



1 in *BCO* 9-7, but calling them deacons or deaconesses, according to their careful  
2 study of biblical teaching; and  
3

4 **Whereas** the PCA’s 2017 Report of the Ad Interim Committee on Women Serving in the  
5 Ministry of the Church to the 45<sup>th</sup> General Assembly formally examined the  
6 practice above and deemed it not prohibited by the *BCO*; and  
7

8 **Whereas** a spirit of charity towards differing views on this topic has guided the practice and  
9 rulings of the PCA since its founding, but the practice of such differing views was  
10 made more difficult by the passage of Overture 26 at the 51<sup>st</sup> General Assembly of  
11 the PCA in 2024; and  
12

13 **Whereas** the heart behind this overture is to continue that spirit of charity by allowing  
14 Sessions appropriate liberty to choose one of several biblically defensible practices  
15 related to the diaconate; but explicitly not to explore and amend the PCA’s exegesis,  
16 definitions, and conclusions on ordination and church offices; and  
17

18 **Whereas** since “neither the Bible nor the Constitution confer on the office of deacon any  
19 authority of rule, then there is no promise of obedience to the deacons implied” in  
20 the congregational vow taken in *BCO* 24-6 while installing elders and deacons (as  
21 recognized in Morton H. Smith's *Commentary on the PCA Book of Church Order*);  
22 and  
23

24 **Whereas** since the office that comprises the courts of Presbyterian polity is that of the  
25 *presbuteros* or elder (*BCO* 10-1), flexibility of understanding and practice related  
26 to deacons need not hinder the ability of our congregations to engage in shared life,  
27 ministry, and mission;  
28

29 **Therefore, be it resolved** to amend *BCO* 7-3, add footnotes to *BCO* 24-1 and *BCO* 24-6, and  
30 add *BCO* 9-8 as follows (underlining for additions; ~~striketrough~~ for deletions) in  
31 order to allow Sessions to decide whether to have a diaconate made up of:  
32

- 33 1) only ordained men serving in the office of deacon;
- 34 2) ordained men serving in the office of deacon and commissioned or  
35 appointed women who are not officers but may bear the title of deacon; or
- 36 3) only commissioned men and women who are not officers but may bear the  
37 title of deacon.  
38

39 **7-3.** No one who holds office in the Church ought to usurp authority therein,  
40 or receive any official titles of spiritual preeminence, except such as are employed  
41 in the Scriptures. Furthermore, unordained people shall not be referred to as, or  
42 given the titles of, the ordained offices of pastor/elder; and they shall be referred  
43 to as, or given the title of, deacon only when their Session has explicitly chosen  
44 to apply this title to unordained people, or deacon.  
45

1 **9-8.** At the discretion of a Session, the diaconate of any church may consist  
2 of 1) only ordained men serving in the office of deacon; 2) ordained men serving  
3 in the office of deacon and commissioned or appointed women who are not  
4 officers but may bear the title of deacon; or 3) only commissioned or appointed  
5 men and women who are not officers but may bear the title of deacon. For an  
6 unordained person commissioned or appointed as part of a diaconate, neither this  
7 status nor the title of deacon shall be understood to transfer should they move to  
8 a different congregation.  
9

10 **24-1.** Every church shall elect persons to the offices of ruling elder and  
11 deacon in the following manner:<sup>1</sup> At such times as determined by the Session,  
12 communicant members of the congregation may submit names to the Session,  
13 keeping in mind that each prospective officer should be an active male member  
14 who meets the qualifications set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1. Nominees for  
15 the office of ruling elder and/or deacon shall receive instruction in the  
16 qualifications and work of the office. Each nominee shall be examined in:  
17

18 <sup>1</sup> The details of this section pertain to the election of church officers. If  
19 a Session determines to commission or appoint men and/or women who  
20 are not officers but may bear the title of deacon (BCO 9-8), such men  
21 and/or women may be subject to a similar process at the discretion of  
22 the Session.  
23

24 **24-6.** The day having arrived, and the Session being convened in the presence of  
25 the congregation, a sermon shall be preached after which the presiding minister  
26 shall state in a concise manner the warrant and nature of the office of ruling elder,  
27 or deacon, together with the character proper to be sustained and the duties to be  
28 fulfilled.<sup>2</sup> Having done this, he shall propose to the candidate, in the presence of  
29 the church, the following questions, namely: ...  
30

31 <sup>2</sup> The details of this section pertain to the ordination of church officers.  
32 If a Session determines to commission or appoint men and/or women  
33 who are not officers but may bear the title of deacon (BCO 9-8), then  
34 the process for commissioning or appointing shall be determined by the  
35 Session.  
36

37 *Adopted by the Metro Atlanta Presbytery at its stated meeting, January 27, 2026*

38 *Attested by /s/ TE Randall Schlichting, Stated Clerk*