

A TRAINING COURSE FOR ELDERS AND DEACONS

In Two Sections*

by

Pastor John R. Hilbelink

**THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT
OF
THE ORTHODOX PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

I. CHRIST, THE KING AND HEAD OF THE CHURCH

1. On what do the offices of the church rest?
2. Describe the headship of Christ over his church.
3. What is the relationship of the Scripture to church government?
4. What is the relationship of the Holy Spirit to church government?

II. THE CHURCH

1. What did Jesus Christ, being exalted, erect in this world?
2. What is the "universal church visible"?
3. What are the members of this church universal to do?
4. What is the work of the church?

III. THE NATURE AND EXERCISE OF CHURCH POWER

1. How are all believers related to the exercise of church power?
2. Who exercises ecclesiastical jurisdiction, and what do they do?
3. Describe the nature and limit of church power. (III,3,4).
4. How are the decisions of church officers to be received? (III,5)

IV THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH

1. How does the unity of the church in Christ reflect in her life?
2. What is the right and duty of those who rule in the church?
3. How is the church's unity shown in her relationship to the world?
4. How is the visible unity affected by the division of the church?

V. OFFICES IN THE CHURCH

1. Describe the purpose of the offices of apostle and prophet in the church of the new covenant.
2. What is the purpose of the gifts of teaching, ruling, and serving?
3. What are the ordinary and perpetual offices in the church?

VI. MINISTERS OR TEACHING ELDERS

1. What is the ministry of the Word?

* In this issue of *Ordained Servant* we publish the second and concluding part of this course.

2. What must every minister of the Word be and do?
3. How should one be able to describe his life and abilities?
4. Where should a minister of the Word be a member?

VII. EVANGELISTS

1. Describe the office of evangelist.
2. What is the work of the evangelist?

VIII. PASTORS

1. Describe the office and work of the pastor

IX. TEACHERS

1. Describe the office of the teacher.
2. What is the work of the teacher?

X. RULING ELDERS

1. Describe the office of the ruling elder.
2. What kind of character should a ruling elder possess?
3. What is the work of the ruling elder?

XI. DEACONS

1. What are the deacons called to do?
2. What kind of character should a deacon possess?
3. How are the deacons to be organized?
4. For what is the board of deacons responsible? (XI,4,5).
5. How is the board of deacons related to the session? (XI,5,6,7).

XII. GOVERNING ASSEMBLIES

1. What rights and powers do all governing assemblies possess?
2. What are the governing assemblies and how are they related?
3. What authority do the governing assemblies possess?
4. What is not permitted with regard to voting in assemblies?

XIII. THE LOCAL CHURCH AND ITS SESSION

1. Of what does the membership of the local church consist?
2. Who are communicant members, and who are non-communicant members?
3. Who are the officers of the local congregations, and how is their number determined?
4. Who are the members of the session, and how do they choose officers?
5. What are the requirements for calling and holding meetings?
6. What is to be done when a pastor is unable to be present?
7. What is the session charged with maintaining?
8. What records must the session keep, and who must review them?
9. What rules apply to the placing and removing names from the rolls of the church?
10. What may be done when a session ceases to exist or becomes too small?

XIV. THE REGIONAL CHURCH AND ITS PRESBYTERY

1. Of what does a regional church consist?

2. What is a presbytery, and of what does it consist?
3. Of whom are the meetings of presbytery to be composed?
4. What rules pertain to the moderator of presbytery?
5. What does the presbytery have the power to do?
6. What records must the presbytery keep, and who must review them?
7. What is required for calling and holding meetings? (XIV,7,8).
8. What are “corresponding members”, and what may they do?

XV. THE WHOLE CHURCH AND ITS GENERAL ASSEMBLY

1. Of what does the whole church consist?
2. What is the general assembly, and of what does it consist?
3. How often does the assembly meet, and what is a quorum?
4. What rules apply to the moderator? (XV,3,4)
5. What rules apply to the calling of an assembly in an emergency?
6. What is the work of the assembly? (XV,6,7)
7. How are the pronouncements of the assembly to be viewed? (XV,8)

XVI. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

1. What rules apply to calling congregational meetings and to voting?
2. What rules apply to congregational meetings in mission works?
3. How must the congregation be notified about a coming meeting, and what business may be transacted?
4. What rules apply to the moderator and the clerk?
5. What rules apply to keeping minutes of the meeting?
6. When must business be transacted as a corporation?
7. What steps must a congregation take if they desire to withdraw from the Orthodox Presbyterian Church?

