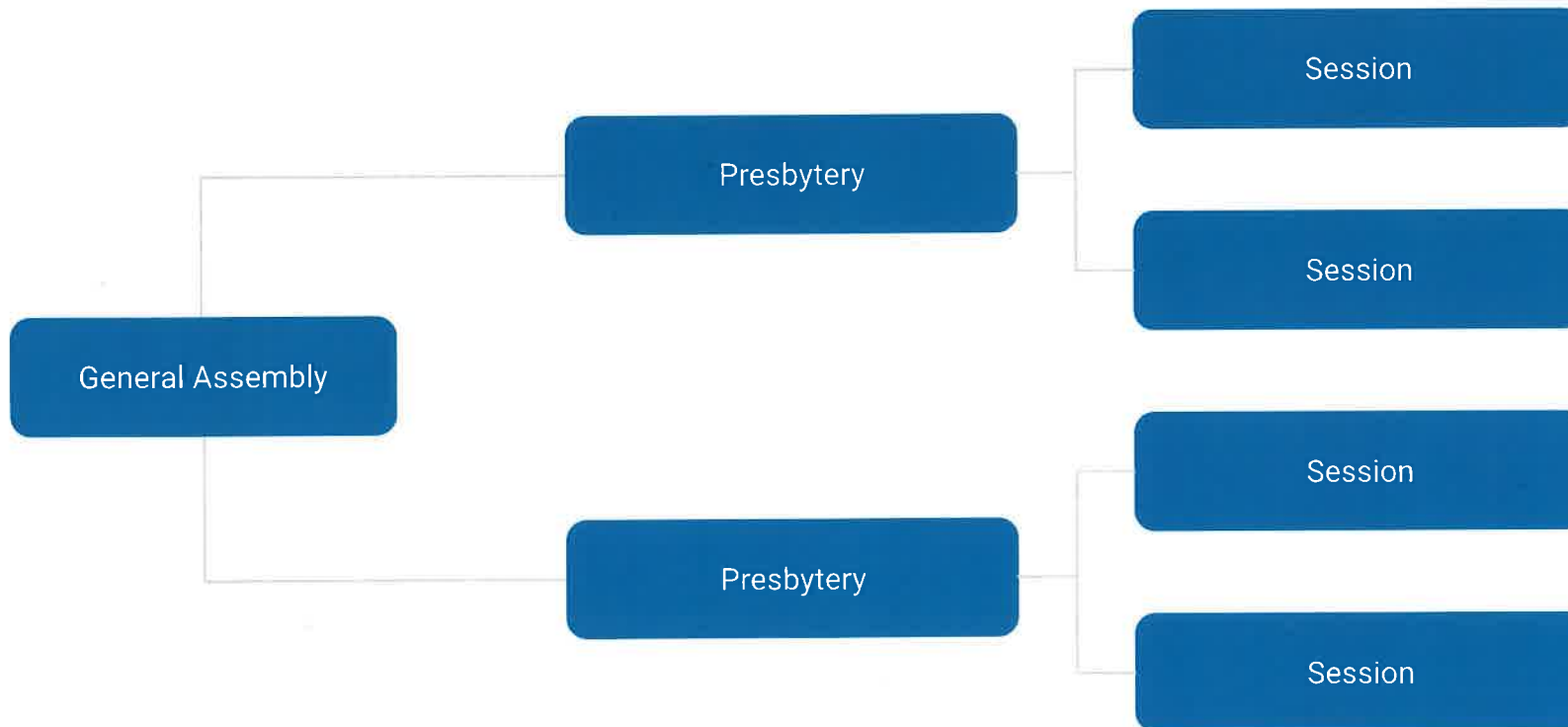


49th General Assembly
Birmingham, AL
June 20-24, 2022

Rev. Dr. David T.A. Strain
August 3, 2022

PCA Structure



Glossary

GA – General Assembly

WCF – Westminster Confession of Faith

BCO – Book of Church Order

RPR – Review of Presbytery Records

Constitution

Subject to and subordinate to the Scriptures
of the Old and New Testaments

Consists of:

Westminster Confession of Faith

Larger and Shorter Catechisms

Book of Church Order

Permanent Committees of GA

- Administrative Committee (AC) of GA
- Committee on Discipleship Ministries (CDM)
- Committee on Mission to North America (MNA)
- Committee on Mission to the World (MTW)
- Committee on Reformed University Fellowship (RUF)

General Assembly Attendance

This year's General Assembly was the **largest recorded** in our history.

The **2021 GA** held the previous record with **2115** commissioners (1499 TEs and 616 REs).

The **2022 GA** attendance was **2385** commissioners (1634 and 751), a **12%** total increase.

