1 2 3 4	OVERTURE 24 from the Chesapeake Presbytery (to CCB, OC) "Amend <i>BCO</i> 8-3 to Include Language from the AIC Report on Human Sexuality for Elder Responsibilities"
5 6 7 8	Whereas , believers united to Jesus Christ are given the privilege and instruction to define and describe themselves in light of their union with Christ and not by their sins (1 Corinthians 6:11; 1 John 3:1-2); and
9 10 11	Whereas , believers are to understand themselves as new creations in Christ and different from what they once were (2 Corinthians 5:17); and
12 13 14 15	Whereas, elders and pastors are to be an example to the flock in speech and conduct, and are to watch their life and doctrine closely for the benefit of the flock they shepherd (1 Timothy 4:12, 16); and
16 17 18 19	Whereas , elders are to model in a way that is above reproach giving themselves over as instruments of righteousness to God and mortifying sin (Titus 1:6-7; Romans 6:12-14); and
20 21 22	Whereas , elders ought to serve as an example to the flock of how believers should define and describe themselves as new creations in Christ Jesus; and
23 24 25	Whereas , the Church of Christ is to be the pillar and foundation of the truth (1 Timothy 3:15) and should speak the truth in love in ways the society understands but not bend to society's understanding; and
26 27 28 29 30	Whereas , we and the members of our congregations live in a society where there is a great deal of confusion about and opposition to the truth broadly and narrowly in the area of human sexuality, so that there is an increased pressure to affirm homosexual identity and self-conception; and
31 32 33 34	Whereas , the AIC Report on Human Sexuality was commended by the 48th General Assembly in 2021; and
35 36 37	Whereas, the AIC Report ¹ says, "Christians are well-served when they can be honest about both their present fallen realities and their hope for sanctification" (p. 906); and
38 39 40 41	Whereas , the AIC Report says, "The goal is not just consistent fleeing from, and regular resistance to, temptation, but the diminishment and even the end of the occurrences of sinful desires through the reordering of the loves of one's heart toward Christ" (p. 882); and
42 43 44	Whereas, the AIC Report says, "Desires that are inconsistent with God's design are to be resisted and mortified, not celebrated or accommodated" (p. 906); and

Whereas, the AIC Report says, "To juxtapose identities rooted in sinful desires alongside the term 'Christian' is inconsistent with Biblical language and undermines the spiritual reality that we are new creations in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17)" (p. 884); and

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Whereas, the AIC Report says, "Christians ought to acknowledge their sin in an effort to overcome it", and that "we name our sins, but are not named by them" (p. 884); and

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Therefore, let it be resolved that the Chesapeake Presbytery petitions the 50th General Assembly to amend the *Book of Church Order* 8-3 to read as follows:

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8-3. It belongs to those in the office of elder, both severally and jointly, to watch diligently over the flock committed to his charge, that no corruption of doctrine or of morals enter therein. They must exercise government and discipline, and take oversight not only of the spiritual interests of the particular church, but also the Church generally when called thereunto. They should visit the people at their homes, especially the sick. They should instruct the ignorant, comfort the mourner, nourish and guard the children of the Church. They should set a worthy example to the flock entrusted to their care by their zeal to evangelize the unconverted, make disciples, and demonstrate hospitality. As those who are to be examples to God's flock that is under their care, and who are to watch their life and doctrine closely, elders are to understand, describe, and define themselves in light of their union with Christ as justified and holy children of God. They are to guard against setting a damaging or confusing example to the flock by describing or defining themselves by their sinful desires (e.g., from 1 Corinthians 6:9,10 (ESV)... "the sexually immoral, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor men who practice homosexuality, nor thieves, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers,..." etc.), but rather are to endeavor by the grace of God to confess, repent of, and mortify sin and sinful desires, and to present themselves and those entrusted to their care as instruments of righteousness to God. All those duties which private Christians are bound to discharge by the law of love are especially incumbent upon them by divine vocation, and are to be discharged as official duties. They should pray with and for the people, being careful and diligent in seeking the fruit of the preached Word among the flock.

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Adopted by Chesapeake Presbytery at its stated meeting, March 14, 2023 Attested by /s/ TE Donald M. Dove, stated clerk

¹ *M48GA*, Appendix W, p. 872ff.