Summary of the 2026 PC(USA) Proposed Book of Order Amendments
Please see page six for voting groups

The document contains 25 proposed amendments, numbered 26-A through 26-Y, approved by the 227th General Assembly (2026) and sent to the presbyteries for their votes. The proposals address public witness, ordination and preparation for ministry, safeguarding and training requirements, antiracism, commissioned ruling elders, and presbytery governance.

The summaries below explain the principal change proposed by each amendment. (See *Proposed Amendments to the Constitution for full text.*)

26-A — F-1.0305: Faithful Witness in Public Life

Adds a new constitutional statement affirming the church's responsibility to bear witness in public life to justice, peace, mercy, and human dignity. It explicitly rejects Christian Nationalism and other ideologies that use state power to privilege Christianity or promote national, racial, or ethnic supremacy, identifying them as incompatible with Jesus Christ's teachings.

26-B — G-2.0102: Ordered Ministries of the Church

Clarifies that the ordered ministries of deacon, ruling elder, and minister of the Word and Sacrament are equally important and nonhierarchical. Their responsibilities differ, but no office is to be considered superior to another in dignity, worth, or authority. It also reiterates that placement in an ordered ministry requires election by the relevant congregation or council.

26-C — G-2.0104c: Antiracism Formation

Requires presbyteries to provide antiracism education and formation to inquirers and candidates preparing for ordered ministry. Presbyteries would determine the timing and format of this formation in accordance with standards established by the General Assembly.

26-D — G-2.06: Preparation for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Changes the heading of G-2.06 from the general Preparation for Ministry to the more specific Preparation for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament. The purpose is to distinguish preparation for this particular ordered ministry from the broader ministry carried out by elders, deacons, and other church members. This is a clarifying change to the section title.

26-E — G-2.0601: Nature and Purpose of Preparation

Renames the section from Nature and Purpose of Ordination to Nature and Purpose of Preparation and adds mandatory training for presbytery members responsible for preparing inquirers and candidates, including their liaisons. The specified subjects are antiracism, intercultural competency, implicit-bias awareness, and equitable support for LGBTQIA+ inquirers and candidates. Training must be completed at least every three years and recorded in presbytery minutes.

26-F — G-2.0603: Purpose of Inquiry

Adds an explicit requirement that inquirers for the ministry of the Word and Sacrament complete boundary training, including sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training. Certificates must be renewed at least every 36 months, and the presbytery determines which training programs qualify.

26-G — G-2.0603: Purpose of Inquiry

Adds antiracism training to the requirements for inquirers, alongside boundary training and child sexual abuse prevention training. Completion certificates and recertification at least every 36 months are required, with the presbytery determining which programs qualify.

26-H — G-2.0606: Education and Training for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Creates a new section requiring those preparing for ministry to complete boundary training, including sexual misconduct, and training in the prevention of child and youth abuse. They must provide certificates to the presbytery and renew the training at least every 36 months. The presbytery determines which training programs qualify.

26-I — G-2.06: Education and Training for the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Creates a new section explicitly requiring a graduate course of study at a theological institution accredited by the Association of Theological Schools and acceptable to the presbytery, culminating in a master's degree. The required studies must include Hebrew and Greek, as well as exegesis of the Old and New Testaments using those languages.

26-J — G-2.0606: Supervised Service While Under Care of the Presbytery in Covenant Relationship

Changes the section title from Service in Covenant Relationship to Supervised Service While Under Care of the Presbytery in Covenant Relationship. The intent is to make the section's subject more explicit; the proposal does not substantively change its provisions.

26-K — G-2.0607: Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service

Revises the evidence required for a candidate to be certified as ready for examination for ordination, pending a call. It specifies educational credentials and theological coursework, including Hebrew and Greek and biblical exegesis in those languages, along with satisfactory academic performance and ordination examination materials. It reinforces the educational qualifications expected before a candidate proceeds to ordination.

26-L — G-2.0607: Final Assessment and Negotiation for Service

Revises the final-assessment provisions to align their educational requirements with the new G-2.0606 section proposed in amendment 26-I. It retains the expectation of a college degree and appropriate theological education, including Hebrew, Greek, and biblical exegesis using those languages. Its principal purpose is to coordinate the final assessment rules with the proposed formal education requirements.

26-M — G-2.07: Ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament

Changes the heading Ordination to Ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacrament. Like amendment 26-D, this is intended to clarify that the section concerns a specific ordered ministry rather than every form of ministry in the church. It does not substantively change the section's provisions.

26-N — G-2.1002: Training, Examination and Commissioning

Establishes a denominational baseline for the preparation of ruling elders commissioned for limited pastoral service. It identifies core competencies, including Presbyterian polity, Reformed theology, worship and sacraments, biblical interpretation, preaching, Christian education, and pastoral care. The aim is to provide a more consistent foundation for training while allowing presbyteries to tailor preparation to particular commissioned service.

