

NUTS & BOLTS OF SESSION MINUTES



The method of recording session minutes is somewhat dependent on local circumstances and tradition. The following is the suggested procedure used by many churches:

1. The Clerk takes notes for the minutes at the meeting and later types the draft minutes or arranges for them to be typed.
2. Make copies of the draft and distribute them before the next meeting;
3. At the next meeting, the draft minutes are either approved as presented or corrections are made. Correct the minutes before putting them in the book;
4. The Clerk or someone responsible to the Clerk prints the approved minutes and puts them into the session permanent minute book (these may be photocopies as long as archival quality paper is used);
5. If using a computer printer for minutes in the permanent minute book, a laser printer and archival quality paper must be used – *inkjet ink is not permanent because it is water soluble*;
6. If you wish, session minutes may be professionally bound into volumes. This can be done by the Presbyterian Department of History at a reasonable cost (215) 627-1852. In any event, some binding should be used to ensure that the pages stay together;
7. Make sure every page within a volume is consecutively numbered;
8. Do not use erasures, whiteout, strikethroughs or footnotes; or insert in the records separate sheets of paper with written or printed matter on them;
9. The records of each session meeting are to be duly attested (signed in ink) by the Clerk. The records of congregational meetings are to be attested by the clerk AND the moderator;
10. The minutes of congregational meetings, the annual report of the church treasurer or treasurers, and the annual statistical report required by General Assembly are to be included. These are to be typed or photocopied into the permanent record book and not included as inserts.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

Minutes of all congregational meetings shall be included in the session record book along with session minutes in one chronological order.

Minutes of these meetings shall include:

1. Indication of whether the meeting is “annual” or “special (called).” (G-1.0501)
2. If it is a “special meeting,” the minutes shall include the call to the meeting, which will serve as the agenda.
3. Name of the church.
4. Date, time, and place of the meeting.
5. Name of the moderator or presiding officer.
6. Presence of a quorum as determined by the church Bylaws.
7. Opening and closing of the meeting with prayer.
8. Record of all actions, whether adopted or lost.
9. When applicable, action by the congregation on the adequacy of compensation and any change in each pastor’s terms of call, with full terms specified. (G-1.0503)
10. Minutes of the meeting of the congregation at which the annual financial reports are made should indicate, at least:
 - a. report of a full financial review of the financial records (G-3.0113);
 - b. a complete report of income and expenditures for the prior year;
 - c. the budget as adopted by the session for the coming year;
 - d. details of the status of any loans (including those from General Assembly, Synod, or Presbytery) if any are outstanding.
11. If the congregation does not approve the minutes before adjournment, session may approve the minutes at its next scheduled meeting.

Congregational meeting minutes must be attested (signed in ink) by the moderator and the clerk.