious if not everything has been completed by the session or included in the minutes. No person or session is perfect. These are the minutes of the session, not your minutes. The moderator should be aware of the things the session needs to do.

Normally the rolls and registers are reviewed every three year. You will be informed if we need to review your rolls and registers.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Stated Clerk, Raymond Meester:

Cell: 402.217.3684

email: RaymondM@HomesteadPres.org

LINE BY LINE TIPS
SESSION RECORDS REVIEW CHECKLIST

Minutes are the official written record of a meeting. Meeting minutes serve as legal documents that may be examined by not only more inclusive councils of the church, but also the secular courts. All of the items in the checklist are to be recorded in the minutes. For further information on each item, refer to the reference for that item. The references are to the *Book of Order*. Concerning reports, please see the explanation under “Minutes” in the *Clerk of Session Handbook*.

1. The clerk of the session shall indicate with a “yes” or “no” on the short line as to whether the particular item was completed.
2. All pages, including attachments, should be paged consecutively and with the same numbering system. Do not attach or insert pages with a different numbering system.
3. If corrections are made, please follow the instructions found in the presbytery’s *Clerk of Session Handbook*.
4. Session must meet at least quarterly. List the date of one meeting per quarter and the page number. (The page number of the first page for each meeting is sufficient.)
5. There shall be one annual congregational meeting per year. Again, fill in the date and the first page number of that meeting’s minutes.
6. All of these items should be included in the first paragraph of the minutes. Example:

CALL TO ORDER

The regular meeting of the session of Grace Presbyterian Church, Anytown, Nebraska, was called to order with prayer at 7:03 PM, September 10, 2019. The moderator, Darlene Morris, was in the chair and the clerk of session was present. A quorum was present. The agenda was approved as amended. The minutes of the August 6, 2019, meeting were approved as printed.

- 7 List all current members of the session and indicate if they were present or absent.
9. Most churches have these reports as part of the annual report to the congregation. These financial reports should be included in the minutes of the congregational meeting. The session can choose to include the entire annual report in the minutes.
10. Approval of celebrations of the Lord’s Supper needs to be prior to its celebration. You need to include the dates of the celebrations. Session can at one meeting schedule all of the celebrations of the Lord’s Supper for the year, or can schedule a certain Sunday of each month. If there is a tradition of celebrating it on the same Sunday each year, it would be best to record that in the minutes of the first meeting of the year. Or, session can give approval prior to each celebration. If a date is changed, session must give prior approval to the change.
11. Each celebration of the Lord’s Supper is reported at the following session meeting. An example would be, “The Lord’s Supper was celebrated during the morning worship on July 28, 2019.” Again, include the date it was celebrated. It is not necessary to report how many participated in the sacrament, who officiated, or who served.
12. The Lord’s Supper is to be celebrated at least quarterly. Pick a date from each quarter. Record the date it was celebrated and the page number in the minutes where it was recorded.
13. Do not include to whom the sacrament was taken. Record which church member(s) (it does not need to be an elder or deacon) accompanied the pastor and the dates. If your church has made provision for elders and/or deacons to take the Lord’s Supper to those absent, homebound, or hospitalized, as described in W-3.0414, please indicate that you do so on the check list.
14. Approval must be made prior to the celebration of the Sacrament. Include the full name of adults being baptized including the maiden name of married women, if applicable. When adults are baptized, they are also joining the church by profession of faith, so a reception of membership needs to be approved and recorded with the baptism, and their names recorded as being received. In the case of infant or children baptism, include the full name of the

child, date of birth, place of birth, date of baptism, place of baptism, and the names of the parents or the one rightly exercising parental responsibility, and include maiden names, if applicable.

15. The report that baptism was celebrated must be recorded in the minutes after it was celebrated. Include the date of the baptism in the record. All of the information required in 18 does not need to be repeated.
16. Ruling elder commissioners to the presbytery are to be elected by the session prior to the presbytery meeting. Elder commissioners to presbytery do not need to be currently serving on the session. The *Book of Order* states: Sessions have a particular responsibility to participate in the life of the whole church through participation in other councils. It is of particular importance that sessions:
 - a. elect, as commissioners to presbytery, ruling elders from the congregation, preferably for at least a year, and receive their reports. (G-3.0202)A session could elect a primary commissioner and a few alternates, such as a first alternate, second alternate. If the primary commissioner cannot attend, the first alternate could attend without having to act on it in a session meeting, and on down the list until you find someone able to go. The governance of the PCUSA is that of parity, equal numbers of teaching elders (ministers of word and sacrament) and ruling elders.
17. The report should be made at the next session meeting following a presbytery meeting. It is not necessary to record in the minutes any of the report, unless deemed pertinent. The commissioner could submit a written report. Do not act to receive, adopt, approve, etc., the report.”
18. Clerk of session should sign at the end of the minutes after they have been approved. If someone else acted as clerk pro tem, the clerk pro tem should sign the minutes for that meeting, and add “pro tem” following “Clerk of Session.” It is advisable to record when those minutes were approved on a line alongside of or below the signature. For example:

