

F-1.04 OPENNESS TO THE GUIDANCE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

F-1.0401 Continuity and Change

The presbyterian form of government set forth in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is grounded in Scripture and built around the marks of the true Church.

It is in all things subject to the Lord of the Church. In the power of the Spirit, Jesus Christ

draws worshiping communities and individual believers into the sovereign activity of the

triune God at all times and places. As the Church seeks reform and fresh direction, it

looks to Jesus Christ who goes ahead of us and calls us to follow him. United with Christ

in the power of the Spirit, the Church seeks “not [to] be conformed to this world, but [to]

be transformed by the renewing of [our] minds, so that [we] may discern what is the will

of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Rom. 12:2).

F-1.0402 Ecumenicity

The presbyterian system of government in the Constitution of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is established in light of Scripture but is not regarded as essential for

the existence of the Christian Church nor required of all Christians.

F-1.0403 Unity in Diversity

“As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male

and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. And if you belong to Christ, then you

are Abraham’s offspring, heirs according to the promise” (Gal. 3:27–29).

The unity of believers in Christ is reflected in the rich diversity of the Church’s membership. In Christ, by the power of the Spirit, God unites persons through baptism

regardless of race, ethnicity, age, sex, disability, geography, or theological conviction.

There is therefore no place in the life of the Church for discrimination against any person.

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) shall guarantee full participation and representation in its worship, governance, and emerging life to all persons or groups within its membership.

No member shall be denied participation or representation for any reason other than those stated in this Constitution.

F-1.0404 Openness

In Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all creation, the Church seeks a new openness to God's mission in the world. In Christ, the triune God tends the least among us, suffers the curse of human sinfulness, raises up a new humanity, and promises a new future for all creation. In Christ, Church members share with all humanity the realities of creatureliness, sinfulness, brokenness, and suffering, as well as the future toward which God is drawing them. The mission of God pertains not only to the Church but also to people everywhere and to all creation. As it participates in God's mission, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) seeks:

a new openness to the sovereign activity of God in the Church and in the world, to a more radical obedience to Christ, and to a more joyous celebration in worship and work;

a new openness in its own membership, becoming in fact as well as in faith a community of women and men of all ages, races, ethnicities, and worldly conditions, made one in Christ by the power of the Spirit, as a visible sign of the new humanity;

a new openness to see both the possibilities and perils of its institutional forms in order to ensure the faithfulness and usefulness of these forms to God's activity

in the world; and

a new openness to God's continuing reformation of the Church ecumenical, that it might be more effective in its mission.