

- (e) Apportionment of church into dioceses, each containing a number of local congregations
  - (f) The authority of the clergy as the chief bond of unity
- (2) The Presbyterial pattern
- (a) Final authority rests in the elders
  - (b) A plurality of elders in each church, forming the Session
  - (c) Distinction between the elder who teaches and the elders who govern
  - (d) The parity of ministers -- no gradation in rank
  - (e) Deacons charged with temporal responsibilities
  - (f) Authority to choose local officers and to decide certain other local matters in the hands of the people
  - (g) Authoritative bodies (presbyteries, synods, general assemblies) to express the unity of the church, to maintain good order by a system of checks and balances, and to preserve the purity of the church.
- (3) The Congregational pattern
- (a) Final authority rests in the local congregation -- autonomy of churches
  - (b) Two kinds of officers in the local church: the pastor or teaching elder, who ministers spiritual things; and the deacons, who minister temporal things and assist the pastor
  - (c) Freedom from binding common creed or organizational structure
  - (d) Independence of local churches from each other and especially from any higher governing authority
  - (e) Associations or fellowships of churches not viewed as authoritative, but only consultative or advisory
  - (f) Emphasis upon spiritual unity, expressed organizationally not by broader assemblies, but only in the local church
- b. Denominations and Associations holding these patterns or polities
- (1) The Episcopal pattern  
The Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Churches, the Anglican Church, the Protestant Episcopal Church, the Methodist Episcopal churches, the Lutheran Episcopal churches of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, and the Moravian Church
  - (2) The Presbyterial pattern  
The Presbyterian churches, the Reformed churches, and some of the Lutheran churches in the United States
  - (3) The Congregational pattern  
The Baptist churches, the Congregational churches, many independent churches, the Disciples of Christ, the United Church of Christ, some Mennonite churches, and the Plymouth Brethren