XVII. CONGREGATIONS WITHOUT PASTORS

1. Who may lead worship in a congregation without a pastor? (XVII,1,3)
2. How may presbytery supervise a congregation without a pastor?

XVIII. MODERATORS

1. Who may serve as a moderator?
2. What authority does a moderator have?
3. What voting privileges does a moderator have?

XIX. CLERKS

1. Who may serve as a clerk, and what are his duties?

XX. ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION

1. Who is responsible for ordaining men to serve in the church? (XX,1,5)
2. What is ordination?
3. Under what circumstances and for what service are officers to be ordained? (XX,3,4)
4. What is installation? (XX,6)
5. Who must perform the service of installation? (XX,7)
6. What may be done for officers who are elderly, disabled, or retired? (XX,8)

XXI. LICENSING CANDIDATES TO PREACH THE GOSPEL

1. What is the purpose of licensure?

2. What steps must be taken to come under the care of the presbytery?
 3. What academic requirements are needed for licensure?
 4. What examinations are given for licensure?
 5. What other assignments may be given for licensure?
 6. How may an exception be taken to the academic requirements?
 7. Briefly describe the questions asked at the time of licensure.
 8. Briefly describe what is declared at the time of licensure and what is recorded in the minutes.
9. What is done when a candidate moves to another presbytery during the carrying out of his examination assignments?
10. What must be done when a licentiate has moved to another presbytery?
 11. Under what circumstances may a license be recalled?

XXII. CALLING A MINISTER

1. Who may be called to ministerial service, and who may issue a call?
2. What place does the presbytery have in the calling process?
3. What place does a special committee of the congregation have in the calling process? (XXII,3,4)
4. What place does the session have in the calling process? (XXII,3,4)
5. What do the moderator and the special committee do at the meeting of the congregation?
6. Describe the voting process for a congregation calling a minister.
7. In what ways may the call be subscribed?
8. What must the moderator do when a call is subscribed?
9. Describe the form of the call.
10. What must presbytery do when a call is from a congregation?
11. What must presbytery do when a call is from a presbytery, the general assembly, or from one of their agencies?
12. What procedures must be taken for . . .
 - a. a call to a pastor of another congregation?
 - b. a call to a minister serving a presbytery, GA, or an agency?
 - c. a call to a minister without charge or not in the church?
 - d. a call to a licentiate?
 - e. a call which has been declined?
 - f. leaving one's charge?
13. What procedures must be taken for a call to a minister outside the OPC?
14. Within what time period should a person accept or decline a call?
15. What is implied in the acceptance of a call?
16. What is meant by "find the call in order" and "approve its terms"?

XXIII. □ ORDAINING AND INSTALLING MINISTERS

1. What does presbytery's receipt of a call and acceptance imply?
2. What is necessary for a licentiate to be ordained?
3. What are the academic requirements for ordination, and how may exception be allowed?
4. What must presbytery do when a licentiate accepts a call?
5. When may a licentiate be ordained?
6. Of what do the trials for ordination consist?
7. What must presbytery do to arrange for an ordination?

IN QUESTIONS 8-12 DESCRIBE THE FOLLOWING:

8. ...ordination service and the candidate's vows.
9. ...vows of the congregation.
10. ...ordination by prayer and the laying on of hands.
11. ...installation of an OPC minister as pastor of a congregation.
12. ...installation of a non-OPC minister as pastor of a congregation.
13. When may a licentiate be ordained to the office of evangelist?

IN QUESTIONS 14-17 DESCRIBE THE FOLLOWING:

14. ...ordination service of a licentiate to the office of evangelist.
15. ...ordination by prayer and the laying on of hands.
16. ...installation of a minister of this church as an evangelist.
17. ...installation of a minister outside the OPC as an evangelist.
18. What is to be done when a minister outside the OPC, though not having a call to service in the OPC, desires to serve in the OPC?
19. What must be done when a minister is to be installed in a position that is a change of function from his previous service?
20. What must be done when a minister has been ordained or installed?

XXIV. DISSOLVING MINISTERIAL RELATIONSHIPS

1. What must be done when a minister desires to resign a ministerial charge so he may accept another call?
2. What must be done if a congregation desires to be relieved of its pastor?
3. What must be done if a presbytery, the general assembly, or one of their agencies decides to dissolve its relationship with a minister serving under their call?
4. What must be done when a minister desires to resign to take up a different kind of labor?
5. What must be done when a minister desires to resign without other ministerial work in view?