26-O — G-2.1002: Training, Examination and Commissioning

Requires ruling elders preparing for commissioned pastoral service to complete antiracism training in addition to boundary training and child sexual abuse prevention training. Training must be renewed at least every 36 months, and presbyteries determine which programs qualify.

26-P — G-2.1002: Training, Examination and Commissioning

Clarifies and makes explicit that ruling elders preparing for commissioning must complete boundary training, including sexual misconduct, and child and youth abuse prevention training. They must submit certificates to the presbytery and renew the training at least every 36 months. The proposal addresses the clarity and placement of existing training requirements.

26-Q — G-2.1002: Training, Examination and Commissioning

Allows a presbytery to determine that a ruling elder who is a Certified Christian Educator has already met the educational and training requirements for commissioning. The elder must still undergo the examination and commissioning required by the Book of Order. This provides a possible pathway that recognizes the relevant preparation already completed through Christian educator certification.

26-R — G-2.1101: Forms of Certified Church Service

Requires people certified and serving in church-related staff positions to participate in ongoing formation and continuing education as required by their certifying body and presbytery. It makes continuing education an explicit expectation rather than relying solely on encouragement to obtain certification.

26-S — G-2.1103: Christian Educators

Addresses training and safeguarding requirements for Certified Christian Educators and Certified Associate Christian Educators. The proposal specifies boundary training, including sexual misconduct, and child sexual abuse prevention training, with recertification at least every 36 months. It also addresses how these requirements apply to educators serving in church educational ministries.

26-T — G-3.0106: Administration of Mission

Revises council policy and training requirements, including explicit provisions for boundary training and child sexual abuse prevention training at least every 36 months. It also addresses antiracism training for specified groups under presbytery and synod jurisdiction, including ministers, commissioned ruling elders, certain church staff, and inquirers and candidates. The goal is to strengthen accountability and consistency across councils.

26-U — G-3.0106: Administration of Mission

Clarifies and reorganizes the required council policies, including sexual misconduct, harassment, protection of children, youth, and adults with vulnerabilities, and antiracism. It explicitly addresses recurring boundary and abuse-prevention training and clarifies that the listed policies are minimum requirements, not an exhaustive list. Its focus is the clarity and proper placement of council policy and training obligations.

26-V — G-3.0206: Training

Adds a new section requiring every member of a congregation's session to complete boundary training, including sexual misconduct, and child and youth abuse prevention

training. Members must provide certificates to the clerk of session and renew the training every 36 months. The session determines which training programs qualify.

26-W — G-3.0301: Membership of the Presbytery

Requires a presbytery to enroll ruling elders commissioned for limited pastoral service as members of the presbytery for the duration of their active commission. These elders would have voice and vote during that period. The proposal clarifies their formal participation in presbytery governance while their commissions are active.

26-X — G-3.0301: Membership of the Presbytery

Removes the provision concerning presbytery membership for ruling elders serving in elected terms for the presbytery or its congregations, while retaining the existing provision allowing a presbytery to establish its own rules on enrollment. The amendment concerns how ruling elders may be enrolled as members of the presbytery; it is distinct from 26-W's provision for commissioned ruling elders.

26-Y — G-3.0306: Membership of the Presbytery

Adds explicit recurring boundary training, including sexual misconduct, and child and youth abuse prevention training for ministers of the Word and Sacrament who are members of a presbytery. Members must provide completion certificates and renew their training at least every 36 months. The proposal clarifies the presbytery-level application of these training requirements.

GROUPINGS OF AMENMENTS FOR VOTING

Many of the proposed amendments overlap or address similar topics so presbytery will be asked to consider them as groups. If you would like to have one or more in a group removed from separate discussion/vote, please make the request to the stated clerk as soon as possible and no later than the conclusion of worship on Nov. 19.

Theme	Relevant amendments	Overall effect
Public witness and theology	26-A, 26-B	Explicitly reject Christian Nationalism and affirm the equality of ordered ministries.
Antiracism & boundary training	26-C, 26-E, 26-G, 26-O,	Introduces or strengthens antiracism education and training requirements.
Safeguarding and recurring training	26-F, 26-H, 26-P, 26-S, 26-T, 26-U, 26-V, 26-Y	Clarify or expand boundary and abuse-prevention training requirements, including recurring certification.
Theological education for ministers	26-D, 26-I, 26-J, 26-K, 26-L, 26-M	Clarify the scope of preparation and ordination and specify academic and biblical-language requirements.
Preparation and support for Commissioned & Certified church leaders	26-N, 26-Q, 26-R	Strengthen preparation for commissioned ministry, recognize existing qualifications in some cases, and require continuing formation for certified staff.
Presbytery membership and governance	26-W, 26-X	Clarify the enrollment and participation of ruling elders in presbytery meetings.