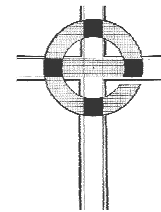


The Presbyterian

of The Presbytery of Elizabeth



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News from the 219th GA: New Form of Government questions and answers

What did the Assembly do? What has changed?

The General Assembly voted to recommend a revised Form of Government to the presbyteries by a vote of 468 in favor, 204 against, and 6 abstentions — a 70%-30% margin.



The new Form of Government includes:

- Foundations of Presbyterian Polity — the principles that are foundational to government, worship, and discipline for the PC(USA) — preserves the vast majority of the material in the first four chapters of the current Form of Government.
- Form of Government — in six chapters, which spells out the constitutional framework for government of the PC(USA) as it seeks to respond to God's call to life in mission.
- Advisory Handbook for Councils for the Development of Policies and Procedures — required by the Form of Government as an aid to councils (governing bodies) of the church for developing the policies and procedures to carry out their mission.

Nothing has changed until a majority of presbyteries vote to approve this new Form of Government. Voting must be completed by July 10, 2011, and if affirmative, the new Book of Order would take effect the next day.

What does it mean?

The current Form of Government has served the church ably over the past quarter century. The bedrock historic principles of Presbyterian governance will continue to order our lives together today and into the future, just as they have guided those who witnessed before us. At the same time, the world in which we as 21st-century Presbyterians proclaim the gospel is not the world of the 1950s, or even the 1980s. The proposed Foundations of Presbyterian Polity and Form of Government are intended to help the church better meet the needs of mission in the 21st century. The Foundations of Presbyterian Polity gathers together in three succinct chapters the historical and theological provisions that have defined, and continue to define, our church life together. Placing this bedrock material into a separate section of the *Book of Order* provides an excellent teaching tool to explain who and what we are. The current Form of Government has evolved over the years from a Constitution into a regulatory manual that attempts to provide a "one size fits all" answer to every situation faced by congregations and presbyteries. The problem with this regulatory approach is that the diverse, multicultural environment in which we do mission no longer permits a "one size fits all" approach if we are to do mission effectively. The proposed new Form of Government lifts up the constitutional standards that are essential to our life together, while at the same time empowering councils (governing bodies) at all levels to respond more effectively to the ministry and mission needs that each faces.

What's next?

The revised Form of Government must now be considered, and approved by a majority of presbyteries, before July 10, 2011, in order to replace the existing Form of Government.

Where can I learn more?

The document, as amended by the Assembly, is available now at the [PC-Biz website](#). A formatted version will be developed and made available online and in hard copy.

Complex Communication World

The simplest thing -- getting a message out -- has gotten complicated. Let's name, own it, and deal with it.

Let's say you want to invite 50 people to an important meeting. You already know that posting a notice on a church bulletin board is inadequate. So is putting a signup sheet in the back of church.

Here's what you should know about those 50:

One person doesn't do e-mail and still reads her postal mail.

Some 35 of your targets don't pay much attention to their postal mail, but they are diligent about reading e-mail.

The 10 who are between ages 20 and 40 rarely bother with e-mail. They prefer faster tools like Twitter and Facebook.

The 4 who are under age 20 don't read postal mail or e-mail or care much about Twitter and Facebook. They like to send text-messages.

So what do you do? If you only use a single tool -- e-mail being the likely one -- you will miss 15 of your 50 targets, or 30%. That guarantees your attendees will be older, and you will miss the perspectives that you are desperate to hear.

Okay, let's deal with it.

First, tell your congregation that you are going to use multiple electronic methods to communicate, and each person can name their preferred method. Set up a data system for storing that preference, and be sure to honor it. Announce this several times.

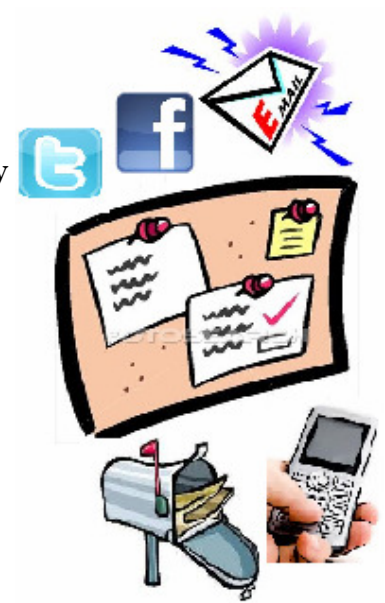
Second, refer people to the church web site, where you identify your e-mail address, Twitter name, Facebook name, and other social media that people are using. (New tools emerge constantly.) Don't have such accounts? Open them today.

Third, in each of the different tools, you will need to set up a list or group to which you can send a message quickly.

When it is time to send a message, you will need to use each of these tools. It will take a few minutes longer, but you'll reach more people. Remember Twitter feeds can't be longer than 140 characters.

As for text-messaging, I suggest you ask the teenagers if you could communicate with them that way. And then be glad to use it. Yes, it takes longer, but they will have opened an important door for you.

(The above article was written by the Rev. Tom Ehrich, founder of the Church Wellness Project.)



The Institute of Music for Children SUMMER ARTS INSTITUTE proudly presents

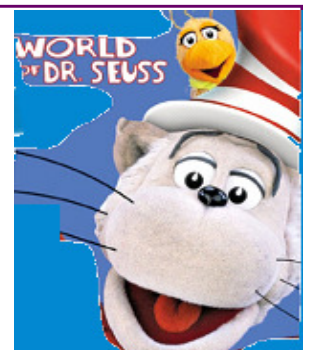
The Wonderful World of Dr. Seuss

Original music and scripted versions of some of his classic stories:
The Lorax, The Sneetches, The Big Brag and The Zax

Third-Westminster Presbyterian Church—780 Salem Ave., Elizabeth NJ 07208

Saturday, July 24th, 2010 * At 12 pm Noon

Followed by a cookout for all of the guests



The Summer Arts Institute is a 4-week program offering students ages 5-14 an array of arts programming including piano, guitar, violin, dance, drama, creative writing and public speaking, choir and more. The Summer Institute also provides teenagers with a summer job and training through the Youth Employment Program.