Commissioner

- Ordained ruling or teaching elder nominated by the Session to attend the General Assembly
- Tasked to vote on overtures and reports submitted to the General Assembly
- **Teaching Elders** in Attendance:
 - David Strain, David Felker, Wiley Lowry, Jamie Peipon
- **Ruling Elders** in Attendance:
 - Bill Stone, Ned Currie, George Fair, Craig Flowers, Claude Harbarger, Alan Walters

Overtures Committee

- A committee of commissioners attending the GA tasked to discuss and approve all overtures to the GA from Presbyteries and Sessions.
- Of **88 Presbyteries**, there are **176 voting members** on the Overtures Committee

Overture

- an official communication submitted to the General Assembly from a lower court to a higher court requesting to take a particular action, approve/disapprove, or endorse a particular statement/ resolution.
- There were **42 Overtures** at GA this year.

Overtures from 2021 GA

- **Overture 23** and **Overture 37** sought to insert language that would prohibit men who identified as gay-Christians from becoming ministers in the PCA.
- Last years GA approved them, but they required 2/3s of all presbyteries to be ratified.
- **They failed by a very narrow margin.**

2022 GA: Overture 29

Would add a new **BCO 16-4**

16-4 Officers in the Presbyterian Church in America must be above reproach in their walk and Christlike in their character. While office bearers will see spiritual perfection only in glory, they will continue in this life to confess and to mortify remaining sins in light of God's work of progressive sanctification. Therefore, to be qualified for office, they must affirm the sinfulness of fallen desires, the reality and hope of progressive sanctification, and be committed to the pursuit of Spirit-empowered victory over their sinful temptations, inclinations, and actions.

2022 GA: Overture 31

Would add a new section to **BCO 21-4**

21-4. e. In the examination of the candidate's personal character, the presbytery shall give specific attention to potential notorious concerns. Careful attention must be given to his practical struggle against sinful actions, as well as to persistent sinful desires. The candidate must give clear testimony of reliance upon his union with Christ and the benefits thereof by the Holy Spirit, depending on this work of grace to make progress over sin (Psalm 103:2-5, Romans 8:29) and to bear fruit (Psalm 1:3, Gal. 5:22-23). While imperfection will remain, when confessing sins and sinful temptations publicly, officers of the church must exercise great care to not normalize those sins in the eyes of the congregation, as though they were matters of little consequence, but rather should testify to the work of the Holy Spirit in Christ Jesus in changing our sin nature (1 Cor. 6:9-11). In order to maintain discretion and protect the honor of the pastoral office, presbyteries are encouraged to empower a committee to conduct detailed examinations of these matters and to give prayerful support to candidates.

2022 GA: Overtures 29 and 31

- **Overture 29** (similar to the previous O23) passed **1922-200**.
- **Overture 31** (similar to the previous O37) passed **2062-33**.
- They will now go to Presbyteries for their ratification and must receive 2/3 approval before being voted on again by next year's GA before our constitution changes to admit them.

2022 GA: Overture 15

- Sought to add a new section, **BCO 7-4**, to the chapter on **Church Officers**, which would read:

Men who describe themselves as homosexual, even those who describe themselves as homosexual and claim to practice celibacy by refraining from homosexual conduct, are disqualified from holding office in the Presbyterian Church in America

2022 GA: Overture 15

- The Overtures Committee had actually recommended that **O15** be answered in the *negative*, but a **Minority Report** was offered, and *adopted* after extensive debate.
- The vote on the Assembly floor was tight (**1167-978**) and it seems unlikely that **Overture 15** will receive the required 2/3 of presbyteries to ratify.

2022 GA: Overture 3

- **Overture 3** called for the withdrawal of the PCA from the **National Association of Evangelicals** for several reasons:
 - The PCA affirms the doctrine of the spirituality of the church.
 - Many of the positions adopted by the NAE would be objected to by the majority of elders in the PCA.
 - The PCA has no need of an unelected lobby group.
 - None of the other conservative evangelical denominations belong to the NAE.
- The Assembly voted to withdraw from the **NAE** by a wide margin of **1030-699**.

2022 GA: Overture 8

- **Overture 8** seeks to change **BCO 33-1** and **34-1** to clarify what “**failure to act**” means by changing it to “**failure to indict.**”
- It then seeks to raise the threshold from two presbyteries to **10% of the total presbyteries** in the PCA who must request that the higher court assume original jurisdiction.
- This overture passed by a wide margin: **1245-521.**

2022 GA: Overture 13

The church may not speak to political matters except in extraordinary cases for conscience' sake.

Overture 13 asked the PCA to petition the government to end abortion.

The overture passed on a near-unanimous vote, **2062-33**.