XXV. ELECTING, ORDAINING, AND INSTALLING RULING ELDERS AND DEACONS

1. Who may be elected to offices of ruling elder and deacon?
2. What provisions must be made for either limited terms of office or lifetime service?
3. For what must a congregation look in their officers?
4. How are candidates to be proposed for the congregation's consideration?
5. What must be done upon a candidate's election to office?
6. Describe the service of ordination and installation and the vows.
7. Describe the service of installation to a limited term of service.

XXVI. DIVESTING FROM OFFICE

1. For what may an officer be deposed?
2. May an officer be divested of his office for other reasons?
3. What must a presbytery do in considering a divestiture?
4. What procedures are to be followed when a ruling elder or deacon may be divested?
5. How must a divested man be viewed if he is called again to office?
6. To whom should divestiture not apply? (XXVI,6,7)

XXVII. MISSIONS

1. Who is responsible for the work of missions?
2. How may the general assembly's initiation of a work relate to the presbytery in which the work is begun?
3. Under whose jurisdiction is a missionary?

XXVIII. MINISTERS LABORING OUTSIDE THE CHURCH

1. What kind of labor is in view in this chapter?
2. What seven general principles pertain to such labor?
3. To whom shall these principles also apply?
4. How often must such ministers report to presbytery, and what must be included in their report?

XXIX. ORGANIZING AND RECEIVING CONGREGATIONS

A. ORGANIZING CONGREGATIONS

1. Who may be recognized as a mission work, and where must its members be enrolled?
2. What roll does the presbytery have in organizing a congregation?
3. What four steps must be taken in organizing a mission work of an existing congregation as a new and separate congregation?
4. What five steps must be taken in organizing a mission work of a presbytery as a new and separate congregation?
5. What four steps must be taken in organizing a group of non-OPC believers, not part of an existing congregation as a new and separate congregation?

B. RECEIVING CONGREGATIONS

1. What roll does the Presbytery have in receiving a congregation not belonging to the OPC?
2. What five procedures must be followed in receiving an existing local church not belonging to the OPC as a new and separate congregation?

XXX. ORGANIZATIONS OF MEMBERS OF THE CHURCH

1. What may every Christian do as they exercise the general office of believer?
2. What should church members do when a church fails to perform its divinely given task?
3. What must an organization do when it purports to represent the OPC?

XXXI. INCORPORATION AND CORPORATIONS

1. What place do corporations have in the government of the OPC?
2. What rules pertain to voting at corporation meetings?
3. What rules pertain to the board of trustees?
4. What rules pertain to meetings of corporations?
5. What property rights do particular churches have?

XXXII. THE CONSTITUTION AND ITS AMENDMENT

1. Of what does the Constitution of the Orthodox Presbyterian Church consist, and to what is it subordinate?
2. How may the Form of Government, Book of Discipline, and the Directory for Worship be amended?
3. How may the Confession of Faith and Catechisms and the forms of subscription be amended?
4. What procedures must be followed for organic union of the OPC with another denomination?
5. Describe the "gist" of chapter XXXII, section 5.

THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

I. THE NATURE AND PURPOSES OF DISCIPLINE

1. What is ecclesiastical discipline?
2. What is administrative discipline?
3. What is judicial discipline?
4. Who is subject to ecclesiastical discipline?

II. JURISDICTION

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. Who has original jurisdiction over individuals? Over judicatories?
2. What rules pertain to certificates of dismissal?
3. What rules pertain to those charged with an offense who ask to be dismissed to another body?

B. THE SESSION'S JURISDICTION

1. Over whom does a session have jurisdiction?
2. What rules pertain to receiving members?
 - a. By letter of transfer from another OPC?
 - b. By letter of transfer from another church of like faith?
 - c. By reaffirmation of faith?
 - d. By confession of faith?
 - e. Non-communicant unbaptized children?
 - f. Non-communicant baptized members?
3. What rules pertain to removing members?
 - a. By letter of transfer to a congregation approved by session?
 - b. To a church of which the session cannot approve?
 - c. Upon the ordination of a teaching elder?
 - d. By erasure?
 - 1). Dismissal to a church of which the session cannot approve?
 - 2). If member does not desire to remain in the OPC?
 - 3). If member unites or persists attending another church?
 - 4). If a member cannot be found?
 - 5). If a member is persistently absent from stated services?
 - 6). If non-communicant neglects to profess faith in Christ?
 - e. When parents names are removed?
 - f. Upon death?
 - g. By excommunication?

C. THE PRESBYTERY'S JURISDICTION

1. Over whom does the presbytery have original jurisdiction?
2. What is presbytery's original jurisdiction over teaching elders?

D. SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

1. What must be done if a session ceases to exist or become too small?
2. What must be done if a church ceases to exist?
3. What must be done if a presbytery ceases to exist?
4. What must be done with incompleated cases of discipline?

III. STEPS IN THE INSTITUTION OF JUDICIAL PROCESS

1. Who may bring a charge?
2. Until what time may a charge be admitted?
3. What 6 rules pertain to charges? What 3 rules...specifications?
4. What is a public offense? What is a private offense?
5. How does Matthew 18:15-17 pertain to the receiving of charges?
6. What warning is given to a person presenting a charge?
7. What rules pertain to THE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION of a charge brought by an individual or individuals?
8. What rules pertain to THE PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATION of a charge brought by a judicatory?

IV. THE TRIAL OF JUDICIAL CASES

A. RULES FOR THOSE INVOLVED

1. What rules pertain to the judicatory?

2. What rules pertain to the clerk?
3. What rules pertain to the accused?
4. What rules pertain to witnesses?

B. RULES FOR EVIDENCE

1. How must the judicatory view factual and circumstantial evidence?
2. In what areas may objections be raised by the accused?
3. What is necessary to establish the truth of a specification?
4. When may a witness be barred from hearing the testimony of another witness?
5. What rules pertain to a trial judicatory's examination of witnesses?
6. When may records of another judicatory be used as evidence?
7. What rules pertain to testimony or evidence taken by a commission?
8. What rules pertain when new evidence is discovered during a trial?
9. What rules pertain when new evidence is produced after the accused has been found guilty?

C. RULES OF TRIAL PROCEEDINGS

1. What rules pertain to THE FIRST MEETING OF THE TRIAL?
 - a. Concerning the presenting of charges and specifications?
 - b. Concerning the time, date, and place for the second meeting?
 - c. Concerning granting citations to summon witnesses?
2. What rules pertain to THE SECOND MEETING OF THE TRIAL?
 - a. Concerning objections which may be raised by the accused?
 - b. Concerning voting privileges and quorums of the judicatory?
 - c. Concerning the accused moving for dismissal of the charge?
3. What rules pertain to THE CONCLUSION OF THE TRIAL?
 - a. Concerning the final argument of the accused, voting on each charge and specification, and proceeding to determine censure?
 - b. Concerning announcing decision on charges and specifications, statement of the proposed censure, and pronouncing of censure in relationship to a possible appeal?
4. What rules pertain to TRIAL IN ABSENTIA?

V. CASES WITHOUT FULL PROCESS

1. How must a judicatory proceed if a person comes as his own accuser?
2. What rules pertain to erasing the following without full process?
 - a. A member desires dismissal to a church of which the session cannot approve as a church of like faith and practice?
 - b. A member declares he does not desire to remain in the OPC?
 - c. A member unites with or persists in attending another church?
 - d. A member cannot be found?
 - e. A member persistently absents himself from stated services?
 - f. A non-communicant neglects to profess faith in Christ?
 - g. A minister desires to renounce the jurisdiction of the OPC?
 - h. A minister cannot be found?

VI. CENSURE AND RESTORATION

A. CENSURE

1. What are the 5 degrees of censure and how are they to be pronounced?
2. What must be done if a person fails to appear for censure?

B. DEGREES OF CENSURE

1. What is admonition?
2. What is rebuke?
3. What is suspension? How is this censure carried out?
4. What is deposition? How is this censure carried out?
5. What is excommunication?

C. PROCEDURAL CONSIDERATIONS

1. Which censures must be announced to the church?
2. What must be done if someone suspended indefinitely does not repent?

D. RESTORATION

1. When may a deposed officer be restored?
2. Under what condition may a deposed officer resume his former office?
3. What must always accompany restoration?

VII. APPEALS

1. What is an appeal, and who may make an appeal?
2. What may not be appealed?
3. What rules pertain to filing an intention to appeal?
4. What steps and timetable must be observed to bring an appeal to a hearing?
5. What is required of the clerk of the judicatory from whose judgment the appeal is taken?
6. What possible decisions may the appellate judicatory make?
7. Who may vote on an appeal brought to an appellate judicatory?

VIII. DISSENTS AND PROTESTS

1. Who may request that his vote be recorded in the minutes?
2. What rules pertain to the submission and processing of a written protest?
3. When should a judicatory answer a protest?

IX. COMPLAINTS

1. What is a complaint, and who may bring a complaint?
2. To whom must a complaint be presented and within what time frame?
3. What rules pertain to a complainant appealing to the next higher judicatory?
4. What rules pertain to the clerks of the judicatories involved in the complaint and the appeal?
5. What rules pertain to a session or complainant appealing a presbytery's decision to the general assembly?
6. Who shall determine what amends are to be made?