Bill Nederhoff, Clerk of Session

Date Approved

19. Clerk reports to session and records in the minutes that presbytery reviewed, note if approved with or without exceptions, if there are exceptions list all the exceptions. Indicate which minutes were approved, by page numbers and the date of the first meeting and the date of the last meeting that were reviewed, and the date the records were reviewed.
20. It is to be reported to the session, and recorded in the minutes, that the newly elected elders and deacons received training. Elders and deacons, who have been previously ordained, are not required to be trained. However, session may require such training. If the session does not require the training of previously ordained officers, please include that in the report. Do not include any detail about the content of the training.
21. The session is to examine newly elected elders and deacons, and such examination is to be recorded in the minutes. Elders and deacons, who have been previously ordained, are not required to be examined. However, session may require such an examination. If the session does not require the examination of previously ordained officers, please include that in the report. Record only if the candidates were approved or not approved. Do not include any detail about the examination.
22. Report and record in the minutes that session approved a date to ordain and install officers prior to the ordination and installation. Include full names and the date. At the first session meeting following the ordination/installation, record in the minutes the fact that the elders and deacons were ordained and/or installed. Again, record the full names and the date.
23. Session is to review the adequacy of the compensation of the pastor, and it be recorded in the minutes. Record the terms of call, including base salary, housing allowance, SECA offset, etc. If the pastor is not an installed pastor, this information does not need to be recorded.
24. This refers to the annual statistical report that is completed online. This report must be approved by the session. A one-page report can be downloaded from the web, printed, and then included in the minutes as an attachment. Instructions for printing the report can be found in the *Clerk of Session Handbook*.

25. Session is to elect the treasurer, and should elect the treasurer for a particular term, whether one year, two years, etc. The treasurer should not be elected for “a life sentence.” Indicate the date of election, length of term, and page number in the minutes of that election. If the treasurer was elected in a previous year, and continues to serve that term, indicate the same information, even if it is recorded in a previous year’s minutes.
26. The same information as for the treasurer (25), above. A clerk of session need not be an active member of the session, but must be a ruling elder. If the clerk is not a member of the session, the clerk has no voice or vote unless granted by the session.
27. The session, not the congregation, approves the budget. (However, the congregation must approve the terms of call of the pastor.) The full budget is to be recorded in the minutes of the session, either within the minutes, or as an attachment.
28. Report to the session and record in the minutes that a financial review or audit was performed, who performed the audit, when the audit was performed, what years were reviewed or audited, and the recommendations and/or results of that review or audit.
29. Session is to review whether there is adequate property and liability coverage, including coverage for the officers. Include the types of coverage and the limits of coverage. The and best procedure is to attach the certificate of insurance to the minutes, which can be obtained from your insurance carrier. If the certificate is attached, there is no need to include the types of coverage and limits in the minutes themselves.
30. No need for details, other than any additions or deletions to the membership rolls, which require session action. The Book of Order (G-3.0204a) directs:

The session shall delete names from the roll of the congregation upon the member’s death, admission to membership in another congregation or presbytery, or renunciation of jurisdiction. The session may delete names from the roll of the congregation when a member so requests, or has moved or otherwise ceased to participate actively in the work and worship of the congregation for a period of two years. The session shall seek to restore members to active participation and shall provide written notice before deleting names due to member inactivity.
31. Record that session did seek to restore members to active participation and that anyone deleted due to lack of participation was given written notification.
32. Compare the composition of the session to the composition of the congregation in terms of demographics: ages, race, gender, etc. The information entered in the annual statistical report can provide the needed information for the congregation. Does the session represent the diversity of the membership? For example, you might have a number of young adults in your congregation, but none on the session. Or the congregation may be made up of 75% women, but only 25% of the session are women. Indicate if there are any of these disparities between the congregation and the session. Concerning birthdates, most members are open to sharing their full birth date, if you explain why you need the information. If they will not provide the information, guess.
33. See 6 above. If the minutes of a previous congregational meeting were approved by the session, the congregation does not approve the minutes. However, it should be reported to the congregation that the minutes were previously approved by the session, and that report recorded in the minutes.
35. Record who were elected to what office, and the terms of service, i.e. to which class. Also record if the floor was opened for nominations, which is required.
36. Record that the budget was presented to the congregation. The congregation does not act to receive or approve the budget.
37. Any changes to the terms of call must be approved by congregational vote. If nothing is changed, it is still best to list the terms of call, so that there be no misunderstanding. Be sure to include any housing allowances in the action.

