To: Clerks and Moderators of Local Church Sessions

From: Greg Gillispie, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Lake Erie 9/03/2019

Re: **Plan to attend an annual review of Session Minutes**

Local sessions annually are to provide their minutes for review by the presbytery. Lake Erie makes this a mutual process, with a group of local clerks swapping records and helping each other. The goals:

* to be sure that required contents are included and records are up to date, and the congregation is protected from potential future problems.
* to ensure that your session’s records are adequate for their current uses, and appropriate for the historical value they hold into the future,
* to provide helpful advice and encouragement to the volunteers who carry out this important role in each congregation, and
* to help each session faithfully lead ministry in their local context.

Each clerk of session is asked to attend one of the following regional gatherings, or send another representative from the session. Choose the date which best fits your location or your schedule. Please note that, based on a request from last year, we’ve added a fourth option, on a weekday afternoon.

**⮚ Sunday, October 13 4:00 – 5:15 pm Oil City First** 215 East Bissell Ave.

**⮚ Sunday, October 20 4:00 – 5:15 pm North Warren** 200 South State St.

**⮚ Thursday, October 24 3:00 – 4:15 pm Erie Westminster** 3642 West 26th St.

**⮚ Tuesday, October 29 7:00 – 8:15 pm Edinboro First United** 4281 Route 6N

Prior to this meeting, please review your minutes and records according to the attached checklist. For those of you who have been in this role for a while, yes, this year’s form is a different format, but covers the same material. Please pre-fill the “page number” column to guide your review partner where those items appear in your record. (For the *every-meeting* items, just pick 2 or 3 examples – *you don’t need to write down all 10 or 12 places where the session meeting opened with prayer*.) This should streamline the review process. Don’t worry, if 100% of these matters are not yet up-to-date. This gives you awareness of matters that can be brought to your session and staff in coming months.

*[ more ]*

Here is what to bring to whichever of these gatherings you attend:

**\_\_ Current register book of your membership rolls & other registers.**

**\_\_ Session and congregational minutes from the 2018-2019 year.**

**\_\_ Checklist for “Session Records Examination”, with page numbers filled in advance.**

**\_\_ Any questions you have about minutes, session meeting processes, or presbytery interactions.**

If you cannot attend any of these, please contact the presbytery’s stated clerk ([gregclerk@outlook.com](mailto:gregclerk@outlook.com)), so that other arrangements can be explored to complete your review of session records and minutes. This is an important function, and should be done annually. *An overarching message: these reviews are mandated by the Book of Order, BUT the most vital goals of these gatherings are to assist clerks and sessions to avoid problems, learn from each other, and maintain helpful records*

As you have any questions on any of this process to assist you with annual reviews, or other parliamentary or constitutional matters, please let me know. You may reach me by e-mail, by phone through the presbytery office, or by calling me directly at (814) 657-4782. My updated email for presbytery matters is gregclerk@outlook.com.