

1 **OVERTURE 34** from the Savannah River Presbytery (to CCB, OC)

2 “Amend *RAO* 16 to Require Reporting on Session and Diaconate Membership and
3 Duties”
4

5 **Whereas** the 45th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in America adopted the 4th
6 recommendation from the Study Committee on the Role of Women in the Ministry of
7 the Church which, in its final form stated: “That sessions, if possible, establish a
8 diaconate of qualified ordained men.”; and
9

10 **Whereas** the rationale in the body of the report explaining this recommendation stated that
11 “There is at least anecdotal evidence that some PCA churches are choosing not to
12 establish an ordained diaconate, even with qualified candidates, because the church
13 wishes to be free to establish a body of unordained servants, both male and female
14 (*Book of Church Order* 9-7)” , and similar reports of this practice persist within our
15 denomination; and
16

17 **Whereas** *BCO* 9-7 recognizes an unofficial and unordained role within the church called
18 “assistants to the deacons” comprised of “godly men andS women of the congregation
19 to assist the deacons in the caring for the sick, the widow, the orphans, the prisoners,
20 and other who may be in distress or need”; and
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22 **Whereas** at its 50th General Assembly, the PCA approved an amendment to the *Book of*
23 *Church Order (BCO)* 7-3 and affirmed it at its 51st General Assembly which prohibits
24 assigning the titles connected to the ecclesial offices of pastor, elder, or deacon to non-
25 ordained members;
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27 **Therefore be it resolved** the Savannah River Presbytery respectfully overtures the 52nd
28 General Assembly of the PCA to protect the constitutional practice of ordaining a
29 Diaconate by adding the following to *RAO* 16-4.c.1 (underlining for additions;
30 ~~striketrough~~ for deletions):
31

32 A current Directory of Presbytery, including (1) a list of all teaching elders, with their
33 addresses and their status; and of all churches and missions with the address of the
34 church, and the name and address of the Clerk of Session, (2) the list of persons who
35 comprise the Session and the Diaconate of each church arranged by their ordained or
36 given titles; and if no Diaconate exists, a report why it has not been established and
37 whether or not the duties have devolved upon the ruling elders, unordained diaconal
38 assistants, or any other committee or member of the church, (23) a listing of all officers
39 and committee members of the regular committees of presbytery, and (34) a list
40 identifying all candidates under care, interns, and licentiates of the presbytery with
41 their addresses and their status.
42

43 **Be it further resolved** to add the following to *RAO* 16-6.c.1:

44 Exceptions of substance: Apparent violations of the Scripture or serious irregularities
45 from the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church in America, actions out of accord

1 with the deliverances of the General Assembly, and matters of impropriety and
2 important delinquencies, and any non-compliance with *RAO* 16-3.e.5-6 and *RAO* 16-
3 4.c.1 ~~should~~ shall be reported under this category.

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6 *Adopted by the Savannah River Presbytery at its Stated Meeting, April 15, 2025.*

7 *Attested by RE W. Glynn Dyer, stated clerk*