

To: Clerks and Moderators of Local Church Sessions  
From: Greg Gillispie, Stated Clerk, Presbytery of Lake Erie 8/28/2018

Re: **Plan to attend an annual review of Session Minutes for 2018**

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 your congregation is protected from potential future problems or liabilities,
- to provide helpful advice and encouragement to the volunteers who carry out the important roles of record-keeping and official communications in each congregation,
- to help each clerk to be more comfortable and knowledgeable about their important role, and
- to help all the elders on each session to lead ministry faithfully 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 one which best fits your location or your schedule.

- **Sunday, October 21 4:00 pm Rocky Grove Ave. Presbyterian, (near Franklin)**
- **Tuesday, October 23 7:00 pm First United Presbyterian, (Edinboro)**
- **Sunday, October 28 4:00 pm North Warren Presbyterian, (North Warren)**

Prior to this meeting, please review your minutes and records according to the attached checklist. You can choose to complete it with paper and pencil, or type in your edits the e-document. Please pre-fill the “page number” column to guide your review partner where those items appear in your minutes. (For the *every-meeting* items, just pick 2 or 3 examples – *you don’t need to write down all 7 or 10 or 12 places where the session meeting opened with prayer.*) If you do this in advance, 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.

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

- \_\_\_ **Session and congregational minutes from your 2017-2018 year.**
- \_\_\_ **Current register book of your membership lists & other registers.**
- \_\_\_ **2018 Checklist for “Session Records Examination”, with page numbers filled in advance.**
- \_\_\_ **Checklist of “Vital Matters for Sessions” indicating dates of approval, or actions still pending.**
- \_\_\_ **Any questions you have about minutes, session meeting processes, or presbytery interactions.**

If you cannot attend any of these, you are welcomed to send another person to represent your congregation and to bring your session records. If that isn’t possible, please contact the presbytery’s stated clerk ([revgreggillispie@gmail.com](mailto:revgreggillispie@gmail.com), 814-657-4782), so other arrangements can be explored to complete your review of session records and minutes. This is an important function, and should be done annually. Nearly all our congregations took part in this required review last year, and we anticipate great participation for 2017. Again, the goal of this process is to help each clerk and each session to faithfully carry out God’s mission and ministry in your local area, prevent potential problems or misunderstandings, and assure a quality historical record for the church.

Each gathering will last less than 75 minutes. As you have any questions on any of this process to assist you with annual reviews, or other parliamentary or constitutional matters any time during the year, 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.