

1 **OVERTURE 10** from the Central Florida Presbytery (to CCB, OC)
2 “Amend *BCO* 22 to Affirm the ‘Consent of the Governed’ Regarding Assistant
3 Pastors”
4

5 **Whereas** *The Book of Church Order* 22-1 states that the “various pastoral relations are Pastor,
6 Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor”; and
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8 **Whereas** the Pastor and Associate Pastor are elected by the congregation and become
9 members of the Session (*BCO* 22-2) but the Assistant Pastor is called by the Session
10 and is not a member of the Session (*BCO* 22-3); and
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12 **Whereas** Assistant Pastors are members of Presbytery, vote on both the church’s higher
13 courts, and exercise ministerial authority in preaching the Word and administering the
14 Sacraments; and
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16 **Whereas** all Elders, both Teaching and Ruling, being of one class of office have parity of
17 office (*BCO* 8-9); and
18

19 **Whereas** the Apostles did not appoint church officers without the consent of the governed
20 (Acts 6:3; Acts 14:23); and
21

22 **Whereas** preliminary principle 6 of *The Book of Church Order* states “the power to elect
23 persons to the exercise of authority in any particular society resides in that society”
24 (see also *BCO* 3-1); and
25

26 **Whereas** the idea of an Assistant Pastor being called by the Session and not being called by
27 the congregation is contrary to historic Presbyterian polity; and
28

29 **Whereas** the first time the Assistant Pastor relation was codified in American Presbyterianism
30 was in 1945 in the nineteenth edition of the PCUS’ *Book of Church Order* (see chapter
31 xxiv, paragraph 126); and
32

33 **Whereas** Assistant Pastors are not infrequently called to serve PCA churches for many
34 years—even decades—without the direct consent of the congregations they shepherd
35 as teaching elders;
36

37 **Therefore, be it resolved** to amend the *BCO* by adding/striking the following language of
38 *BCO* 22-3 and 22-4 to read as follows (underlining for additions; ~~striketrough~~ for
39 deletions):
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41 **22-3.** An assistant pastor is called by the Session, by the permission and
42 approval of Presbytery, under the provisions of *BCO* 20-1 and 13-2, with
43 Presbytery membership being governed by the same provisions that apply to
44 pastors. The Session may call an Assistant Pastor only to serve for a definite
45 period not exceeding five years. Should the Session wish to renew the assistant

1 pastor's call beyond five years, it shall call a congregational meeting to seek the
2 consent of the governed in support of his continued ministry. In this case,
3 congregational consent shall be indicated by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote.
4 The renewal of a call as an Assistant Pastor is subject to Presbytery approval. If
5 no three-fourths majority is secured, the Session shall conclude that the assistant
6 pastor does not have adequate support from the congregation for a continued
7 ministry among them, and shall move immediately to dissolve his call, in
8 accordance with the provisions of BCO 23. He The assistant pastor is not a
9 member of the Session; but may be appointed on special occasions to moderate
10 the Session under the provisions of BCO 12-4.

11 **22-4.** The relationship of the associate pastor to the church is determined by
12 the congregation. The relationship of the Assistant Pastor to the church is
13 determined by the Session (though not indefinitely, see BCO 22-3). The
14 dissolution of the relationship of both is governed by the provision of BCO 23.
15

16 So that the amended paragraphs would read:
17

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19 approval of Presbytery, under the provisions of BCO 20-1 and 13-2, with
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35 determined by the Session (though not indefinitely, see BCO 22-3). The
36 dissolution of the relationship of both is governed by the provision of BCO 23.
37
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39 *Adopted by the Central Florida Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 28, 2025.*

40 *Attested by Donald L. Mountan, Stated Clerk*