

ALBANY PRESBYTERY CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF SESSION RECORDS

Clerk of Session is asked to complete checklist pages 1, 2, and 3 prior to Peer Review Meetings

For the Peer Review Meetings, please bring all Checklist pages, and the Minutes Book

Review of Session Records of the _____ Church, _____, NY/VT

Dated from [date of last “stamped” review] _____ to _____ [normally 12/31 of prior year]

Checklist completed by _____ Records presented by (if different) _____

Date of Peer Review Session attended _____

# on prior checklist)	ITEM AND CITATION	Yes or N/A	No	Page Numbers
SESSION MEETINGS – RESPONSIBILITIES				
1	Date, hour, place and type of meeting (stated or special) is recorded. (Robert’s Rules of Order §47)			each meeting*
2	Full name of person presiding is recorded. (G-3.02)			each meeting*
3.	Attestation of a quorum is recorded. (G-3.02)			each meeting*
4.	Each meeting is opened and closed with prayer.			each meeting*
5.	The record of each meeting is duly attested (signed) by the Clerk of Session. (G-3.02)			each meeting*
6.	Process for education and mutual growth of Session members is recorded.			
7.	Name of elder(s) elected commissioner(s) to Presbytery meetings and any term of appointment are recorded. Commissioner reports to the Session are expected and are recorded.			
8.	Annual review of membership rolls by session is required and is recorded. (G-3.02)			
9.	General administrative review summary noted – in many churches, this is done in the form of an annual report, often presented to the congregation, but technically made to the session. (G-3.02)			
10.	Session’s establishing budget/s is included in the minutes along with a copy of the budget			
11.	Statement of composition (Male/Female) of Session is included.			
12.	Annual review of all Treasurers’ Reports is recorded.			
13.	Annual financial review is recorded. (G-3.0113)			
14.	Instruction, examination, ordination and installation are recorded for new church officers (ruling elders and deacons). (G-3.02)			
SACRAMENT OF LORD’S SUPPER				
15.	Dates for celebration of the Lord’s Supper are established by session in advance. (W-2.4012)			
16.	Celebrations of the Lord’s Supper are recorded in minutes of next regular meeting after celebration.			
17.	For home or hospital communions, the name of church officer or member approved by Session to accompany minister at celebration of the Lord’s Supper is recorded.			

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM				
18.	Counseling and authorization by Session prior to baptism are recorded.			
19.	<u>Infant baptisms</u> : Record name, parents' names, date of birth, person/s presenting for baptism <u>Adult baptisms</u> : Record name (including full maiden name if applicable), parents' names, date of birth.			
20.	Facts (date and place) of a baptism having taken place are recorded at next regular meeting of Session. And are recorded in the Church Register.			

* One need not put the page number of every meeting, but might instead note any meetings in which the guideline was not met.

(# on prior checklist)	ITEM AND CITATION	Yes or N/A	No	Page Numbers
RECEPTION OR DISMISSAL OF MEMBERS				
21.	Full names of new members are recorded, and whether they join by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith, or letter of transfer.			
22.	The names of new members' minor children and dates of their baptisms are recorded.			
23.	Full names of people transferred to another church and the name of the church are recorded.			
CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS				
24a.	Annual Congregational Meeting: properly called, with the purpose of the meeting stated. (G-1.05)			
24b.	Annual Congregational Meeting: within proper limitations of business for a congregation. (G-1.05)			
24c.	Annual Congregational Meeting: quorum present			
24d.	Annual Congregational Meeting: Elders and Deacons elected by congregation (nominations asked from floor; vote taken by voice, hands or ballot)			
24e.	Annual Congregational Meeting: terms of call for installed pastor/s are annually approved.			
25a.	Special Congregational Meeting: properly called, with the purpose of the meeting stated. (G-1.05)			
25b.	Special Congregational Meeting: within proper limitations of business for a congregation. (G-1.05)			
25c.	Special Congregational Meeting: quorum present (G-1.05)			
26.	All Congregational Meeting Minutes are included in Session Minute book, with Secretary (Clerk) signing the minutes.			
SPECIAL CONSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS				
27.	Full record of disciplinary proceedings is included in the minutes (See <i>Rules of Discipline</i> .)			