THE DIRECTORY FOR THE PUBLIC WORSHIP OF GOD

I. THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE LORD'S DAY

1. How may we prepare for the Lord's Day?
2. Why do we keep the first day of the week holy as the Lord's Day?
3. How is the Lord's Day to be kept holy?
4. How do we enable others to keep the day holy?
5. How can each family prepare for the Lord's Day?
6. What is "the sacred duty and high privilege of God's people"?

II. THE PRINCIPLES OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

1. From what source must we derive our principles of public worship?
2. Describe God's relationship to public worship.
3. What are the end and the aim of public worship?
4. How is public worship said to be "divine"?
5. How is public worship "Christian"?
6. How must public worship be performed "in spirit and in truth"?
7. What liberty do we have in public worship?
8. How does public worship differ from private worship?
9. How must we come into God's presence in public worship?

III. THE USUAL PARTS OF PUBLIC WORSHIP

1. What are the two kinds of parts of the public worship of God?
2. How is the reading of the Scriptures to be a part of public worship?
3. How is the sermon to be a part of public worship?
4. What is proper at the beginning and conclusion of public worship?
5. How is prayer to be a part of public worship?
6. How is singing to be a part of public worship?
7. How are the offerings to be a part of public worship?
8. What place may ruling elders take in public worship?

IV. THE CELEBRATION OF THE SACRAMENTS

A. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1. How can we prepare ourselves to celebrate the sacraments?
2. With what urgency and/or frequency should the sacraments be kept?
3. How are the sacraments to be administered?
4. Who may administer the sacraments?
5. How strictly must the forms for the sacraments be followed?

B. OF HOLY BAPTISM

1. What instruction is given at the service on the nature of baptism?
2. What instruction is given as to the ground of infant baptism?
3. What instruction is given as the basis of the baptism of an adult?
4. What questions are asked prior to the baptism of an infant?
5. What questions are asked of an adult prior to his or her baptism?
6. How is the sacrament of baptism performed?

C. OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

1. What instruction is given at the service of the Lord's Supper?
2. What warning is given before the sacrament is served?
3. How is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper served?

V. PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH IN CHRIST

1. What may be done for those who contemplate making public profession of faith in Christ?
2. What should a session examination seek out?
3. Why must a one-week public notice be given prior to a public profession of faith?
4. How is a profession of faith related to taking the Lord's Supper?

5. What questions are asked on the occasion of public profession?

VI. OF ORDINATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS

A. MINISTERS

1. How is the ordination and installation of ministers to be performed?
2. What instruction may be given on the warrant and nature of the office of minister?

B. RULING ELDERS

1. How is the ordination and installation of ruling elders to be performed?
2. What instruction may be given on the warrant and nature of the office of ruling elder?

C. DEACONS

1. How is the ordination and installation of deacons to be performed?
2. What instruction may be given on the warrant and nature of the office of deacon?

EACH CANDIDATE SHOULD BECOME ACQUAINTED WITH THE FOLLOWING ITEMS WHICH OCCUR AFTER "THE DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP."

A. SUGGESTED FORMS FOR USE IN CONNECTION WITH THE BOOK OF DISCIPLINE

- | | | |
|--|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| I. Charge and Specification | II. Citation of Accused | III. Citation of Witness |
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ IV. Notice of Intention to Appeal | V. Appeal | VI. Complaint |
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ VII. Appeal (In Administrative Cases) | | |

B. SUGGESTED FORMS FOR PARTICULAR SERVICES

- | | | |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|
| I. Marriage Service; | II. Burial Service; | III. Dedication of a Church |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|

C. THE RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM FOR MINISTERIAL PREPARATION IN THE O.P.C.

SCRIPTURE.

- | | | |
|---|------------------------------|------------------------|
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ I. Bible Content; □□□□ | II. Biblical Languages; □□□□ | III. Hermeneutics; □□□ |
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ IV. Use of the Bible in Ministry | | |

DOCTRINE.

- | | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|
| □□□□ I. Church History; □□□□ | II. Apologetics; □□□□ | III. Theology and Ethics; □□□□ |
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ IV. Polity | | |

PRACTICAL THEOLOGY.

- | | | |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------------|
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ I. The Pastor's Personal Life; □□□□ | II. Worship; □□□□ | III. Evangelism; □□ |
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ IV. Missiology; □□□□ | V. Pastoral Care; □□□□ | VI. Christian Education; □□□□ |
| □□□□□□□□□□□□□□□□ VII. Pastoral Administration. | | |