

1 **OVERTURE 16** from TE Ted Lester (to CCB, OC)\
2 “Amend *BCO* 25-2 to Require Annual Congregational Meeting and
3 Reporting Standards”
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5 [This Overture was submitted to Northwest Georgia Presbytery for its stated meeting,
6 August 21, 2021, by TE Ted Lester, commissioner to NW GA Presbytery, and was rejected
7 by the Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 15, 2022 (see *RAO* 11-10).]
8

9 **Whereas**, The Lord Jesus, as King and Head of His Church, has established a church
10 government to be administered by Church officers (*WCF* 30.1); and
11

12 **Whereas**, Church officers are called to govern the holy institution of the Church well, promote
13 the purity and peace within the congregations they shepherd, administer the
14 sacraments, and provide for the spiritual well-being of the church; and
15

16 **Whereas**, a Presbyterian system of government prescribes that the men set apart for the sacred
17 charge of Church office are selected and elected by members of a particular church
18 (*BCO* 24); and
19

20 **Whereas**, inherent to a Presbyterian system of government is that the Word of God is to be
21 preached only by such as are sufficiently gifted, and also duly approved and called to
22 that office (*WLC* 158) and that from time to time as need arises by members who
23 “shall, after consultation and deliberation recommend to the congregation” a pastoral
24 candidate who in their “judgment, fulfills the Constitutional requirements of that office
25 and is most suited to be profitable to the spiritual interests of the congregation...”
26 (*BCO* 20-2); and
27

28 **Whereas**, the congregation consists of all the communing members of a particular church,
29 and they only are entitled to vote (*BCO* 25-1); and
30

31 **Whereas**, the aforementioned vote is how a congregation’s voice is expressed and its will
32 exercised within a particular church; and
33

34 **Whereas**, all members of a particular church have vowed to “support the Church in its
35 worship and work” to the best of their ability, and “study its purity and peace” (*BCO*
36 57-5);
37

38 **Therefore, be it resolved** that in order to preserve the congregational voice of particular
39 churches in the PCA, and assist members in upholding their membership vows, the
40 *Book of Church Order* 25-2 be amended by adding the underlined text below:
41

42 **25-2.** Whenever it may seem for the best interests of the church that a
43 congregational meeting should be held, the Session shall call such meeting and
44 give public notice of at least one week. No business shall be transacted at such
45 meeting except what is stated in the notice. A stated meeting shall be held at

1 least once annually to consider the affairs of the congregation, which shall
2 include a report on the state of a church's ministry, a disclosure of the financial
3 state of the church, a presentation of the terms of call for teaching elders, and a
4 disclosure of the status or outcome of any judicial actions involving the Session
5 or its members. The Session shall always call a congregational meeting when
6 requested in writing to do so:

- 7 a. by one-fourth (1/4) of the communing members of a church of not more
8 than one hundred (100) such members,
- 9 b. by one-fifth (1/5) of the communing members of a church of more than
10 one hundred (100) and not more than three hundred (300) such
11 members,
- 12 c. by one-sixth (1/6) of the communing members of a church of more than
13 three hundred (300) and not more than five hundred (500) such
14 members,
- 15 d. by one-seventh (1/7) of the communing members of a church of more
16 than five hundred (500) members but not more than seven hundred (700)
17 such members,
- 18 e. by one hundred (100) of the communing members of a church of more
19 than seven hundred (700) such members.

20 Upon such a proper request, if the Session cannot act, fails to act or refuses
21 to act, to call such a congregational meeting within thirty (30) days from the
22 receipt of such a request, then any member or members in good standing may
23 file a complaint in accordance with the provisions of *BCO* 43.
24

25 So that *BCO* 25-2 as amended would read:

26
27 **25-2.** Whenever it may seem for the best interests of the church that a
28 congregational meeting should be held, the Session shall call such meeting and
29 give public notice of at least one week. No business shall be transacted at such
30 meeting except what is stated in the notice. A stated meeting shall be held at
31 least once annually to consider the affairs of the congregation, which shall
32 include a report on the state of a church's ministry, a disclosure of the financial
33 state of the church, a presentation of the terms of call for teaching elders, and a
34 disclosure of the status or outcome of any judicial actions involving the Session
35 or its members. The Session shall always call a congregational meeting when
36 requested in writing to do so:

- 37 a. by one-fourth (1/4) of the communing members of a church of not more
38 than one hundred (100) such members,
- 39 b. by one-fifth (1/5) of the communing members of a church of more than
40 one hundred (100) and not more than three hundred (300) such
41 members,
- 42 c. by one-sixth (1/6) of the communing members of a church of more than
43 three hundred (300) and not more than five hundred (500) such
44 members,

- 1 d. by one-seventh (1/7) of the communing members of a church of more
2 than five hundred (500) members but not more than seven hundred (700)
3 such members,
4 e. by one hundred (100) of the communing members of a church of more
5 than seven hundred (700) such members.

6 Upon such a proper request, if the Session cannot act, fails to act or refuses
7 to act, to call such a congregational meeting within thirty (30) days from the
8 receipt of such a request, then any member or members in good standing may
9 file a complaint in accordance with the provisions of *BCO* 43.

10
11 *Submitted by /s/ TE Ted Lester to Northwest Georgia Presbytery for its stated meeting, August*
12 *21, 2021*
13 *Rejected by Northwest Georgia Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 15, 2022 (Attested*
14 *by /s/ TE David Gilbert, stated clerk)*
15 *Submitted by /s/ TE Ted Lester to the 49th General Assembly of the PCA, March 25, 2022*