	PRESBYTERY ANNUAL REQUIREMENTS			
28.	Annual General Assembly membership and financial statistics are entered into the Session records. (can be copied into book from the printout after entering the statistics online)			
CONTINUING PRESBYTERY GUIDELINES				
29.	Minutes should be in a secure, permanent binder such as post or pressure binder, and on acid-free or 25% rag content paper.			<i>all pages*</i>
30.	Pages should be numbered consecutively with printing on both sides of the page. <u>Leave no blank spaces</u> , or use note such as, "The remainder of this page is purposely left blank.")			<i>all pages*</i>
31.	Records are typed or handwritten legibly.			<i>all pages*</i>
32.	Full names of elders present and absent are recorded.			<i>all meetings*</i>
33.	Actions of the Session are recorded; neither names of makers of motions, nor details of discussions need be included, except as seen as vital to the transaction of the meeting or church history, or to provide background for future discussions.			<i>all meetings*</i>
34.	Official communications to Session are recorded, along with the action taken or the referral made.			
35.	Presbytery's previous review of minutes is recorded and, in the case of any exceptions, correction is made when necessary.			
36.	Erasures, interlineations, footnotes and inserted material are avoided. Correction fluids, glues and pastes are not used (because they contain acids.)			<i>all pages *</i>

Page 4 is completed at the Peer Review Meeting by another Clerk of Session who reads these minutes and discusses any questions with the Stated Clerk and other Clerks.

ALBANY PRESBYTERY CHECKLIST FOR ANNUAL REVIEW OF SESSION RECORDS

Review of Session Records of the _____ Church, _____, NY/VT

Review completed by _____, clerk of session at _____

Date of Peer Review Session _____

Guidelines for reviewing minutes: The reviewing of Session minutes is a presbytery responsibility that provides the opportunity for awareness and support of a congregation’s ministry and witness, and guidance and support for the clerk of session as she or he seeks to fulfill the responsibility for accurate record (and history) keeping. While each clerk seeks to have minutes approved “without exception,” there are times when exceptions can actually help the clerk in his or her work.

Notes, exceptions and commendations: In reviewing the minutes of another church, you are encouraged to read through the whole year of minutes to gain a feel for the ministry and witness of the congregation, as well as the style of the clerk of session in recording the minutes. Then, using the clerk’s completed checklist, please review the minutes so that you can make a recommendation to the presbytery. The following “definitions” are offered to guide you:

- ⊕ **Notes:** If single items are lacking (e.g., forgetting to state time of one or two session meetings), then simply include that as a note for the clerk (and the Session.) “Notes” are items that are not deemed critical for the records or history of the church, but their correction will improve the record-keeping.
- ⊕ **Exceptions:** Recurrent omissions can be listed as exceptions; exceptions can also be items critical for record keeping such as not detailing officer elections, names of new members and baptismal information. There are times when an exception can help the clerk in her or his work. (e.g., if the congregation, rather than the session approves the church budget – and the clerk has been calling attention to this error.)
- ⊕ **Disapproval:** Disapproval may be for incomplete minutes, or such serious omissions that there would be due concern about the church’s records, or comprehension of actions taken. (See stated clerk.)
- ⊕ **Commendations:** As you read the minutes the style of the clerk’s reporting, or a practice or ministry in the life of the congregation may stand out for you. This offers you the opportunity to lift it up.

Recommendation:

_____ that the minutes be approved without exception

_____ that the minutes be approved without exception, but with the following **Notes:**

_____ that the minutes be approved with the following **Exception/s:**

_____ that the minutes be **Disapproved** for the following reason/s:

_____ and that the Presbytery take the following action/s:

Commendations: