

JANUARY 2009

EXAMINATION IN WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS

OPEN AND CLOSED BOOK

MAXIMUM TIME: 3 HOURS

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS

This examination shall assess the candidate's understanding of the meaning and purpose of corporate worship and the Sacraments, familiarity with the *Directory for Worship* and *The Book of Confessions*, and their application to the life of worshiping communities.

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Questions on this examination deal with both **WORSHIP AND SACRAMENTS**. You will be expected to demonstrate the following:

- An ability to illustrate the connection between the contemporary understandings and practices of worship set forth in the *Directory for Worship* and the theological heritage of the Reformed tradition as it is expressed in *The Book of Confessions*.
- An ability to articulate a Reformed theological framework for addressing issues and practices related to worship and sacraments that arise from contemporary contexts for ministry.
- An ability to discern theological components in liturgical situations that may arise in ministry.
- An ability to discuss provisions of the *Directory for Worship* and to apply them in concrete contexts for ministry.
- An ability to reflect theologically and pastorally on the many different relationships between the ways the church understands and carries out its ministry and mission in the world and its worship and celebration of the sacraments.
- An ability to respond to individuals or groups in given situations with sensitivity to their needs, while also expressing the spirit of the constitutional standards.

In writing your answers, bear in mind that presbyteries elect elders as well as ministers of the Word and Sacrament to serve as readers. Examinations should be written in jargon-free language. Technical language should be used only where the task requires it or where it is appropriate.

The examination is divided into three sections:

Section I is a required one-hour question about Reformed Liturgical Heritage. When you complete Section I, give your copy of *The Book of Confessions* to the proctor who then will give you Sections II and III of the examination.

Section II is a required one-hour question calling for a Constructive Theological Reflection on Reformed Worship. No books or resources shall be used.

Section III is a required one-hour question dealing with Application for Ministry. There are two options. Select only one option. No books or resources shall be used.

**Identify every answer by the letter and number assigned to it (e.g., I.1 or III.A.1).**

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A CLEAN, UNMARKED, PRINTED COPY OF *THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS* MAY BE USED AS A RESOURCE **ONLY** DURING SECTION I OF THE EXAMINATION. NO OTHER BOOKS ARE ALLOWED.

Submit all answers in your own handwriting in ink; or type the answers if you prefer. You may make corrections, deletions or additions without rewriting or erasing.

**You may use a computer. You may bring your own equipment or, at some exam sites, you may use equipment provided by the proctor. If you use one of these means:**

- **You may not consult or copy from personal notes or any other source on the computer or a network during the exam.**
- **Since a printed copy of the exam must be turned in before you leave the exam and failure to do so will result in failure, you are strongly urged to make sure that all the necessary equipment (computer, printer, font and printer software, etc.) is properly working and coordinated.**
- **Number the pages.**
- **Include your candidate number on each page of the exam.**
- **Print responses using double spacing and 12-point font size.**
- **When finished, staple the printed copy to the first few pages of the exam book.**

Be advised that illegible papers will be returned ungraded. Papers that cannot be understood by readers because of poor syntax and/or grammar will be graded accordingly. Papers written in pencil will be returned ungraded.

The final grade for this examination will be the average of grades received on all three questions with rounding up or down determined by the readers on the basis of the examination's overall merit. You must complete all three sections of the examination. Even if two sections merit a superior score and one section is omitted, the examination will be considered unsatisfactory. The examination must receive a grade of three or higher on at least TWO questions to be considered satisfactory.

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**SECTION I: REFORMED LITURGICAL HERITAGE**

**ONE HOUR OPEN BOOK REQUIRED**

**(*THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS ONLY*)**

A member of the congregation you serve as pastor has been unemployed for a prolonged length of time. One day he arrives at your office looking both excited and anxious. He says, "I have been offered a great job working for a big non-denominational church across town. They want me for the job, but there's a catch. They will not hire anyone who has not been baptized by immersion. I was baptized as a baby, but not by immersion. That makes me feel like something was missing from my baptism."

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Discuss a Reformed understanding of the Sacrament of Baptism, including the form and frequency of the Sacrament. In your discussion, incorporate at least one (1) citation (e.g., 0.000) from each of three (3) different documents from *The Book of Confessions*. The answer should be based on your knowledge of the *Directory for Worship* as well as *The Book of Confessions*.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, identify and discuss at least two (2) issues raised by the member.

**You must use a clean, unmarked, printed copy of *The Book of Confessions*, copyright 2002 or later, for Section I. For the purpose of this examination, the *Westminster Shorter* and *Larger Catechisms* will be considered one document. Turn in your copy of *The Book of Confessions* to the proctor by the end of the first hour of the examination. The proctor will then give you Sections II and III (pp. 5-7) of the examination.**

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**UPON COMPLETING SECTION I,**

**TURN IN YOUR COPY OF *THE BOOK OF CONFESSIONS*.**

**THE PROCTOR WILL GIVE YOU SECTIONS II AND III.**

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**SECTION II: CONSTRUCTIVE THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION ON  
REFORMED WORSHIP**

**ONE HOUR      CLOSED BOOK      REQUIRED**

An adult class in your congregation is engaged in a study of the Christian understanding of death. One of the classes is "Planning for the Christian Funeral." During a question and answer time the following comments are made:

- Eunjin:            When my brother's wife died, the funeral took place in the church sanctuary. Now my brother doesn't attend worship here any more because the sanctuary is a place of painful memories.
- Carlos:            How am I supposed to worship with a corpse in full view while everyone talks about how lifelike the body looks?
- Ben:                I just take so much comfort in the pastor's eulogy, telling me what a saint the person was.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Articulate a Reformed understanding of the meaning, purpose, and ordering of Services on the Occasion of Death, demonstrating your knowledge of the *Directory for Worship*.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to at least one (1) issue raised by each of the three (3) class participants.

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**SECTION III: APPLICATION TO MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR**

**CLOSED BOOK**

**REQUIRED**

**(CHOOSE A or B)**

**A.**

Returning from your vacation, you discover that your email inbox is full. It seems that the visiting pastor showed a DVD segment from *The Greatest Story Ever Told* during the offering. The emails included these comments:

Jessica: The video was so inspirational. We should use videos more often, especially during stewardship season.

Helen: I've never seen a video used in worship before. Showing it during the offering spoiled my time for reflecting on the sermon.

Rafael: I thought it worked out great. Our choir got a break. I know they must get tired of having to sing every Sunday.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Identify and briefly discuss three (3) issues concerning the meaning of offering that are raised by the members' discussion. Your answer should be informed by your knowledge of the *Directory for Worship*.
2. Guided by your answer in Required Response 1, respond to each of the three (3) members.

**-OR-**

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**SECTION III: APPLICATION TO MINISTRY**

**ONE HOUR                      CLOSED BOOK                      REQUIRED**  
**(CHOOSE A or B)**

**B.**

Entering the church you serve as pastor one Sunday morning, you discover that the sanctuary has been decorated for the Vacation Bible School that will begin the next morning. You encounter three members discussing the decorations:

Elma:                      Look at all those decorations! You can't see the chancel area at all.

Keisha:                      Well, we got permission from the Worship and Music Committee to set up the decorations prior to worship. Besides, we couldn't wait until after worship and still have gotten it all done.

Roberto:                      Kids really respond to bright colors, streamers, and balloons. This is a great way to help generate some excitement and keep them entertained.

**REQUIRED RESPONSES**

1. Articulate a Reformed understanding of worship space, guided by your knowledge of the *Directory for Worship*.
2. Based on your answer in Required Response 1, respond to Elma, Keisha, and Roberto, addressing at least one (1) issue raised by each.