

TEMPLATE

For the minutes of
stated (regular)
session meetings

This template is offered as an example of how minutes may be formatted and is not a required format. Clerks are free to develop and use the format that best suits them and the sessions they serve.

Name of Church
City, State
Minutes of Stated Session Meeting
Date & Time

Moderator:

Elders Present:

Elders Excused:

Guests:

Call to Order: Rev. _____ called the meeting to order at _____(time) and opened with prayer (typed in boldface here because this is a frequent omission even though there was a prayer!). If prayer concerns are shared, it is not advised that any personal information be recorded; it is sufficient to say that the moderator called the meeting to order, asked for prayer concerns and opened with prayer.

Approval of Minutes: Record approval of the minutes of the previous stated (regular) meeting as well as those of any special meetings that were held since the last stated meeting. The session has the authority to approve the minutes of congregational meetings as well, although some churches prefer to have the congregation approve them at the annual meeting. If minutes are approved as corrected, not as written, corrections are made before minutes are entered into the permanent register.

Clerk's Report:

Correspondence: Report on correspondence received/sent since the last stated (regular) meeting. It is not necessary to report on every piece of correspondence received (other church newsletters, announcements or advertisements, mass mailings, etc.)

Membership Actions: Record here:

- Reception of new members by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or letter of transfer
- Dismissal of active/inactive members by letter of transfer to another church
- Deletion of members from active/inactive roll because of death or at their request to be deleted
- Transfer of members on active roll to inactive roll
- Restoration of members on inactive roll to active roll

For all actions, record the full name of each person.

Communion: Record session approval to serve communion on selected dates AND record all dates that communion was served since the last stated (regular) meeting, including communion at retreats or other special gatherings.

Baptisms: Record the prior authorization to perform a baptism AND record all baptisms performed. Information that must be recorded for every person baptized (infant, child and adult):

- Full legal name of person to be baptized (first, middle and last)
- Date and place of birth of person to be baptized
- Full legal name(s) of parent(s) presenting infant/child for baptism, including mother's maiden name, if applicable. The names of the parents of an adult to be baptized should also be recorded, even if they are not "presenting" the adult for baptism.

NOTE: It sometimes happens that an authorized baptism is not performed. While it is not necessary to record the reason, session minutes should record that the scheduled baptism did not take place.

Marriages: Record weddings at which the pastor has officiated on/off church premises.

Memorial Services: Record services at which the pastor has officiated on/off premises.

Officer Actions: Upon completion of a period of study and preparation, record the session approval to ordain and install incoming officers on a selected date. At the next stated (regular) meeting after that date, minutes must record that officers were actually ordained/installed on that date.

*Election of officers also needs to be recorded, but that will be recorded in the minutes of a congregational meeting since it is the congregation, not the session, that elects officers.

Pulpit Supply: If guest pastors have preached, record the names and dates here.

Presbytery Commissioners: Record the name(s) of person(s) elected to serve as elder commissioners at Assembly meetings. Your church's custom will determine whether commissioners are elected before each meeting, on a rotating basis, or for a specified period of time, i.e., one year. Commissioners must be ordained elders, but do not have to be active, i.e., currently on the session.

**The following asterisked items need to be recorded once per year, generally in January or February.

**Composition of the session compared to that of the congregation: The session does/does not compare favorably to the congregation in the categories of gender, age, race/ethnicity and disabilities.

**General Assembly Statistical Report: The summary pages of the report must be entered into the permanent register along with session minutes each year.

**Approval of Budget: The session, not the congregation, approves the annual budget, after which it is presented to the congregation. The budget is typically presented the annual meeting

and, if your church's fiscal year is different from the calendar year, the budget may be approved at some time other than January or February.

NOTE: It is helpful, although not required, to attach a copy of the approved budget to the session minutes entered into the register.

****Review of the Adequacy of Compensation for All Staff**: This review must be done annually and includes all staff – clergy and lay. Recording changes in the terms of call for the pastor(s) does not meet this requirement! It is easiest to do this during the budget-planning process and record that the Personnel (or perhaps Finance) Committee has reviewed the compensation of all ordained and non-ordained staff and found that all wages/salaries represent adequate compensation. It is not necessary to record the dollar amount of each staff member's compensation.

****Election of Treasurer**: The session must do this annually.

****Election of Clerk**: The session elects a clerk, who must be an elder, but does not have to be currently active on the session, for a term that the session determines. Since the term may be longer than one year, please be sure that the minutes record the agreed-upon term so that a new clerk or the current clerk is (re-)elected as necessary.

****Organization of Boards**: It is helpful to record each year the committee(s) on which each elder and deacon will serve.

Omnibus Motion: Your church may or may not choose to make use of an omnibus motion. It can be very helpful in moving a meeting along and is best used for actions that are not considered to require discussion. Items in the omnibus are voted on together, although if there is an item that has been extracted, it is voted on separately. Please see sample omnibus attached to this template.

Pastor's Report: Record those matters the pastor brings to the attention of the session.

Committee Reports were received from (list each session committee that submitted a written report since the last stated (regular) meeting). Written reports do not need to be entered into the permanent register along with session minutes.

NOTE: The number and particular name of session committees will vary according to the church, but the below-listed committees are typical.

Building and Grounds:

Christian Education:

Finance:

Membership:

Mission:

Personnel:

Worship:

Presbytery Assembly Report: Reports of Assembly meetings are required. *A brief* summary by the commissioner(s) is fine; the report does not need to be extensive!

Old/New Business:

Adjournment: The meeting adjourned at _____ with a closing prayer by _____.

The next stated (regular) meeting will be _____(date).

Respectfully submitted: _____
Clerk of Session

SAMPLE OMNIBUS MOTION

OMNIBUS MOTION:

From the Pastor (motion could be from the clerk if an active elder on the session):

1. Approve the minutes of the stated meeting on January 15, of the special meeting on January 19 and of the annual meeting on January 27.
2. Authorize the baptism on March 9, 2008 of Mary Elizabeth Smith, born on November 15, 2007 in Chicago, Illinois to James Allen Smith and Kathleen Anne (Jones) Smith.
3. Approve a letter of transfer to 1st Presbyterian Church in Miami, Florida for David Johnson and Alice Johnson (Mrs. David), and their subsequent removal from the active roll.
4. Approve the 2007 General Assembly Statistical Report as completed and submitted by the clerk.
5. Approve the election of Jane Schmidt as treasurer for 2008.
6. Approve the election of Carol Clark as clerk for 2008 and 2009.

From the Christian Education Committee:

1. Approve holding Vacation Bible School the week of July 7-11, 2008.

From the Finance Committee:

1. Accept the 2007 audit of the books as completed by Karl Jackson.

From the Mission Committee:

1. Approve the collection of the PC (U.S.A.)'s four denominational offerings in 2008: One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost, Peacemaking and Christmas Joy.

From the Personnel Committee:

1. Approve the revisions to the choir accompanist position description.

From the Worship Committee:

1. Approve the service of communion on:
 - February 6 – Ash Wednesday
 - February 17 – 2nd Sunday in Lent
 - March 20 – Maundy Thursday
 - May 18 – Trinity Sunday
 - June 22
 - September 7
 - October 5 – World Communion Sunday
 - November 30 – 1st Sunday in Advent

Other:

1. Accept the Board of Deacons report of January 21.

The session voted to approve the omnibus motion as presented.

