

[OVT-002] On Establishing the Authority of Presbyteries to Define Severance Plans for Installed Ministers

Source: Presbytery
Committee: Unassigned

IOB Link: <https://www.pc-biz.org/#/search/3000512>
Event: 224th General Assembly (2020)
Sponsor: Beaver-Butler Presbytery
Type: General Assembly Full Consideration

Recommendation

The Presbytery of Beaver-Butler overtures the 224th General Assembly (2020) to direct the Stated Clerk to send the following proposed amendment to the presbyteries for their affirmative or negative votes:

Shall G-3.0303c be amended as follows: [Text to be added is shown as italic.]

“c. establishing minimum compensation standards, *including provisions for severance payments*, for pastoral calls and Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators within the presbytery;”

Rationale

In 1993, the General Assembly Permanent Judicial Commission ruled in the case *Saurbaugh v. the Presbytery of Great Rivers* that “The *Book of Order* does not give the presbyteries power to require congregations to pay compensation upon dissolution of pastoral relationships” (*Minutes*, 1994, Part I, p. 155, *Remedial Case 206-13,11.094* attached)

In subsequent years the church has maintained that while a presbytery can have guidelines and policies concerning severance for ministers at the dissolution of a pastorate, the presbytery has no authority to enforce those policies.

This overture seeks to remedy that omission in the *Book of Order* by making explicit the authority of presbyteries to create and enforce severance policies by linking that authority to the power to set minimum wages and approve calls.

The overture does not attempt to set a national severance policy, but to clarify the presbytery’s relationship to both the session and the minister during times of transition.

Concurrence

North Alabama Presbytery

Advocates

