**BCO 13-5. Receiving an Ordained Minister without a Call**
L. Roy Taylor, Stated Clerk PCA

**Question:** May a Presbytery receive into its membership an ordained minister who is not being called to a definite work within its bounds?

**Answer:** Yes, a Presbytery may receive into its membership an ordained minister who is not being called to a definite work within its bounds.

**Grounds:**
- *BCO 13-5* states:
  - 13-5. *Ordinarily,* [emphasis added] only a minister who receives a call to a definite ecclesiastical work within the bounds of a particular Presbytery may be received as a member of that Presbytery except in cases where the minister is already honorably retired, or in those cases deemed necessary by the Presbytery, [emphasis added] subject to the review of the General Assembly. In such cases deemed necessary, which may include the case of a minister without call whose circumstances appear to require relocation within the bounds of that Presbytery, the time allotment of *BCO 13-2* shall be counted from the day the minister was first continued on the roll without call in any Presbytery.
  - *Usually,* a Presbytery receives a minister into its membership on the basis of his receiving a call to a definite ecclesiastical work within its bounds. But *BCO 13-2* begins with the word, “ordinarily” which allows the Presbytery to use its discretion.
  - Moreover, additional discretion is given the Presbytery by the phrase, “or in those cases deemed necessary by the Presbytery.”
  - Since the conjunction “or” is used with reference to the case’s being deemed necessary by the Presbytery, it is not an additional requirement, but an alternative requirement.

---

The Office of the Stated Clerk may give advice and counsel regarding constitutional and procedural matters. Interpretations of *The Book of Church Order, The Westminster Standards,* “The Rules of Assembly Operation,” “The Operating Manual of the Standing Judicial Commission,” and/or *Robert’s Rules of Order* by the Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PCA or staff members of the Office of the Stated Clerk are for information only, however, and are not authoritative rulings that may only be made by the courts of the Church. Responses to inquiries are based on information supplied by the inquirer, which may not necessarily be comprehensive. The Office of the Stated Clerk does not represent parties in ecclesiastical judicial cases and may not prepare judicial cases for parties. Parties to potential cases or cases in process are responsible for their own constitutional and procedural knowledge and understanding. The Office of the Stated Clerk does not give legal advice. When legal advice is needed, professional legal counsel should be secured from one familiar with applicable laws and regulations.